

RULES & REGULATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Lead Area:	WAFC Community Football
Lead Procedure Title:	Rules & Regulations
Procedure Reference Number:	WAFC R&R
Adapted by:	JH.
Last Modified:	9 March 2021

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Community Football Rules & Regulations for all Junior and Youth competitions conducted by the West Australian Football Commission (WAFC). These competitions shall be played according to the AFL Laws of Australian Football and any modified form of Australian Football as amended by the Australian Football League (AFL) or the WAFC.

1. SPIRIT OF JUNIOR FOOTBALL

Every participant understands that Football in Western Australia is delivered to the Community with the Spirit of the Game in mind.

It is incumbent on every participant irrespective of their place in the game, to ensure that they will;

- 1.1. ***Not focus on winning at all costs*** and understand that the role of Junior & Youth Football is to foster the development of players, volunteers, umpires, coaches and officials. Learning to win and lose is part of the developmental journey of a participant but must remain secondary to the primary focus of player development.
- 1.2 Maximise the enjoyment and development of Junior & Youth footballers.
- 1.3 Provide our children with a game environment that is safe, fun and fair.
- 1.4 Ensure that the values which add to the spirit of our game, which include fairness, equality, respect and teamwork are encouraged and celebrated.
- 1.5 Uphold, promote and protect the Rules, Laws, Codes, Policies and Spirit of the game.
- 1.6 Not accept poor behaviours around our game and deter practices that undermine our games environments (coaching, playing, volunteering, spectating and umpiring).
- 1.7 Adhere to any directive issued by the games controlling bodies in the best interests of achieving the above.
- 1.8 Coaches should adopt an athlete centred coaching philosophy.

A Person must not engage in conduct which is unbecoming or likely to prejudice the interests or reputation of Junior Football or to bring the game of football into disrepute.

2. SUPPORTING UMPIRES OF JUNIOR FOOTBALL

Umpires play a key role in the successful delivery of Community Football. Coaches, officials, players and parents play a vital role in developing the highest quality umpires.

- 2.1 All team players, officials, parents and spectators are expected to adhere to the following: WA Football has a ***ZERO TOLERANCE*** stance against any form of umpire or official abuse, verbal dissent, intimidation or disputing of decisions.

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- 2.2 Players, officials, parents and spectators are not permitted to comment about an umpire or the performance of an umpire in any way other than in writing to the Umpires Coach via the Club President.
- 2.3 Only the Captain or Team Manager from either team can approach an umpire during the breaks in a match. The Captain or Team Manager cannot question decisions, interpretations or question the free kick count.

3. INTERPRETATION & DEFINITIONS

All Committees, Coaches, Players and Parents should request interpretations, clarifications and explanations of the Competition Policies, Rules and Regulations via the Club President or Club Secretary.

Arena	The playing field and all the area between the playing field and the perimeter fence, including any break in the perimeter fence
Club	Any junior football club which affiliates with the RDC/RFDC through membership.
Community Football Appeal Board	An appeal tribunal convened by a Junior Competition.
Community Football Tribunal	An independent tribunal acting on behalf of Community Football in WA.
Competition	The specific division in which a team has fixtured matches.
Development Squad Player	Any player who played in a WAFL Development Squad match or taken part in a WAFL Development program in the past 12 months.
Forms	Refers to either paper based or electronic based forms.
Juniors	Persons who play football within the boundaries of the RDC/RFDC up to the age determined from time to time by the WAFC.
Junior Match Committee	A group established by the WAFC to classify Reportable Offences.
Match Day Checklist	A venue checklist as provided by the insurer to complete prior to matches, currently the Marsh Match Day Checklist.
Member	A club or person elected to membership of the RDC /RFDC.
Open Competition	Any competition that is open to: Males: Auskick to Year 12 Females: Auskick to Year 9 As opposed to female only competitions.
Perimeter Fence	The physical barrier surrounding the playing field. Where an arena does not have a perimeter fence, then the perimeter fence shall be interpreted as being located 10m outside and parallel to the playing field.
Playing Field	The field of play inside the boundary line, goal line and behind line, excluding the area between such lines and the perimeter fence.
Registration System	The WAFC adopts the Sports TG Footyweb registration and competition management system.
RDC	Regional Development Council
WAFC	West Australian Football Commission, or an authorised representative of the West Australian Football Commission.

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SECTION 2: COMPETITION GOVERNANCE

4. COMPETITIONS

- 4.1 The WAFC shall arrange inter-club football competitions in specific year groups for players registered with affiliated junior clubs.
- 4.2 The WAFC may divide the area within its jurisdiction into sub-districts. It is recommended that all players residing within an allocated area play for the aligned club. The WAFC may alter, vary or add to the boundaries of its sub-districts as it sees fit.

5. SCRATCH MATCHES

Clubs may arrange scratch/practice matches outside of WAFC fixtured competitions. For insurance purposes:

- 5.1 All scratch matches must be played within the WAFC Policies and Rules & Regulations
- 5.2 All players must be registered through the WAFC approved registration system or fall within the four-week prospective members clause.
- 5.3 All scratch matches with official umpires are bound by the Laws of the Game, including penalties for reportable offences.

6. RULES & REGULATIONS, POLICIES & CODES OF CONDUCT

All clubs, players, parents, spectators and officials are bound by the WAFC's Junior & Youth Football Policies and True Sport Codes of Conduct and are subject to penalties at the discretion of the WAFC for any breach.

Penalties handed down for breaches of these Rules & Regulations, Policies and Codes of Conduct can only be applied to and served in competitions within the scope of these rules.

7. DISPUTES & APPEALS – COMPETITION POLICIES, RULES AND REGULATIONS

Should any dispute or objection arise as to the meaning or interpretation of any of these Rules & Regulations, the WAFC shall settle such dispute or objection.

Clubs are entitled to appeal penalties and or decisions for any breach of the WAFC's Junior and Youth Football Rules & Regulations or Policies on the grounds that the penalty provided meets one of the following criteria:

- An error in the application of a rule has occurred.
- The decision of the Competition is so unreasonable that no Competition acting reasonably could have come to that decision having regard to the evidence before it.
- The sanction imposed by the Tribunal was manifestly excessive or inadequate.

The appeal will be heard by the relevant independent body as appointed by the WAFC.

Request to Appeal:

- 7.1 E-Points cannot be appealed if aligned to a Red or Yellow Card infringement.
- 7.2 A club shall submit a written communication addressed to the WAFC requesting to appeal a penalty within 48 hours of receiving notification of the penalty, accompanied by a non-refundable \$250 fee. Within the written request to appeal the club will outline on what basis the penalty meets the above appeal criteria.

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Appeal Panel:

- 7.3 The Chair of the Appeal Panel may determine whether the case meets the Appeal Criteria prior to the panel sitting and has the power to determine that a case should not be heard on the basis that it does not meet the appeal criteria.
- 7.4 The Appeal Panel will determine whether the penalty fits within one of the appeal criteria based on the evidence provided and any new additional evidence provided by the club.
- 7.5 All members of the Appeal Panel must be independent to the case.

Appeal Hearing:

- 7.6 If circumstances prevail whereby a hearing must be heard prior to the clubs next match, the WAFC will make a reasonable attempt for this to occur.
- 7.7 The Appeal Panel may use its full discretion to gather and take into account any relevant evidence in making its determination.
- 7.8 A club attending an appeal hearing may be represented by an advocate. An advocate may not be a legal practitioner.
- 7.9 The club will have the opportunity to present its case to the Appeal Panel.

Appeal Decision:

- 7.10 The Appeal Panel shall not dismiss any case on grounds of technicality.
- 7.11 The Appeal Panel will make a determination as to whether the penalty handed down by the WAFC is in breach of one of the appeal criteria.
- 7.12 The Appeal Panel will make recommendations as to what they believe the appropriate penalty should be.
- 7.13 The WAFC has discretion as to whether to implement the recommended penalty.
- 7.14 The WAFC will communicate the decision of the Appeal Panel back to the club within a reasonable period of time after the decision has been made.

8. ALTERATION OF RULES & REGULATIONS

Should any situation arise which is not covered in these Rules & Regulations, then the WAFC Policies and Codes of Conduct shall apply.

- 8.1 The WAFC may elect to resolve any matter, which is not provided for in these Rules & Regulations and any such resolution shall immediately become an amendment to the Rules & Regulations and shall automatically be included herein.
- 8.2 Any variation (exemptions) to these Rules & Regulations must be approved by the WAFC prior to implementation.

SECTION 3: SEASON ADMINISTRATION

9. YEAR GROUPS

- 9.1 Any player who is repeating Year 12 at school is not eligible to play in the Year 11-12 competition and should be encouraged to join a senior community competition.
- 9.2 On application to the WAFC, a player may be eligible to play up a MAXIMUM of one year group only. In a combined age group, only the senior aged players can apply to go up to the next age bracket.
- 9.3 A player who does not meet the Physical Development Criteria or the Disability criteria for a play down must apply to the WAFC in writing for approval.
- 9.4 With reference to combined year groups, the WAFC or controlling body will make the final determination regarding play up applications. It is generally considered that only top aged players are eligible to play up a year group.

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- 9.5 The granting of any such request shall apply only to the current season and can be subject to review by the WAFC during the current season.
- 9.6 A player who is playing down due to their current school year group, must supply a letter from the school confirming that they are attending school in the year group in which they are playing.

Physical Development Criteria

Players must apply to the WAFC for permission to play down a year group during the current season.

- 9.7 Approval will only be granted if the player submits written authority by a sports physician or doctor along with their application to play down a year group. The written authority should specify that the participant falls below the fifth percentile for height or weight.
- 9.8 A player granted permission to play down a year group will be eligible for the fairest and best votes for the grade in which they have received permission to play.
- 9.9 The granting of any such request shall apply to the current season only.

Disability – Physical and Intellectual

A player with a disability that limits their ability to play, may apply to the WAFC for permission to play down one or more year groups during the current season.

- 9.10 Approval will only be granted if the player submits written authority by a sports physician or registered medical practitioner along with their application to play down a year group.
- 9.11 A player granted permission to play down a year group will be eligible for the fairest and best votes for the grade in which they have received permission to play.
- 9.12 The granting of any such request shall apply to the current season only.

Gender Diversity

- 9.13 The WAFC is committed to inclusion and will utilise the AFL's Gender Diversity Policy in instances where Trans, Non-Binary or other Gender Identity is raised.

10. CLUB OFFICIALS

Each Club shall elect Club administrators and officials who will be responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Club. These officials may include:

- 10.1 President, Committees, Delegates to the RDC and other required officials who will be elected as per each club's constitution.
- 10.2 Each Club shall elect or appoint a Registrar who shall be responsible for the registration of players for that Club and shall keep a record of the achievements of those players as may be required. The Club Registrar shall be responsible for managing any changes to the personal details of any players registered with that Club in accordance with the WAFC approved registration system.
- 10.3 All District and Club volunteers may be subject to a Working with Children Check as per legislative requirements.
- 10.4 Clubs are to have in place a policy on 'Duty of Care' relevant to Club and Team officials. When adults have responsibility of care for children, Clubs must ensure the safety, health and protection of children. Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of its Club and Team officials in line with WA Football Policies.

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11. REGISTRATION

No player shall be eligible to take part in any match under the control of the WAFC until an online registration form is completed and approved through the WAFC approved Registration System.

- 11.1 Players must not alter their name or date of birth to register via the Registration System.
- 11.2 Players are not permitted to be registered and play in more than one Team, Club and/or District/Region which is playing in a single Junior Competition.
- 11.3 A Club Official must witness the birth registration number, State or country of birth or other authentication of birth date prior to playing a match.

SECTION 4: TRIBUNAL GUIDELINES

12. INTRODUCTION & SCOPE

The Tribunal Guidelines are adopted by WAFC and Country Junior Competitions to provide clubs, players and officials with clear guidelines for those who commit reportable offences.

The span of the Tribunal Guidelines is outlined below:

- Team Officials – Year 3 to Year 12
- Players – Year 7 to Year 12

13. PROCESS

Report

The Junior Match Committee will assess all reports and potential Reportable Offences. Reportable Offences can be reported by the following groups:

- Umpire
- Umpire Coach
- Competition Official
- WAFC Staff Member

All Notice of Reports are to be received by **12pm Monday** after the match is played.

The Junior Match Committee will gather the required information relevant to making a decision on whether a charge is made.

Determination of type of offence and appropriate charge

Following the review of each report or referral, the Junior Match Committee will determine whether the charge is appropriate and alter the charge if required. There are three types of Reportable Offences:

- A low-level offence
- A classifiable offence
- A direct to tribunal offence (referred directly to the community football tribunal)

The Junior Match Committee will inform the player or official and their club president whether or not a reported or referred player/official has been charged and the corresponding base sanction for that charge by **5pm Monday** after the match is played.

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Options available to the player or official charged with a reportable offence:

A player or official charged with a Reportable Offence may:

- Submit an early guilty plea, in which case the relevant sanction for the Reportable Offence will apply subject to a reduction available as a result of the early guilty plea as per grading table.
- Contest a charge at the Community Football Tribunal using evidence to show they are not guilty of the classifiable offence or guilty of a lesser charge.

The player or official charged must submit their Option by **12pm Tuesday** after the match is played.

Timelines may be adjusted at the discretion of the WAFC under exceptional circumstances.

Tribunal Hearing

The tribunal will hear a charge for which a Player or Official has pleaded not guilty or has pleaded guilty to a lesser charge. The tribunal may find the Player or Official guilty of the original charge, a lesser charge or not guilty of any charge. The tribunal will determine the appropriate sanction within the Standard Range of Penalties for the Reportable Offence if it finds the player guilty of a Reportable Offence.

Unless requested for attendance by the Tribunal Chairman, Umpires or Victims may provide evidence prior to the Tribunal hearings however must be available to be contacted by the Tribunal Chairman during the hearing period if required.

Players, Officials and Umpires are permitted to be accompanied by an advocate however this advocate may not be a legal practitioner and is only to act in the role of providing support. An advocate will not be asked to provide evidence.

The Community Football Tribunal will operate within the Community Football Tribunal Guidelines.

Appeal Hearing

A player or official may decide to appeal the decision of the Tribunal to the Community Football Appeal Board based on one of the following criteria being applied:

- An error of law has occurred.
- The decision of the Tribunal is so unreasonable that no Tribunal acting reasonably could have come to that decision having regard to the evidence before it.
- The classification of the offence by the Tribunal was manifestly excessive or inadequate, or
- The sanction imposed by the Tribunal was manifestly excessive or inadequate.

All appeal lodgements must occur within 48 hours of notification of the Tribunal decision, accompanied by a \$250 non-refundable fee and articulate how the decision fits into one of the above stated appeal criteria.

Competition Management also reserves the right to appeal decisions of the Tribunal to the Community Football Appeal Board based on the above stated appeal criteria.

The Community Football Appeals Board will operate within the Community Football Tribunal Guidelines.

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14. REPORTABLE OFFENCES

A reportable offence occurs where a Player or Official commits any of the offences set out in Law 22.2.2 of the Laws of Australian Football. Broadly speaking there are three categories of Reportable Offences - Low Level, Classifiable, and Direct to Tribunal Offences.

Any Offence defined in the AFL Laws of the Game but not specified in these Tribunal Guidelines will be categorised as Direct to Tribunal Offences.

Low Level Offences

List of Low Level Offences

The following are low-level offences which do not require classification however may be addressed by the Junior Match Committee through the issuing of a Yellow or Red Card. In the case of a Red Card, the player will receive an automatic 1 match suspension.

If relevant and appropriate evidence is present, the Competition Officials have the powers to:

- Issue Yellow & Red Cards
- Upgrade a Yellow Card to a Red Card
- Downgrade a Red Card

Low Level Offences cannot be taken to the Community Football Tribunal:

- Attempting to strike, kick or trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg.
- Careless contact with an umpire
- Spitting at another player.
- Engaging in a Melee, except where a Player's sole intention is to remove a Player from the same Team from the incident. *
- Engaging in an act of staging.
- Making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured Player.
- Using abusive, insulting, or obscene language.
- Engaging in Time Wasting.
- Throwing or pushing a Player after that Player has taken a mark, disposed of the ball or after the ball is out of play.
- Wrestling another person.
- Use of an obscene gesture.
- Disputing a decision of an Umpire.
- Pinching another person.
- Interfering with a Player Kicking for Goal.
- Failing to leave the Playing Surface when directed to do so by an Umpire.
- Intentionally shaking a goal or behind post when another Player is preparing to Kick or is Kicking for Goal or after the Player has kicked for Goal and the football is in transit.
- Wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9.
- Any other act of low-level misconduct which is not a Classifiable Offence or Direct Tribunal Offence.

**Penalties may be applied to Teams who engage in a melee at the discretion of the WAFC.*

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Classifiable Offences

List of Classifiable Offences

The following offences are Reportable Offences that are graded by the Junior Match Committee to determine an appropriate base sanction:

- Striking another person.
- Kicking another person.
- Kneeing another person.
- Stomping on another person.
- Charging another person.
- Engaging in rough conduct against an opponent which in the circumstance is unreasonable.
- Bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football.
- Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire.
- Head-butting an opponent or making contact to an opponent using the head.
- Eye-gouging an opponent or making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the eye region of an opponent.
- Making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of an opponent.
- Scratching another person.
- Tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg.
- Using abusive, insulting or obscene language towards or in relation to an Umpire.

Note: WAFC or Competition Officials may use their discretion to establish an appropriate prescribed penalty for Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire.

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Grading of Classifiable Offences

Conduct	Impact	Contact	Base Sanction	Early Guilty Plea
Intentional	Severe	All	Tribunal	N/A
	High	High/Groin	Tribunal	N/A
		Body	4 Matches	3 Matches
	Medium	High/Groin	3 Matches	2 Matches
		Body	2 Matches	1 Match
	Low	High/Groin	2 Matches	1 Match
		Body	1 Match	1 Match
	Careless	Severe	All	Tribunal
High		High/Groin	3 Matches	2 Matches
		Body	2 Matches	1 Match
Medium		High/Groin	2 Matches	1 Match
		Body	1 Match	1 Match
Low		High/Groin	1 Match	1 Match
		Body	1 Match	Yellow Card/Reprimand

As indicated in the table above, the determination of a base sanction for a Classifiable Offence will be made based on an assessment of whether:

1. The conduct is Intentional or Careless,
2. The impact is Severe, High, Medium or Low; and
3. The Contact with the other Player/Official is High/Groin or to the Body

All penalties (Base Sanction and Early Guilty Plea) will be doubled if the player or official has been found guilty of a reportable offence within the past 12 months.

Reduction in base sanction for early guilty plea

The base sanction for Classifiable Offences can, in most instances be decreased where a player submits an early guilty plea.

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Direct to Tribunal Offences

List of Direct to Tribunal Offences

The following offences are Reportable Offences that are sent directly to the Community Football Tribunal to determine an appropriate penalty within the Standard Range of Penalties:

- Intentionally making contact with, or striking, an Umpire.
- Attempting to make contact with, or strike, an Umpire.
- Carelessly making contact with an Umpire.
- Spitting at or on an Umpire.
- Spitting on another person.
- Instigating a Melee.
- Any classifiable offence which attracts a base sanction that the Junior Match Committee finds inappropriate.
- Any other act of serious misconduct which the Junior Match Committee considers appropriate to send to the Community Football Tribunal.

The Community Football Tribunal will determine the appropriate sanction for a Direct to Tribunal offence within the Standard Range of Penalties.

15. STANDARD RANGE OF PENALTIES

Offence	First Offence	Second Offence
Striking	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Kicking	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Kneeing	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Stomping	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Charging	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Rough Conduct	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Forceful front on contact	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Headbutt or contact using head	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Eye-gouging/unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the eye region	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face	1-5 weeks	2-10 weeks
Scratching	1-5 weeks	2-10 weeks
Tripping	2-10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Intentional contact with an umpire	4 weeks – 2 years	Life Ban
Striking an umpire	2 years – 10 years	Life Ban
Spitting on or at an umpire	1 year – 5 years	Life Ban
Spitting on another person	2 – 10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Attempting to strike an umpire	1 year – 5 years	Life Ban
Instigator of a Melee *	2 – 10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks
Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire	2 - 10 weeks	4 – 20 weeks

**Penalties may be applied to teams who engage in a melee at the discretion of the WAFC.*

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16. SUSPENSIONS

- 16.1 Any player, Official, Club Member or Spectator suspended by either a tribunal or prescribed penalty in a WAFC affiliated competition will not be permitted to play, coach or participate in any capacity, in any WAFC affiliated competition including schools, senior metropolitan community football or regional football, for the duration of the penalty unless otherwise stated by the WAFC.
- 16.2 Any player, Official, Club Member or Spectator reported or in receipt of a prescribed penalty notice, is not to play or act in any official capacity in a WAFC affiliated competition until such time as the charge has been dealt with.
- 16.3 Any player, Official, Club Member or Spectator who chooses to contest a Red Card, Report or Prescribed Penalty is deemed suspended until such time as the charge or report is dealt with to the satisfaction of the WAFC.
- 16.4 A player, Official, Club Member or Spectator found guilty of an offence who has been given a suspension, fine or any other sanction by the Community Football Tribunal, shall not be permitted to enter the Arena on Match Days while the penalty remains unserved.

SECTION 5: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

[2021 AFL Laws of Australian Football](#)