

**NORTHERN NETBALL FOOTBALL
LEAGUE INCORPORATED**

BY-LAWS



**Adopted
November 2022**

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NORTHERN FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE BY-LAWS

1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

1.1.The following terms, unless the contrary intention appears, are in relation to all matters relating to the Northern Football Netball League:

Seniors: Senior men and women football competition for open age players that does not restrict the playing of Under-19, Under 18 Girls or Junior footballers.

Reserves: Reserve senior football competition for open age players that does not restrict the playing of Under-19 or Junior footballers. **For Senior Womens clubs with 2 teams, the second team is considered the Reserves team.**

Under-19: Competition of senior football restricted to players as defined by By-Law 4 or Junior competition footballers

Under-18 Girls: Competition of junior girls football

Finals Matches: Matches played at the end of the home and away matches.

Football Season: The first home and away football match through to the final football match (Grand Final) of the competition season.

Netball Season: The first home and away netball match through to the final netball match (Grand Final) of the competition season.

Home and Away: The matches played to determine those teams who are to play finals matches.

Junior Competition: Matches graded by age from under-9 to under-18.

Junior Player: Any player eligible to play in the Junior Competition.

Laws of Australian Football: The laws of the game of Australian Football adopted by the Australian Football League as modified for the League, set out in Schedule 1.

League: The Northern Football Netball League Incorporated.

NFNL: The Northern Football Netball League Incorporated.

Official: A member of an Affiliated Club who holds a formal position within the Club such as water carrier, trainer, coaching staff, or committee member.

Player: A registered player with an Affiliated Club within the NFNL.

Member: A financial member of an Affiliated Club or in the case of a player, a family member of that player.

Senior Competition: Football matches scheduled as Senior Men and Women, Reserve and Under-19.

Senior Player: Any player eligible to play in the Senior Men and Women, Reserve and Under 19 competitions.

Supporter: A member of the public who may not have a formal affiliation with a Club but is present on match day watching NFNL competition.

NFNL Football Operations Manager: A staff member of the League who is appointed to manage all competitions and related matters regarding football.

NFNL Netball Manager: A staff member of the League who is appointed to manage all competitions and related matters regarding netball.

NFNL Netball Umpire Administrator: A staff member of the League appointed to oversee the recruitment, appointment, development and badging of all netball umpires throughout the season.

1.2 The appendices and schedules attached should be read in conjunction with and form part of the By-Laws of the Northern Football Netball League. ***By-Laws that have been altered from the previous year are indicated in bold.***

2. LAWS OF THE GAME

2.1 All football games shall be played in accordance with the “Laws of Australian Football” determined by the AFL, as adopted in Schedule 1 by the League. *(Noting: NFNL Local Law variances to rules are contained in the Schedule 1 document)*

2.2 All netball games shall be played in accordance with the “Rules of Netball” determined by the International Netball Federation.

3. AFFILIATION FEE AND OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS TO THE LEAGUE

3.1 Each affiliated Junior, Senior or Netball Club shall pay an annual affiliation fee of the sum prescribed by the Board.

3.2 Debts: All monies outstanding to the League are to be paid no later than thirty (30) days after the date of invoice issued by the League.

3.3 Clubs must be within the determined NFNL trading terms by 3pm on the Friday prior to the following rounds to be eligible for match points in all football and netball matches:

- a) Round 1 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;

- b) Round 5 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;
- c) Round 9 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;
- d) Round 14 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches.

- 3.4** If a Junior, Senior or Netball Club is deemed to be un-financial all football and netball teams from the un-financial club will become ineligible for match points until the club is deemed to be financial by the CEO.
- 3.5** Where a match takes place with a club who is ineligible for match points, the opposition club must win the match to receive the match points. If the unfinancial club wins the match, neither team shall receive the match points.
- 3.6** The NFNL Board shall have the right to approve an agreed payment plan for un-financial clubs. If a club breaches the agreed payment plan they will forfeit the right to another payment plan and will become ineligible for match points until they are deemed to be financial by the CEO.
- 3.7** All affiliated clubs participating in final series matches must be financial with the league before the conclusion of the home and away matches. In the event that a participating club is not financial, the league may at its discretion, remove all or any of its teams from their position in the final series matches and promote the next entitled financial teams in their place to participate in the final's series.
- 3.8** Senior football clubs who are unfinancial with the NFNL at the close of business on the 31st of October each year will have their Total Player Payments (TPP) for the following season reviewed by the NFNL Board.
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4. CLUB & PLAYER REGISTRATION

4.1 Football – General

- 4.1.1** The understanding of the registration process of players is vital for clubs when considering the promotion of juniors to senior football during the home and away season or for the selection of juniors in senior finals football.
- 4.1.2** Before finalising a player's registration, clubs must sight the player's original birth certificate and upload it to the players profile online. In cases where a birth certificate cannot be obtained, the club must contact the League to seek approval to use another process to confirm a player's age. The League may request to sight the original copy of a player's birth certificate and/or other age-related documentation at their discretion.
- 4.1.3** For Senior Clubs that provide a pathway (sponsor) to senior football for a standalone Junior Affiliated club, they must provide the NFNL with a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Presidents of both Clubs in order to have junior footballers from that Junior Affiliated Club eligible to play senior football with the sponsoring Senior Club. To play senior football with the sponsoring club, a Match Day Permit is still required to be completed online at the NFNL website. Junior Clubs should consider the impact of players playing out of their age groups in seniors (Under19, Reserves, Seniors) in regard to the impact on an individual player's qualification for their junior team for home and away and finals matches. Refer to NFNL By Law 4.2.2(b)

- 4.1.4** No person may play in any matches authorised or conducted by the League, other than practice matches, unless that person has registered with an NFNL Club with player details recorded on the online Competition Management System.
- 4.1.5** Any player registered with the League and permitted to play with an Affiliated Club who wishes to play with another Affiliated Club must apply to the League for a transfer within the League in accordance with the AFL National Transfer Regulations.

4.2 Playing Out of Age Group/Grade/Team & *Juniors to Senior competitions

- 4.2.1** All players in the under-9 to under-18 football age groups (inclusive) may play out of their registered age group/grade/team. However:
- a) No junior player may play more than two years above his/her age group as decreed in By-Law 4.1.3, regardless of whether or not competitions are available in those junior age groups.
 - b) ***Once a Junior player plays 5 or more home and away matches of senior football (Under-19, Reserves, Seniors Men/Women) they are ineligible to play again in any junior competition matches, including finals.***
 - c) ***Once a Junior player has played 5 or more home and away matches in a higher age group, they are ineligible to play in a lower age group for the remainder of the season, including finals.***
 - d) ***Once a Junior player has played 5 or more home and away matches in a higher division, they are ineligible to play in a lower division team for the remainder of the season, including finals.***
 - e) ***For clubs with 2 teams in the same division, once a player has played 5 or more home and away games with a team, they are ineligible to again play for the club's other team in that same division for the remainder of the season, including finals.***
 - f) ***The hierarchical order is Senior Men/Women, Reserves, Under 19s, Juniors age group, competitive junior grades blue, red, green and silver.***
 - g) ***Refer to final's eligibility for clarification of movement between age groups/grades and teams for finals participation.***
 - h) ***Where a club fields two or more teams in the under 19s competitions, a player is permitted to move between these teams during the home and away matches, but once they have played five (5) matches in the higher graded competition team they may not move to the lower graded team for the remainder of the season, including finals.***
 - i) ***Where a Club has two Under-19 teams in the same division, each team must be registered separately, and they will take part in the competition on the same terms and conditions as if they were entered as separate clubs. Movement of players between teams in these circumstances can only be made after League approval is obtained. A list of players of teams concerned must be forwarded to the League office before the first round of the home and away season. Players can be rotated between teams no more than three (3) times during the home and away season.***

- j) ***Senior Women clubs with 2 teams are classified as a Senior (Team 1) and Reserves (Team 2) team model. There are no restrictions on player movement between the “senior” and “reserves” team in different divisions during the home and away season.***

4.3 Player Age Group – Football

- a) A player must be at least 7 years old as of April 30 in each year to be eligible to be registered with an NFNL affiliated club.
- b) A player’s age group shall be based on a player’s age as of January 1 in each year.

4.4 Football competitions that extend the age of a competition must adhere to January 1 as the age determination date, e.g., for a U/19 ½ competition in 2022, the age shall be extended back to July 1, 2021, thus allowing the player to be 19 ½ on January 1, 2022.

Example:

Under 17.5 – Any player born prior to July 1, 2005, would not be eligible to play in the 2023 Under 17.5 competition.

Under 19.5 – Any player born prior to 1 July 2003 would not be eligible to play in the 2023 Under 19.5 competition

- 4.4.1** Any request for a player to play down an age group must meet the criteria set out in Schedule 34 – NFNL Medical Overage Exemption Policy with exception to by-law 4.1.3.V
- 4.4.2** Any request for an overage player to play down in Under-19s or Under-18s junior girls must meet the criteria set out in Schedule 35 – NFNL U18 Girls-U19 Development Player Policy

4.5 Netball - Club/Team Conditions

- 4.5.1** Clubs may enter as many teams as they wish. All teams are to be graded at the start of the season.
- 4.5.2** A Club applying for entry into the Competition shall ensure the following:
 - a) No late entries will be accepted (no correspondence will be entered into) following the grading period;
 - b) Satisfy the Competition Manager that they are prepared to field a team for all fixture matches and are in a position to meet the financial requirements of the Competition/s they are entering;
 - c) The Club/Team shall agree to abide by the policy and rules of NFNL;
 - d) The Club/Team shall agree to adhere to the requirements of the sponsor/s of the Competition/s they are participating in;
 - e) Club/Team shall agree to abide by Netball Victoria Codes of Conduct;
 - f) NFNL reserves the right to refuse an entry from any club/team for any reason.

4.6 Netball Membership/Registrations

- a) Netball Victoria's membership fee is set annually by the Victorian Netball Association Inc. and shall be communicated to Affiliated Clubs annually.
- b) All Players, coaches & umpires must be registered with the Northern Football Netball League.
- c) All players are to be financial with Netball Victoria before taking the court or prior to Commencing participation.
- d) Players must make payment online via Netball Connect. Clubs are to record the player's current Netball Victoria Membership number and forward all registration forms to the NFNL Competition Manager on a date to be advised.
- e) Single Game Vouchers will be available for purchase at venue entry for all competitions and will only constitute a current Netball Victoria Membership for the game granted.

4.7 Player Age Group – Netball

- a) A Participant's age group is determined by their age as of 31st December of that year.
- b) The League may run competitions in the following age groups each season dependent on participation:
 - I. Open Section (15 years and over).
 - II. Under-17.
 - III. Under-15.
 - IV. Under-13.
 - V. Under-11.
 - VI. Under-9.
 - VII. Net Set Go (Ages 5 to12 years)

4.7.1 Male Players

- a) Males eligible for Under-13 and below competitions are permitted to play in the NFNL Netball Competitions.
- b) Teams may have up to one male on the court at one time

4.8 Penalty for Playing Non-Permitted Players

4.8.1 Any Affiliated Club that allows a player to play in any home and away games or finals series where that player is:

- a) Not registered with the League; or
- b) Not permitted to play with that Affiliated Club; or
- c) Under suspension; or
- d) Not qualified under rule 4.1 or 4.2.

Shall be liable to:

- A fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
- Disqualification from the competition; and/or
- Loss of all premiership points and scores obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams. Individual stats such as goals and Best & Fairest votes will NOT be removed for players other than the offending player.
- The Board may also deal with the player concerned as it sees fit.

4.8.2 Each Affiliated Club shall advise the League in the manner stipulated from time to time by the CEO by no later than June 30 in each year detailing all players change of addresses and those players whose permits to play are no longer required.

4.8.3 Any player whose name is removed from the permitted players list shall not be entitled to play with the Affiliated Club or any other Club without first:

- a) Re-applying for a permit to play; or
- b) Where appropriate, applying for a player transfer approval.

4.8.4 No person shall be qualified to play for a League Club in any match played under the auspices of the League:

- a) Who is not for the time being a duly registered playing member of such Club and the holder of a permit to play.
- b) Who is under any disqualification or who has not paid any fine for breach imposed by any competent authority. A record of such disqualification or fine for breach (as far as known) shall be kept by the League and shall be available for inspection by all officials at any time.
- c) Unless he/she is the holder of all required transfers and permits.

4.9 A reported player may continue to play with his/her Affiliated Club until his/her case is heard by the appointed Tribunal and any suspension that may be given shall date from the date of the Tribunal's decision. The CEO must approve all deferred tribunal hearings. Any suspension shall make a player ineligible from playing in all competition/age groups until after the NFNL fixture home and away and/or finals games played equal to the player's suspension has been.

4.10 Fees – Football

4.10.1 Each Affiliated Club shall pay to the League \$4.00 plus GST for each current senior player permit, as of July 1 in each season.

4.10.2 Each junior player who registers with an NFNL under-9 to under-18 competition with an Affiliated Club shall pay a levy of \$25 each season.

4.11 Player and Official De-Registration - Football

4.11.1 Please refer to Schedule 14 of the Northern Football Netball League By-Laws.

5. PLAYER TRANSFERS

5.1 Football

5.1.2 All intra-league transfers will be dealt with in accordance with the AFL National Player Transfer Regulations set out in Schedule 5 of these By Laws.

5.1.3 No more than three (3) junior players per age group will be permitted to be transferred from an affiliated club to another Affiliated Junior Club per season unless both Affiliated Junior Clubs consent to this number being exceeded.

5.2 Netball

- a) Any player wanting to obtain a transfer to another Club during the season must complete a Transfer Form and forward to the Competition Manager for processing.
- b) **The netball transfer period will open on the 1st of October each year and close on the 30th of June the following year.**
- c) A player must have received notification in writing from the League before playing for the new Club.
- d) A transfer may be refused if there are any outstanding fees or equipment.

5.3 Procedure

- a) The exiting club has 6 business days to complete the transfer, or the player will automatically transfer to the new club. The 6 days commence from the time the transfer is lodged with NFNL.
- b) An email will be sent to the new club detailing whether the transfer has been accepted or rejected. If the transfer is refused by the club, then it is up to the player to ensure that the issue is resolved before another transfer application is submitted.
- c) Best and Fairest votes will transfer with the player should they remain in the Northern Football Netball League.
- d) The number of games played in the current season will NOT transfer with the player to the new club, i.e., they will need to qualify for finals with the new club.
- e) If a player wishes to play in the NFNL Summer Competition and their club has not entered a team, they can apply for a transfer to play for another club during the Summer Competition.
- f) If a player wishes to return to their former club for the following Winter Season, they must apply for a transfer prior to the winter season. Transfers open from the 1st of February.

6 COMMUNITY CLUB SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM – SENIOR MEN FOOTBALL

6.1 Player Points System

- a) Player points will be allocated as prescribed in Schedule 25 'AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy'.
- b) The total player points (TPP) cap for season 2023 is:
 - **46 points for Division 1 Senior Men**

- **46 points for Division 2 Senior Men**
 - **46 points for Division 3 Senior Men**
- c) The total player points cap does not apply to Senior Women, Reserve, Under-19 or Junior competitions.
- d) A request for additional TPP points (see NFNL Schedule 25 – AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy, Section 8) must be submitted to the NFNL by no later than March 1st of the year the request is for. Any submissions made after this date will not be assessed.
- e) The submission must outline the reasons for the request in line with the guidelines in NFNL Schedule 25 – AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy, Section 8.
- f) **A club may lodge an appeal, to be heard by the CEO, on the allocation of player points by League operation staff within 7 days of notification.**
- I. **A bond of \$300 must be paid to the office of the CEO at the time of lodgement.**
 - II. **The bond, may be returned upon resolution of the appeal, except in the case where it is determined that the appeal was frivolous or vexatious, in which case the CEO at their discretion may retain whole or part of the bond.**

6.2 Player Payment Policy

6.2.1 Player Payment Policy will be actioned as prescribed in Schedule 28 ‘AFL VICTORIA PLAYER PAYMENTS POLICY’.

6.2.2 The total player payments cap for season 2023 is:

\$110,000 for Division 1 Senior Men

\$88,000 for Division 2 Senior Men

\$66,000 for Division 3 Senior Men

6.3 Player Declarations (Senior Men teams Division 1, 2, 3)

6.3.1 Players are required to use the Northern Football Netball League standard playing declaration if receiving match payments. The declaration can be found as Schedule 29 (AFL Victoria Standard Player Declaration) in the Northern Football Netball League Rules and By-Laws.

6.3.2 If a club elects to sign a player and does not use the AFL Victoria Standard Player Declaration, in the case where there may be a dispute between player and club over contract arrangements the Northern Football Netball League may not be able to help resolve the dispute, as it states in the declaration.

7 MISREPRESENTATIONS

7.1 Any player or club representative who makes any misstatement or misrepresentation in applying for registration or clearance may be dealt with by the Board by way of:

- a) Fine not exceeding \$1000; and/or
- b) Disqualification from the competition; and/or

- c) Loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in whom that player played and awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams

8 FOOTBALL AND NETBALL COMPETITIONS

8.1 Team Numbers – Football & Netball

Senior Men	
Seniors	22 Players (18 on-field, 4 bench)
Reserves	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-19	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)

Senior Women	
Division 1, 2 & 3	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)

Junior Boys	
Under-17	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-16	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-15	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-14	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-13	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-12	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-11	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-10	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-9	24 Players (15 on-field, 9 bench)

Junior Girls	
Under-18	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-16	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-14	24 Players (18 on-field, 6 bench)
Under-12	24 Players (15 on-field, 9 bench)
Under-10	24 Players (15 on-field, 9 bench)

Netball	
All Ages	Players (7 on-field, 5 bench)

- a) There is no limit to the number of players that can be registered at any one time by a junior football team, however players participating in matches are subject to the NFNL junior rules regarding interchange players.
- b) In junior age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and well-being. League expectation is that in these underage matches, all players will play at a minimum half a game of football.
- c) No approval will be given to junior football teams in age groups Under-12 to Under-18 to expand the interchange bench for home and away matches.
- d) If a junior football team in age groups Under-9 to Under-11 wishes to have more than the permitted number of players on the interchange bench during a game, they will need to seek approval of the League.

8.2 Headcount (Football)

- 8.2.1** The captain or acting captain of a team may at any time during a match request that the field umpire count the number of players of the opposing team who are on the playing surface.
- 8.2.2** Where the number of players on the field exceed the permitted number the field umpire will first note the scores at the time of the count and award a free kick to the captain of the opposing team to be taken at the centre circle or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending team. A 50-metre penalty is then added to the position where the free kick was awarded. **The League will determine the final result of the game at a later stage.** The Board will determine at a later date if any other penalty is imposed.
- 8.2.3** Where player numbers are found to be correct and/or the request was without merit the field umpire will award a free kick to the captain of the opposing team to be taken at the centre circle or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending team. A 50-metre penalty is then added to the position where the free kick was awarded. If the field umpire(s) are of the opinion a request was made to delay play or the request lacked merit, the umpire(s) shall report the captain for time wasting

8.3 Ball Requirements

Women		Junior Boys	
Senior	Size 4 Leather	Under-17	Size 5 Leather
Men		Under-16	Size 5 Leather
Senior	Size 5 Leather	Under-15	Size 5 Leather
Reserves	Size 5 Leather	Under-14	Size 4 Leather
Under-19	Size 5 Leather	Under-13	Size 4 Leather
Junior Girls		Under-12	Size 3 Leather
Under-18	Size 4 Leather	Under-11	Size 3 Synthetic
Under-16	Size 4 Leather	Under-10	Size 2 Synthetic
Under-14	Size 4 Synthetic	Under-9	Size 2 Synthetic
Under-12	Size 3 Synthetic		
Under-10	Size 2 Synthetic		

- a) All footballs used must have the NFNL approved sponsor's logo.
- b) In senior matches, two new and approved footballs must be supplied. One must be provided to the umpires, and the spare kept on the home bench for the duration of the game.
- c) In reserve and under-19 matches, two approved footballs in good condition must be supplied. One must be provided to the umpires, and the spare kept on the home bench for the duration of the game.
- d) In non-competitive junior age groups (under-9 and under-10) one football in good condition must be supplied.
- e) In competitive junior age groups (under-11 to under-18) two approved footballs in good condition must be supplied, preferably one of these balls to be new.
- f) For all netball matches, the NFNL will supply a match ball.
- g) In wet weather, prior to the commencement of the match a senior official from both clubs will come together to decide on the number of balls used in that match. In the event of a dispute, the senior official from the home club shall have the right to decide.
- h) Red balls can be substituted for yellow colored balls, but only if agreed to by an away club senior official. The color selected shall be used throughout the match

8.4 Start Times for All Competitions

- a) The starting times for junior and senior matches will be determined by the NFNL office as per fixturing. A guide of overage football start times is as follows:

Senior Men	2:10pm (Saturday)
Reserve	11:55am (Saturday)
Under-19	9:40am (Saturday)
Senior Women	3:00pm (Sunday)

8.5 Length of Quarters

a) Senior Men and Women Competitions

Senior Competitions	
Senior Men	20 Minutes + Time On (All Qtrs.)
Reserves Men	1st & 2nd Qtr. 20 Minutes (No Time On)
	3rd & 4th Qtr. 20 Minutes + Time On
Under-19	1st & 2nd Qtr. 20 Minutes (No Time On)
	3rd & 4th Qtr. 20 Minutes + Time On
Senior Women Division 1 & 2	20 Minutes (No Time On) (All Qtrs.)
Senior Women Division 3	15 Minutes (No Time On) (All Qtrs.)
All Senior Women's Finals	1st & 2nd Qtr. (No Time On)
(Qtr. length as above)	3rd & 4th Qtr. + Time On

b) Junior Competitions

Junior Boys	
Under-17	20 Minutes
Under-16	20 Minutes
Under-15	20 Minutes
Under-14	15 Minutes
Under-13	15 Minutes
Under-12	15 Minutes
Under-11	15 Minutes
Under-10	12 Minutes
Under-9	12 Minutes
Junior Girls	
Under-18	15 Minutes
Under-16	15 Minutes
Under-14	15 Minutes
Under-12	12 Minutes
Under-10	12 Minutes

c) Netball Competitions

Section 1	15 Minutes
All other Sections	9 minutes

8.6 Breaks

Senior Men & Women Competitions	
1/4 Time	5 Minutes
1/2 Time	15 Minutes
3/4 Time	5 Minutes
Junior Competitions	
1/4 Time	5 Minutes
1/2 Time	10 Minutes
3/4 Time	5 Minutes
Netball - Section 1	
1/4 Time	1 Minute
1/2 Time	2 Minutes
3/4 Time	1 Minute
Netball – All Other Sections	
1/4 Time	30 Seconds
1/2 Time	1 Minute
3/4 Time	30 Seconds

8.7 Promotion/Relegation – Senior Men Football

8.7.1 A senior men’s club shall be entitled to participate in the division in which it participated in the previous season with the exception of the club whose team were premiers in Division 2, who shall be promoted to Division 1, and the club whose senior team finished bottom in Division 1, who shall be relegated to Division 2. The same shall apply between Division 2 and Division 3.

8.7.2 The Board may otherwise promote, relegate or refuse to promote any club in the event that:

- a) The club cannot field a full complement of teams for the forthcoming season.
- b) Playing facilities of the club are not of a sufficient standard for the division in which the team is to compete in the next season.
- c) There are any other circumstances which, in the opinion of the Board, require a club to be promoted, relegated or refused promotion, including those clubs that have not met their financial commitments to the NFNL.

8.8 Senior Under-19 and Under-17/Under-18 Junior Football Competitions

8.8.1 The U/19 competition is classified as a Senior U/19 ½ competition and as such, the age shall be extended back to July 1, 2022, thus allowing the player to be 19 ½ on January 1, 2023.

Any player born PRIOR to 1 July 2003 is ineligible for the Under 19.5 competition.

8.8.2 **The U/17 competition is classified as a Junior U/17 ½ competition and as such, the age shall be extended back to July 1, 2021, thus allowing the player to be 17 ½ on January 1, 2022.**

Any player born PRIOR to 1 July 2005 is ineligible for the Under 17.5 competition

8.8.3 ***The U/18 Girls competition is classified as a junior competition and is based on a player’s age as of January 1 in each year. Refer to By Law 4.1.3***

8.8.4 **Once a Junior player (U18 and below) plays 5 or more home and away matches of senior football (Under-19, Reserves, Seniors Men/Women) they are ineligible to play again in any junior competition matches, including junior finals.**

8.9 23rd Player Rule - Football

- a) An eligible under-19 player may play as a 23rd player in the affiliated club’s senior team. The NFNL shall nominate four (4) rounds prior to the commencement of the season where clubs are able to play the 23rd player. This player cannot be the same player in all four games; it must be a different player in each of these games, and the player must be nominated on the team sheet.
- b) If a player has played three (3) or more career games in the senior team, he is unable to be used as the 23rd player in any of the nominated rounds
- c) A player’s points allocation under the AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program (Schedule 25) shall not count towards their team’s points total when that player is playing under the 23rd man rule.

- d) All clubs must inform the NFNL, by 11am on the Friday prior to each round, the name of their 23rd player.

8.10 Joining Clubs

8.10.1 A club joining the League shall be entitled to participate only in the division determined by the Board and then be subject to promotion and relegation.

- a) Entering Teams into Netball Competitions
- b) Clubs may enter as many teams as they wish. All teams will be graded at the start of the season.
- c) No late team entries will be accepted following the grading period.

8.11 Ground Equipment - Football

8.11.1 The home Affiliated Club shall be responsible for due appointment and marking of grounds, the provision of suitable bell or siren and other usual and suitable equipment, such as goal posts pads and medical stretcher. The failing therein shall be reported and be subject to the same procedure and penalties as provided in the case of an Affiliated Club not ready to commence play.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

8.12 Playing Surface - Football

8.12.1 The Playing Surface shall be:

- a) Oval in shape.
- b) Between 150 metres and 185 metres in length.
- c) Between 95 metres and 155 metres in width.

8.12.2 A white line shall be marked on the ground to identify the Playing Surface. This white line shall be drawn in the shape of an arc from the behind post at one end of the Playing Surface to the behind post at the other end of the Playing Surface. The white lines which are drawn are called the Boundary Line.

8.12.3 At a ground that is fully enclosed by a fence, the distance between the marked boundary line and the fence at all points must be at least three (3) metres. Where the ground is not enclosed by a fence a second line must be marked four (4) metres outside the marked boundary line. No spectator is to encroach over this 'second' line during the playing of quarters.

8.12.4 Clubs with unfenced grounds must also ensure that an area behind the goal and behind posts is sectioned off to a distance of five (5) metres.

8.12.5 Once a team has entered the playing arena for the conduct of a match (at their programmed commencement time), they are not permitted to leave the arena other than for the recognised halftime break and on the conclusion of the match (after the final siren has sounded).

8.12.6 The following areas shall be marked on the Playing Surface:

- a) A square, to be called the Centre Square, which shall be located in the centre of the Playing Surface and be 45 metres long by 45 metres wide.
- b) A Centre Circle, Located in the middle of the Centre Square - an inner circle 3m in diameter and an outer circle 10m in diameter. Both circles are divided into two semicircles by drawing a straight line parallel with each goal line.
- c) An Interchange Area, two lines each one metre in length, should be marked 15 metres apart so as to intersect the boundary line at right angles, at the centre wing position on one side of the ground only.
- d) A Goal Square at each end of the Playing Surface.
- e) A Goal Line and Behind Line at each end of the Playing Surface.
- f) 45 metre or 50 metre arcs at each end of the Playing Surface.
- g) Four Water Carriers/Trainers boxes, marked along the fence line at each point of the 50m arcs. All water carriers/extra trainers must be stationed in this marked area.

8.13 Coaches Boxes - Football

- 8.13.1** Coaches boxes or benches must be placed on opposite sides of the interchange area and each box/bench must be at least 35 to 40 metres from the marked interchange area.
- 8.13.2** If coaches boxes are fixed, the interchange area must be marked exactly in the middle between the two boxes.
- 8.13.3** Coaches boxes/benches and the interchange area must be placed on the same side of the ground unless prior approval from the CEO is received.
- 8.13.4** Fines will be imposed when home clubs fail to meet this requirement, or any alternative requirement imposed by the CEO.
- 8.13.5** Coaches' line is to be marked on the surface halfway between the boundary line and the fence/coaches box, over which no official (other than the runner or trainers) is to encroach during the game's playing time.
- 8.13.6** In Junior Football, coaches boxes must be roped off a minimum distance of 3 metres either side of the coaches box on the outside of the ground.
- 8.13.7 Senior/Reserve/Under-19:** Where coach's boxes are situated on the playing surface outside the boundary line, teams are restricted to interchange players, **a maximum of two (2) trainers** and five other club officials, one of which is the runner. Umpires may award a free kick against any support staff who does not comply with this rule.
- 8.13.8 Junior:** Where coach's boxes are situated on the playing surface outside the boundary line, teams are restricted to interchange players and four club officials, one of which is the runner, **plus a maximum of two (2) trainers.**
- 8.13.9** To ensure that there is no unauthorised entry to the coaching box, a line between the boundary fence and boundary line is to be marked 15 meters either side of the

edges of the coaching box as the area for all unauthorised persons to remain clear of.

8.13.10 Umpires shall report any infringement of By-Law 8.12.

8.13.11 Officials are not permitted to smoke within the playing arena.

8.13.12 It is the responsibility of the home club to provide appropriate seating at each Coaches Box area.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

8.14 Admission Prices

8.14.1 The Board shall advise as of March 1 yearly the recommended maximum admission prices for home and away matches (exclusive of any fee for parking or football record). Admission cannot be charged for NFNL home and away matches until 10am.

9 FIXTURES

9.1 Preparation

9.1.1 The League shall be responsible for the organisation of matches in each division by preparing fixtures for each team in each division/section for each season. The League may amend a fixture as required.

9.1.2 Each affiliated club shall have the opportunity to submit, when requested, their preference for any special consideration for the fixturing **of their senior men's teams, for** the following football season by the end of October.

9.2 Home and Away

9.2.1 The League shall conduct a series of 18 (or such number as the Board shall from time to time determine) Home and Away football matches for senior, reserves and under-19s. The League shall conduct a series of a minimum of 14 (or such number as the Board shall from time to time determine) Home and Away football matches for under-18 age groups and below (excluding under-9 and under-10).

9.2.2 For all netball competitions, the League shall determine the number of Home and Away matches to be played.

9.2.3 **The League shall conduct a series of a minimum of 14 (or such number as the Board shall from time to time determine) Home and Away football matches for Senior Women.**

9.3 Failure to Fulfill Engagements

9.3.1 Should any Affiliated Club fail to fulfill its engagement to play in any premiership match, the League may disqualify them from further premiership matches or otherwise deal with such Affiliated Clubs as it thinks fit.

9.3.2 Any Affiliated Club failing to fulfill its engagement shall pay all umpires expenses relative to the said fixture plus an additional Fine for breach as set by the Board.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

9.4 Alterations

- 9.4.1** Clubs desiring to conduct senior, reserves, under-19 or junior grade football matches on a day or time other than that published by the league in the official fixture may do so providing the following requirements have been satisfied:
- a) That written agreement for a change to the fixture has been obtained from an office bearer of the opposing club.
 - b) That all appropriate licences and permissions to conduct the game have been received and copies forwarded to the League office prior to the game.
 - c) **With exception to extraordinary circumstances as determined by the League, the League must receive the fixture change request, with accompanying agreement and reasoning, at least 14 days prior to the proposed game date.**

10 LADDERS

10.1 Point Allocation and Match Ratio Calculations

10.1.1 In the Home and Away matches, four (4) points will be allotted for a win, four (4) points for a team in whose favour a forfeit or walkover is ruled, two (2) points for a draw and zero (0) points for a loss. In competitions involving an uneven number of byes for competing teams, the League shall also prepare a match ratio which reflects the number of wins by each team against the number of matches played by each team.

10.2 Netball and Junior Football Grading Games

10.2.1 Four (4) points shall be awarded for a win during grading games and two (2) points for a draw. No percentage points will be allocated during the grading games in any division that has had regrading of teams. Refer to Schedule 24 – Item 9.2

10.2.2 All clubs shall have the opportunity to submit a request to change competitions at the completion of Round 3. The NFNL Netball Manager or Football Operations Manager (as applicable) will have the final decision regarding grading.

10.3 Weekly Ladders

10.3.1 The League shall prepare a weekly ladder for each appropriate competition and in addition to awarding points for each win, forfeit, walkover, draw or loss, it shall also prepare a percentage table comparing the total points scored by each team against the total points scored against each team. In the event that selection for the finals series is between teams with the same number of points, the team(s) with the highest percentage will be entitled to participate in the finals series ahead of a team(s) with lower percentage. In the event that selection for the finals series is between teams with the same match ratio, the team(s) with the highest percentage will be entitled to participate in the finals series ahead of a team(s) with lower percentage. All decisions of the League in respect of the calculation of the points and percentages shall be final and binding.

10.3.2 In the event that two teams end the season equal on premiership points/match ratio AND percentage in a netball competition, positions will be determined by the greater number of goals scored.

10.4 Scores Used to Calculate

10.4.1 The scores used by the League to calculate the points and percentages for each competition shall be based upon the scores contained in the goal umpire's cards in football, and the official score sheet in netball. Should the goal umpires scores differ, the timekeeping cards will be used as the basis for calculating points and percentages.

10.4.2 In all junior football competitions (U18 Girls and below), the maximum percentage applied will be a total of 60 points score differential.

10.4.3 For all official junior football matches, clubs are responsible to lodge scores by no later than 12:00 noon on the Monday following the match in the manner stipulated by the NFNL.

11 CONDUCT OF MATCHES

11.1 Entering Playing Surface

11.1.1 No trainer, non-playing Affiliated Club official or unauthorised person shall enter the playing area during a match, except:

- a) Trainers and other authorised Affiliated Club Officials during $\frac{1}{4}$ time and $\frac{3}{4}$ time intervals.
- b) Approved trainers and medical practitioners (doctors, physios etc.) as is necessary to attend an injured player or to replace such player.

11.1.2 Where a person enters the Playing Surface when he or she is not permitted to do so, the field/court Umpire shall:

- a) Stop play immediately.
- b) Seek assistance of the person(s) authorised to remove the unauthorised person(s) from the Playing Surface.
- c) Until the situation is rectified, all umpires will be accompanied from the Playing Surface by the Umpire Escorts of the two competing clubs who will remain with them until it is mutually agreed that they may leave.
- d) A decision on whether the game will be resumed will be at the sole discretion of the Field Umpire(s)/Venue Manager based on consideration relating to personal safety and the general wellbeing of all umpires.

11.1.3 Where Runners, Trainers or Water Carriers remain on the ground after they have completed their immediate duty, an umpire shall offer one warning to the offending official(s). If the official(s) reoffend, they shall be ordered off the ground and cannot be replaced. The official will not be permitted to be used again for the remainder of the game in any on-field role.

11.1.4 A free kick is to be paid against a team if its runner or any other on-field official is positioned within the 45 or 50 metre arcs when a player is kicking in after a behind has been scored. In the event the free kick is against the team bringing the ball back into play, the opposing

team shall take the free kick from the top of the 45 or 50 metre arcs in that half of the ground. If the free kick is against the defending team, the player bringing the ball back into play shall advance to the top of the 45 or 50 metre arcs in that half of the ground. An umpire may show discretion only in the event a trainer is in the area to attend to an injured player.

11.2 Match Day Players and Officials

- 11.2.1** Prior to the commencement of all football matches (practice, home and away, and finals), each team of a Club shall prepare a “team list” of all players, coaches, runners, water carriers and trainers, who are actively involved with the team on that day. This list must contain an accurate statement of the players and their numbers allotted for that day. No two players are permitted to play in the same team wearing the same number. The team list shall be completed on the official form provided by the League.
- 11.2.2** At or prior to half time of each football match, team managers must hand to the field umpire of the match the signed copy of their team lists.
- 11.2.3** Prior to the commencement of all netball matches (practice, home and away, and finals), all players from either side are to be listed on the score sheet with complete given and surname (matching the name used to register with the NFNL). Any player who takes the court without having been named on the score sheet is to be removed immediately and cannot participate in the remainder of the match. The score sheet must also indicate the position played by each player in each quarter, the goals they score and the match score.
- 11.2.4** Netball Umpire must sign off on the team sheet before the end of the second quarter to ensure no more names are added.
- 11.2.5** At the conclusion of the match, to indicate their satisfaction that the information on the official score sheet is correct, it is to be signed by the captains of the two competing teams, the officiating umpires and the scorers/timekeepers. A team who wishes to protest a scoring issue must not sign off on the final score sheet and must lodge the protest in writing to the NFNL Netball Manager within 24 hours of the match being played.
- 11.2.6** For Officials requirements and responsibilities, refer to Schedule 8.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.3 Lodgment of Scores

- 11.3.1** For all official senior, reserves and under-19 games, all home fixture clubs are required to lodge on-line with the league the final scores, best players and goal kickers by no later than 5:30pm on the day of the match
- 11.3.2** For all official senior, reserves and under 19 matches (including women’s), live scoring must be implemented by the home club.
- 11.3.3** For all official junior games in boys competitions U13 and above, and in girls competitions U14 and above, all clubs are required to lodge on-line with the league their final scores, best players and goal kickers by no later than 12 noon on the day following the match. In U11 & U12 competitions the finals scores only must be lodged online.
- 11.3.4** The NFNL Netball Manager will be responsible for the entering of all netball results onto the League Website, including team players, scores and goal scorers (where provided correctly).

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.4 Interchange Procedure of Injured Players

11.4.1 If a football player is taken from the field on a stretcher or carried from the field, the player shall not resume playing for a period of 20 minutes (excluding intervals between quarters) from the time when the player left the arena. After the 20-minute period has expired, the player may be interchanged in provided the player is able, having due regard to his or her health and safety, to resume playing in the match.

11.5 Substitution – Netball

11.5.1 Substitutions may be made during play (as well as during stoppages and intervals). There is no limit to the number that can be made, and more than one substitution may be made at any time. Play will not be held for a substitution to be made.

11.5.2 For a substitution during play:

- a) The substitute stands wholly inside the team’s substitution box to indicate a substitution is to be made.
- b) Before leaving the substitution box, the substitute tags (with hand) the player leaving the court.
- c) Players must observe the offside rule as they enter/leave the court and must not interfere with the umpire’s movement during the substitution.
- d) Sanction: Free pass where the ball was when the interference or offside entry/exit occurred.
- e) The player leaving the court returns to the team bench.

11.5.3 Team scorer is required to complete the substitution form when a shooter changes position

11.5.4 Substitution form is to be kept with the team sheet at the score bench.

11.6 Officials Required for Junior Football Matches

Coach (Accredited)	All Age Groups
Assistant Coach (Optional)	All Age Groups
Team Manager	All Age Groups
Trainer (Accredited)	All Age Groups
Runner (Optional)	Not Permitted Under-9 & Under-10
Water Carrier (Optional)	Not Permitted Under-9 & Under-10
Timekeeper	All Age Groups
Boundary Umpire	Not Permitted Under-9 & Under-10
Goal Umpire	All Age Groups
Umpire Escort	All Age Groups

11.6.1 In age groups under-12 and below, the age of the Runner must be 15 years or older. In all other age groups, the Runner must be 18 years or older.

11.6.2 For Officials requirements and responsibilities, refer to Schedule 8.

11.7 Centre Square

11.7.1 Coaches and/or player huddles are not permitted to enter the centre square while the umpires are there for the duration of the game, including quarter time, half-time, three-quarter time breaks (unless as a player moving to their playing position).

11.7.2 Only the umpire squad, umpire escorts and those instructed by the umpires are permitted inside the centre square during quarter time or three-quarter time breaks.

11.8 Conduct of Netball Matches

11.8.1 A late player may take the court after a goal has been scored by either team and after notifying an umpire.

11.8.2 Any team failing to start on time shall forfeit a goal per minute to the non-offending team until 10 minutes has elapsed. A forfeit shall then be declared, providing the non-offending team has at least 5 or more players present.

11.8.3 A player may only play in one game per night.

11.8.4 A player is eligible to play in a competition if they are listed on the Club/Team entry for that competition.

11.8.5 If a club enters teams into multiple Sections, players may move between those teams. Once a player has played five (5) matches in a Section, they may not play further games for any lower Section during the Home and Away season or during finals.

11.8.6 In the event that there is more than one team from the same Club in the same Section, players may switch between teams until the player takes the court for their fifth (5) game with a particular team. Once this occurs, the player must remain with that team for the remainder of the season.

11.8.7 The umpire shall toss a coin with the presence of both team captains in order to determine starting ends prior to the start of each game.

11.8.8 There is no injury time – a match may be stopped by the umpires in extenuating circumstances to ensure a safe playing area is maintained.

11.8.9 Mercy Rule for Juniors: Once there is a 15 goal or more difference, the centre pass shall be taken by the losing side for as long as the margin stays at 15 goals or higher.

11.8.10 Netball Trainer (not mandatory)

11.8.11 If a Team has a trainer (primary carer) they must be registered and hold appropriate qualifications and wear a trainer's vest, only this person is permitted on the court to attend to an injured player.

11.9 Forfeit of Matches

a) In competitive male junior age groups (under-11 to under-17) and all senior men competitions (Under 19's, reserves and seniors in all divisions), a minimum of 14 players from each team is needed for the match.

b) In competitive female junior age groups (under-10 to under-12), a minimum of 11 players from each team is needed for the match. In competitive female age groups (U14-

U18) and Senior Womens a minimum of 14 players from each team is needed for the match.

- c) In netball competitions, a minimum of 5 players from each team is needed for the match (if the above conditions are not met the game is forfeited).
- d) If a match is forfeited due to lack of numbers, the teams may agree to conduct an unofficial practice match and the field umpires may be requested to assist if necessary.
- e) If any club forfeits a scheduled match, in either Senior or Junior competition, penalties may be imposed as below:
 - I. Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20
 - II. In addition to any financial penalty, the Board may, at its discretion withhold match points for the relevant competing team.
 - III. Junior clubs may receive a fine at the discretion of the CEO, if they forfeit a game in the first four rounds.

11.9.1 If a Senior Men’s Football club has a shortage of players, a Senior team is not permitted to forfeit a match whilst their Reserves team plays in the same round.

11.9.2 Ladder calculation: In the event of a game being forfeited, the defaulting team shall not include the game in club playing records. The team against whom the forfeiting team was to play shall be awarded match points and shall be entitled to include the game in the records of its players. Scores will be calculated by taking the average winning score and average losing score from matches played in that division during that round and be awarded accordingly.

11.10 Withdrawal of Team

11.10.1 In the event that a Club wishes to withdraw any team from any football or netball competitions for the remainder of the season, they must make such notification in writing to the CEO two (2) days prior to the next scheduled match. A notice must be provided two (2) days prior to scheduled match; otherwise, the match shall be considered forfeited.

11.10.2 Clubs may be fined if a team is removed from a competition for the remainder of the season. The fine will be applied at the discretion of the NFNL Board.

11.11 Evening Up Rule (Junior Football Competitions Only)

11.11.1 Where one team has between 14 and 18 players (mixed/boys competitions) or between 11 and 18 (girls competitions), as per Schedule 32 – Junior Rules Matrices, and the second team has more players than the first team, both teams shall field the same number of players, therefore an equal number of players shall take the field.

11.11.2 For age groups under-9 to under-12, clubs must loan or accept the number of players required to even up the teams.

11.11.3 Team Managers, particularly from the team that requires the evening-up rule to apply, must ensure that the process is organised as early as possible and prior to the teams taking the field.

- 11.11.4** If a club does not have jumpers available of a suitable and appropriate size for the age group to facilitate the loan of players, there is no requirement to even-up playing numbers on the field.
- 11.11.5** For age groups under-13 to under-18, if players are not offered to the team with less than 18 players, then playing numbers must be reduced so that both teams field the same number of players. If players are offered, but not accepted, then the team with the greater number of players is not required to reduce playing numbers.
- 11.11.6** Where an imbalance is caused during a match due to injury, playing numbers shall be evened-up for the remainder of the game. A player should join the game from the interchange bench, if available. If not, a player from the team with the greater number of players must be removed from the field.
- 11.11.7** Late Arrivals: Should a player arrive late, that player may take the field at any time provided the following procedure is adhered to:
- a) The Team Manager shall inform the officials of the other team.
 - b) The addition to the playing numbers on the field can only be made providing the numbers on the field remain equal for both teams.
- 11.11.8** Where a head count is conducted and uneven playing numbers are evident, the scores at the time of the head count shall be noted and the matter referred to the League for determination of the result of the match.
- 11.11.9** Loaning of players: When players are loaned, the Team Manager of both teams shall note on the Team Sheet the number of players loaned. Players may be loaned on a quarter-by-quarter rotating basis or for the whole match as appropriate.
- 11.11.10** Any dispute regarding By-Law 11.11 will be referred to the NFNL who will determine penalties, if any, to be applied. Penalties may include loss of premiership points and/or score by the offending team and/or the Club of the offending team shall be penalised in accordance with Schedule 20.
- 11.11.11** The Evening-Up Rule shall not be applied in finals.
- 11.11.12** Where a player is ordered off the field by the field umpire and there is no replacement available (as per schedule 21) there is no requirement to even-up the playing numbers on the field.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.12 Mercy Rule (Junior Football Competitions only)

- 11.12.1** When a team is 60 points or more in front of the opposing team, the mercy rule will come into play. This means that the trailing team will take a kick from their attacking centre half forward position (man on the mark stands on the centre square) after every goal, irrespective of which team kicks the goal. If the margin drops to under 60 points at any stage, the mercy rule will no longer apply and normal playing rules will take effect.
- 11.12.2** All players (both teams) must remain in their positions and on-batters/wingers must stay behind the centre circle away from the kicker. The ball must be kicked forward by the “attacking” player

- 11.12.3** The mercy rule will apply for both home and away and finals matches.
- 11.12.4** The beginning of all quarters shall commence via a ball up regardless of whether the mercy rule is in effect. If a behind is scored normal rules apply (i.e. kick in from Fullback).

11.13 Non-Completion of Matches

- 11.13.1** If any match has been started and cannot be completed or recommenced within a 30-minute period, for reasons beyond the control of the affiliated Senior or affiliated Junior Club or Clubs, or where a match has been cancelled at the direction of the officiating umpire, the following procedures shall apply:
- 11.13.2** If a game is concluded prior to half time and the match cannot proceed within the scheduled time, the match will be declared a draw. Each team will be awarded two (2) premiership points and the scores of the teams at the time the match was interrupted would be used to calculate the percentages.
- 11.13.3** If half a game has been completed and is unable to proceed within the scheduled time for the match, the scores of the teams at the time the match was interrupted shall be deemed to be final scores of the match and shall be used to calculate percentages. The team with the highest score will be declared the winner and awarded four premiership points.
- 11.13.4** In either of the above circumstances, goals scored during the time played will still be allocated to the respective players. Best & Fairest votes will be given if play had commenced.
- 11.13.5** If a match has been started and cannot be completed within the time scheduled or recommenced within a 30-minute period for reasons within the control of any club, such club will be dealt with by the Board at its absolute discretion in any way it sees fit.
- 11.13.6** **Taking into account schedule 15 'Match Delay Policy' if a senior 2:10pm match can conclude by 5:00pm, the match must be completed.**
- 11.13.7** **In all cases, the umpire and/or club representatives, must contact League operation staff or the League CEO to seek direction on how to complete the match.**
- 11.13.8** **League operations staff and or the League CEO have total discretion over extending the 30-minute recommencement period of the match as they see fit for any Junior or Senior match. League operation staff will endeavour to work with the aim of achieving a match result. Refer By Law 11.13.3- half a game completed & Schedule 15 Match Delay Policy**

11.14 Match Cancellation – Adverse Weather Conditions (All Junior competitions Under 11 and up, Senior men and women competitions)

Note: Refer to NFNL By Law 36.5 for Under 9 and Under 10 junior football procedures

- 11.14.1** If the air temperature, as reported on the Weatherzone website (<http://www.weatherzone.com.au/>), is below 5 degrees Celsius or in excess of 35 degrees Celsius on a training night, an umpire training session shall be cancelled.
- 11.14.2** If the air temperature in the suburb of the host venue, as reported on the Weatherzone website (<http://www.weatherzone.com.au/>), is below 0 degrees Celsius, or in excess of

- 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official Northern Football Netball League match at any grade the match shall be cancelled.
- 11.14.3** In the event that any game is cancelled in accordance with these By-Laws (“Match Cancellation”) a match ratio shall be applied to the ladder for that division in that grade.
 - 11.14.4** In the event that a senior, reserves or under-19 game has commenced, and in the opinion of both club captains the weather conditions have become too hazardous, the game will be abandoned, and the provisions of By-Law 11.13 shall be applied.
 - 11.14.5** In the event that any junior grade (under-9 to under-18) game has commenced, and in the opinion of both club coaches the weather conditions have become too hazardous, the game will be abandoned, and the provisions of By-Law 11.13 shall be applied.
 - 11.14.6** If two or more games are cancelled or abandoned due to adverse weather in the same grade and division, the round will be declared void and no premiership points, percentages or best and fairest votes will be awarded or applied for that round
 - 11.14.7** If the Board, or its representative, during the review of a match, is not convinced that match should have been cancelled or abandoned or the reason for the cancellation or abandonment was not in good faith, it reserves the right to award points or any penalty as it sees fit.
- 11.15 Match Suspension – (All Junior competitions Under 11 and up, Senior men and women competitions - Refer to Schedule 15 Match Delay Policy)**
- Refer to NFNL By Law 36.5 for Under 9 and Under 10 junior football procedures.**
- 11.15.1** In the event of severe inclement weather immediately prior to commencement or during a game, such as lightning, very heavy rain, hailstorm or fog, the game can be suspended:
 - 11.15.2** In all senior grade games, upon the agreement of the competing captains in consultation with the field umpire(s); and
 - 11.15.3** In all junior grade games upon agreement of the competing coaches.
 - 11.15.4** A match may be suspended for such time as the competing captains/coaches/umpires, in consultation with the League, consider appropriate, but not for a time exceeding 30 minutes **unless directed by the League after consultation.**
 - 11.15.5** Special Arrangements: Once it becomes apparent that a match will not finish prior to the scheduled start time of a following match, the length of the breaks and/or quarters may be reduced at the discretion of the League. The breaks/and or quarters must be shortened into equivalent time periods and be consistent throughout the remainder of the match. See Schedule 15 ‘Match Delay Policy’ for procedure **(Not applicable to netball).**
 - 11.15.6** **Taking into account schedule 15 ‘Match Delay Policy’ if a Senior Football 2:10pm match can conclude by 5:00pm, the match must be completed.**
 - 11.15.7** **In all cases, the umpire and/or club representatives, must contact League operation staff or the League CEO to seek direction on how to complete the match.**

11.15.8 League operations staff and or the League CEO have total discretion over extending the 30-minute recommencement period of the match as they see fit for any Junior or Senior match. League operation staff will endeavour to work with the aim of achieving a match result.

11.16 Ground Inspections - Football

11.16.1 All 'home' clubs are required to complete a ground inspection sheet on each Tuesday night prior to a home game. As a result of this inspection, should any risk issues including, but not limited to, the items listed in the ground inspection sheet, be identified, the club must notify the CEO of these issues prior to 10:00 am on the following Wednesday immediately prior to the scheduled match.

11.16.2 In the event that an away club has a concern in regard to a ground, they are to make notification to the NFNL by 12:00 pm on the Wednesday prior to the scheduled round.

11.16.3 The League retains the right to take whatever action it deems necessary to address any issue arising from the ground inspection report, or concerns raised, including but not limited to, moving the game to another venue, cancelling the game or re-scheduling the game to another day or time.

11.16.4 On the day of any official match arranged by the League, all players and officials must make a full inspection of the ground on which the match will be played prior to the match commencing. A representative from each club shall complete the official Match Day Checklist via the JLT document (Schedule 7) or mobile app and a representative of each club shall sign the checklist which is to be retained by the home club for seven years.

11.16.5 Prior to any player or official signing the team sheet for a match (or ticking dependent on league processes for that season), the home club must make all players aware of the following waiver:

"By signing the club's team sheet prior to the commencement of or during the course of a game, each player and official DOES HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE that:

He/she has inspected the playing surface of the venue where the game is to be played and all fixtures and fittings thereon including but not limited to change rooms and toilet facilities, goal and point posts (and padding thereon), sprinklers, fencing, score and line markings; and

Such playing surface, change rooms and toilet facilities and all other fixtures and fittings referred to above are in such a condition that it is safe and reasonable to allow the game to proceed; and

He/she will release the Northern Football Netball League Inc, its servants or agents and voluntary workers, his/her club, its servants or agents and voluntary workers from all liability for any injury, loss or damage suffered by the player as a result of the use by the player of the venue, its facilities and fixtures."

- a) Immediately prior to signing the team sheet, an official of the club is required to notify the player or official of the presence of the above waiver on the team sheet.
- b) If any player or official is of the opinion that the venue is unsafe for play for whatever reason, he/she should not sign the team sheet.
- c) Any player or official, who does not sign the official team sheet, is ineligible to take part in the match for which the team sheet is required.

- d) If on the day of any junior grade (under-9 to under-18) match, the umpire and both team coaches deem that the playing surface is unsafe for play to commence or continue, the game may be called off and the result shall be determined by the League.
- e) In the event a game has commenced, the provisions of By-Law 11.13 shall be applied.

11.17 Conduct of Behavior at Matches

- 11.17.1** Affiliated Clubs shall be held responsible for the conduct of acceptable social behavior prior to, during and after the matches (includes intervals in the match).
- 11.17.2** A registered official of an Affiliated Club disputing a decision of an umpire or using abusive language or threatening or insulting language before, during or after a match shall be dealt with as the Board deems fit.

12. FINALS

12.1 Senior, Reserve and Under-19 Finals Eligibility

- 12.1.1** Seniors: Players must play at least three (3) matches (Senior, Reserve, and/or Under-19) with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Senior final's series.
- 12.1.2** Reserves: Players must play at least three (3) Reserve matches with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Reserves finals series.
- 12.1.3** Under-19: Players must play at least three (3) Under-19 matches with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Under-19 finals series.
- 12.1.4** Where a club fields multiple teams (Senior/Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, a player must have played a combination of at least three (3) games for the competing teams to be eligible.
- 12.1.5** Any player playing more than 50% of a Club's Senior home and away matches is ineligible to play with that Club's Reserves or Under-19 teams in the finals series, with exception where a Club fields multiple teams (Senior/Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, as per By-Law 12.1.4.
- 12.1.6** Any player playing more than 50% of a Club's Reserve home and away matches is ineligible to play with that Club's Under-19 team in the finals series, with exception where a Club fields multiple teams (Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, as per By-Law 12.1.4.
- 12.1.7** Any player drafted by an AFL club, placed on an AFL supplementary or rookie list or included on an official VFL list can, provided he has qualified under the rules, return to play with the League in the finals in the Senior and Reserve grade only.
- 12.1.8** Any player that plays twelve (12) or more **Home and Away matches** in the State league Under-18/Under-19 competitions may, provided he has qualified under the rules, return to play with the League in the finals of the Senior or Reserve grades only.
- 12.1.9** Where a club has two Under-19 teams in separate divisions and a player has played for both teams during the home and away season, the player is not permitted to play finals

in the lower division once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches in the higher division.

- 12.1.10** Where a Club has two Under-19 teams in the same division, each team must be registered separately and they will take part in the competition on the same terms and conditions as if they were entered as separate clubs. Movement of players between teams in these circumstances can only be made after League approval is obtained. A list of players of teams concerned must be forwarded to the League office before the first round of the home and away season. Players must play five (5) games for the team playing in the finals and can be rotated between teams no more than three (3) times during the home and away season.
- 12.1.11** Where a player plays in more than one grade on the same day or the same weekend during the home and away season, the higher grade match shall be counted towards the finals eligibility only.
- 12.1.12** A player may only play in one NFNL Final per weekend.
- 12.1.13** The hierarchical order for grades is Senior, Reserve, Under-19 and Junior.
- 12.1.14** If a player plays an NFNL match and a State league Under-18 or VFL match on the same weekend, the NFNL match does not count towards finals eligibility.
- 12.1.15** **A player who qualifies for finals in multiple age groups is not permitted to play finals in the younger age group once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches (this includes grading matches for that team) in the higher age group. This includes players who have played (5) or more home and away matches in senior football (Under-19, Reserves, Seniors) being ineligible to play finals with a junior team.**
- 12.1.16** **Any VFL listed player must play three (3) Senior games to qualify for Senior finals. NFNL Reserves/Under-19 games do not count towards their finals eligibility. In exceptional circumstances, a club may apply to the League for an exemption.**
- 12.2 Senior Women's Home and Away/Finals Eligibility**
- 12.2.1** Players must play at least three (3) matches with their Affiliated Club/respective team in the home and away matches to qualify to play in a finals series.
- 12.2.2** Where a club fields multiple teams (i.e., Division One/Division Two/Division Three) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, a player must play a combination of at least three (3) games for the competing teams to be eligible.
- 12.2.3** Any player who has played more than 50% of games in the VFL Women's team home and away matches is ineligible to play in that Club's NFNL team in the finals series.
- 12.2.4** Any player playing more than 50% of a Club's higher division home and away matches is ineligible to play with that Club's lower division team in the finals series, with exception where a Club fields multiple teams (i.e., Division One/Division Two) in a finals series on the same day or weekend.
- 12.2.5** Where a player plays in more than one grade on the same day or the same weekend during the home and away season, the higher grade match shall be counted towards the finals eligibility only.

- 12.2.6** A player may only play in one NFNL Womens Final per weekend.
- 12.2.7** Any player drafted by an AFLW club, placed on an AFLW supplementary or rookie list in the current season is not permitted to play in any NFNL Competitions.
- 12.2.8** At the completion of a VFLW teams season, VFLW players are not permitted to play with their NFNL community club if they have played more than 50% of the VFL Women's home and away matches.
- 12.2.9** **Where a Senior Womens team has a genuine shortage of eligible players for Home and Away games, the club may seek approval from the League for the utilisation of VFLW listed players.**
- a) **For the purpose of By-Law 12.2.9 a team has a "genuine shortage" when they have less than 20 players.**
 - b) **In exceptional circumstances, variations to this rule may apply upon application to the League.**
 - c) **Teams utilising players approved under By-Law 12.2.9 may play a Home and Away game with eligible and approved players on the Team Sheet to a maximum of 20 players.**
- 12.2.10** Any player included on an official VFLW list can, provided she has qualified under the rules, return to play with the League in the Senior Women's finals only.
- 12.2.11** Where a player plays in more than one grade on the same day or the same weekend during the home and away season, **the higher match as per the hierarchical order shall be counted towards the finals eligibility only.**

The hierarchical order is Senior Women, Reserves (Clubs with 2 women's teams in separate divisions), Juniors (U18 Girls)

12.3 Junior Finals Eligibility

- 12.3.1** Players may only play finals for one (1) junior **or senior** team per season. The team a player plays their first final match with will remain their 'finals team' for the remainder of the current season. Exemptions may be granted where a team has a genuine shortage (By-Law 12.3.12).
- 12.3.2** Players must play at least three (3) matches with their Affiliated Junior Club team in the age group and division in which he/she competes in the home and away matches which includes grading matches for that team to qualify to play in the finals series. (Exceptions on eligibility By Law 12.3.3, 12.3.4, 12.3.5, 12.3.6, 12.3.7)
- 12.3.3** **Where a player has played 3 or more matches in a season in multiple teams (including Seniors, Reserves, and Under-19), the player is only eligible to play finals for the team they have played the most home and away games with. In the case of the player having played equal games in multiple teams, the League, at their discretion, will determine the player's finals team for that junior or senior season.**
- 12.3.4** **Once a Junior player plays 5 or more home and away matches of senior football (Under-19, Reserves, Senior Men/Women) they are ineligible to play again in any junior competition matches, including junior finals.**

- 12.3.5** Once a Junior player has played 5 or more home and away matches in a higher junior age group, they are ineligible to play in a lower age group for the remainder of the season, including finals.
- 12.3.6** Once a Junior player has played 5 or more home and away matches in a higher division, they are ineligible to play in a lower division team for the remainder of the season, including finals.
- 12.3.7** For clubs with 2 teams in the same division, once a player has played 5 or more home and away games with a team, they are ineligible to again play for the club's other team in that same division for the remainder of the season, including finals.
- 12.3.8** Where a player plays in more than one grade on the same day or the same weekend during the home and away season, **the higher match as per the hierarchical order shall be counted towards the finals eligibility only.** The hierarchical order is Senior Men/Women, Reserves, Under 19s, Juniors age group, competitive junior division colours blue, red, green and silver.
- 12.3.9** In junior finals a number of players greater than 24 may be utilised, provided that each player is eligible to compete in a finals series in accordance with By-Laws 12.3. Clubs must submit an application to the Football Operations Manager fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the junior finals for approval to apply this rule.
- 12.3.10** Where a team has a genuine shortage of eligible players for finals games, the club may seek approval from the League for the utilisation of players from other teams for each finals match played.
- 12.3.11** For the purpose of By-Law 12.3.10, a team has a "genuine shortage" for finals games when they have less than 20 players.
- 12.3.12** An application under By-Law 12.3.10 & 12.3.11 must include at least six (6) players. League approval will only be given for players from a team in a lower division. If the club does not have a team in a lower division, it may nominate players from a lower age group. In exceptional circumstances, variations to this rule may apply upon application to the League.
- 12.3.13** Players approved under By-Law 12.3.11 are eligible to play finals with the team who sought approval. Finals teams utilising players approved under By-Law 12.3.11 may play a finals game with eligible and approved players on the Team Sheet to a maximum on the Team Sheet of 20 players.
- 12.3.14** Where a player has played **ten (10) or more Home and Away matches** in the State League Under-18/Under-19 competitions in a season they are not eligible to play Junior finals (Under-17 boys or Under-18 girls or younger) in the NFNL in that season.
- 12.3.15** Where a female player is listed at a VFL club they are not permitted to play in any NFNL junior competition.
- 12.4** **Netball Finals Eligibility**
- 12.4.1** Players must play at least three (3) matches with their affiliated club in a particular team during the home and away season (this includes grading matches for that team) in order to qualify for finals with that team.

- 12.4.2** Players may only play in one team during the finals series per season. A player who qualifies for finals in multiple sections is not permitted to play finals in the lower section once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches (this includes grading matches for that team) in the higher section.
- 12.4.3** Where a team has a genuine shortage of eligible players for finals games, the club may seek approval from the League for the utilisation of players from other teams for each finals match played.
- 12.4.4** For the purpose of By-Law 12.4.3, a team has a “genuine shortage” for finals games when they have less than 7 players.
- 12.4.5** An application under By-Law 12.4.3 must include at least three (3) players. League approval will only be given for players from a team in a lower section. In exceptional circumstances variations to this rule may apply upon application to the League.
- 12.4.6** Players approved under By-Law 12.4.3 are eligible to play finals with the team who sought approval. Finals teams utilising players approved under By-Law 12.4.3 may play a finals game with eligible and approved players on the Team Sheet to a maximum on the Team Sheet of 7 players.

12.5 Team Participation

- 12.5.1** Clubs shall be advised in writing by the NFNL of those teams that have qualified to play finals football on the completion of the home and away matches.
- 12.5.2** All Senior football finals matches shall be played on enclosed grounds to be determined by the Board and where a charge for admittance can be made.
- 12.5.3** Participating Affiliated Clubs shall be supplied with 38 free tickets (one team), 72 tickets (two teams), and 102 tickets (three teams) for entry to finals match day venue of their competing teams. It is the duty of the Affiliated Club to distribute its own tickets. No refunds will be made on un-presented tickets.

12.6 Finals Uniforms/Change Rooms - Football

- 12.6.1** For the first week of finals the team placed highest on the ladder prior to the commencement of the final’s series shall wear their registered guernsey and home coloured shorts unless this is varied by the Board or its appointee.
- 12.6.2** For the first week of finals the team placed highest on the ladder prior to the commencement of the final’s series shall use the home team rooms unless this is varied by the Board or its appointee.
- 12.6.3** After the first week of finals the first team to enter the subsequent finals shall wear the home coloured shorts and use the home team rooms unless this is varied by the Board or its appointee.

12.7 Timekeepers

- 12.7.1 Senior Football Finals** - Clubs are to supply timekeepers for all finals except Grand Finals. The NFNL will supply independent timekeepers for all senior Grand Finals.

12.7.2 Junior Football Finals - Both Clubs to supply a timekeeper for all finals. At the discretion of the Football Operations Manager, time on may be added in a junior game in the case of a serious injury where a player has to be stretchered from the ground or an ambulance has been called to remove a player from the field.

12.7.3 Netball Finals - For netball grand finals, the League will manage the appointment of timekeepers/scorers. For all other netball finals, clubs are required to supply a timekeeper/scorer.

12.8 Drawn Matches in Football Finals

12.8.1 In the event of a drawn game in any football Qualifying Final, Elimination Final, First Semi Final, Second Semi Final, Preliminary Final or Grand Final – the following conditions will apply:

- a) Goal umpires confirm scores.
- b) Field umpires will re-commence the game (teams will not change ends) for a duration of five (5) minutes, plus time on for Senior, Reserve and Under-19 matches. The siren will sound, and the teams will change ends and a further five (5) minutes shall be played, plus time on for Senior, Reserves and Under-19 matches.
- c) If the game is still drawn after the second 5-minute period (plus time on for Senior, Reserve and Under-19 matches) the siren will sound, the goal umpires will confirm scores and both teams remain in the positions they were in.
- d) The match will recommence from a ball up in the centre of the ground. The time keepers will allow play to continue until the next score when they will sound the siren. The team that scores first is the winner.
- e) No time on shall be added to the extra time periods of junior finals matches.
- f) At no stage during extra time are coaches permitted to address their players.
- g) **Player interchange may occur at any time during the extra time period.**

12.8.2 In the event of a drawn netball finals game, the following conditions will apply:

- a) There shall be a one (1) minute time allowance to enable teams to change ends and scores to be verified on the score sheet.
- b) 2 x 5-minute halves shall be played.
- c) Positional changes and substitutions may occur during either of these breaks.
- d) Should scores still be level at the end of extra time, play will continue until a team leads by two (2) goals.

12.9 The Board

The Board shall exercise full control in relation to the arrangement of the times and places for the playing of all finals series matches.

12.10 Entrance Fees

- 12.10.1** The Board shall be responsible for the fixing and collection of all entrance fees at all finals series matches. The Board may delegate its authority for the collection of entrance fees from time to time.

13. UNIFORMS

13.1 Football Uniforms

- 13.1.1** The colours of the League shall be a combination of blue, yellow, white, and silver. Each club must register its colours and uniforms (guernsey, shorts and socks) at the beginning of the season, and they shall not be changed without the approval of the Board.
- 13.1.2** All club uniforms (guernseys, shorts and socks) worn in NFNL matches must be supplied by NFNL licensed suppliers and ordered through the NFNL.
- 13.1.3** The teams of each club shall wear their registered club guernseys as approved by the Board.
- 13.1.4** If two clubs compete in the same division and those clubs' colors are the same or similar and are drawn to compete against one another, the away club must change its jumper, upon instruction from the CEO.
- 13.1.5** In the event of teams whose colours are the same or similar meeting in finals, the club finishing higher on the ladder at the completion of the season will retain its jumper.
- 13.1.6** All teams shall wear their registered club coloured shorts, at all home games. All teams visiting as the away team are required to wear white shorts (with exception to under-9 and under-10 competitions) unless permission to use another colour for away shorts is given by the NFNL. All shorts shall be supplied by manufacturers as approved by the Board from time to time.
- 13.1.7** Approval of jumper designs will not be given over the phone; a sample of the jumper must be provided to the Northern Football Netball League before approval is given.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

13.2 Netball Uniforms

- 13.2.1** Each Club must register its uniform prior to the commencement of the season.
- 13.2.2** The League must approve all the uniforms, colours and designs.
- 13.2.3** Clubs must notify the League of any changes to their uniform.
- 13.2.4** All uniforms must have the NFNL logo on the right-hand breast.
- 13.2.5** All uniforms are to be purchased through a League approved supplier with all orders to be submitted through the office (no club is to directly place orders with a supplier).
- 13.2.6** All players are to be in correct uniform for matches unless prior approval has been given by the NFNL Netball Manager on an agreed interim uniform.
- 13.2.7** No bikini pants, see through pants, slacks, or track suit pants are permitted.

- 13.2.8** The NFNL Netball Manager or Venue Manager may, at their discretion, deem a player's or official's uniform inappropriate and request action to be taken to ensure the uniform is deemed appropriate for future matches.
- 13.2.9** If there are religious or medical reasons why a player should wear particular head coverings or other items of clothing, the club or team must notify the NFNL Netball Manager in writing BEFORE the season commences, or as soon as possible. It must state the reason for the non-standard uniform. Only the player/s named in the correspondence will be permitted to be "out of uniform" during match times. Any item to be worn must not interfere with play or be a hindrance or danger to other players on the court.
- 13.2.10** Nails must be short and smooth or taped using the approved material tape. Satisfactory taping method is one piece of tape over the top/end of the nail and one piece around the nail.
- 13.2.11** No item of jewellery except a wedding ring and or a medical alert bracelet may be worn and shall be taped.
- 13.2.12** All piercings must be covered with tape or approved product – Tuff Talons prior to player taking the court.
- 13.2.13** Players are not permitted to wear gloves unless they have first been granted permission to wear the gloves by the league (medical reasons) The umpire will sight written approval from the league. Players are permitted to wear only NFNL branded gloves, which can be purchased from the League or Netball Venue.
- 13.2.14** If a player has their hair braided, and it swings free from their head when the head is moved, it may cause harm to another player if struck by the braid. As such, players are not permitted on the field with free braids in their hair. Braids must be secure and not swing free. Players with plaited ponytails must either roll the plait into a bun or remove the plait and play with a loose ponytail.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

13.3 Compression Garments

- 13.3.1** For competitive age groups (under-11 to open age), compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body must not extend beyond a player's football jumper and/or shorts.
- 13.3.2** For uncompetitive age groups (under-9 and under-10), compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body may be full length and extend beyond a player's jumper and/or shorts.
- 13.3.3** For all age groups, compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body must be completely beige in colour.
- 13.3.4** All other garment types are not permitted to be worn in addition to a player's uniform unless prior approval is granted by the League.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

13.4 Player Boots, Jewellery, Religious Garments and Protective Equipment

13.4.1 Interpretation: For the purpose of By-Law 13.4, protective equipment includes but is not limited to:

- a) Hard shell helmets.
- a) Knee braces.
- b) Shoulder pads.
- c) Back supports.
- d) Arm guards; and
- e) Any other item designated as such by the NFNL.

13.4.2 A Player shall not wear during a match:

- a) Any form of jewellery; the taping of piercings is prohibited unless prior approval is given by the league.
- b) Protective equipment (other than protective equipment approved by the NFNL) unless the field umpire is satisfied that the item does not constitute a danger or increase the risk of injury to other players competing in the match.
- c) Protective equipment which has been approved by the NFNL, if the field umpire is satisfied that such equipment has, during the match, become dangerous or increased the risk of injury to other players.
- d) Metal stops (inc. tips)/studs/plates/cleats.
- e) Gloves: players are not permitted to wear gloves unless they have first been granted permission to wear the gloves by the league (medical reasons) and the league has also inspected the gloves. The umpire will sight written approval from the league and also inspect the gloves prior to the commencement of the game. All players in Under-9 and Under-10 are permitted to wear NFNL branded gloves (subject to an approved license provider producing them).
- f) At any time before or during a match, a field umpire may inspect a players boots or hands or any protective equipment that a player intends to wear or use during a match.
- g) Braids: If a player (male or female) has their hair braided, and it swings free from their head when the head is moved, it may cause harm to another player if struck by the braid. As such, players are not permitted on the field with free braids in their hair. Braids must be secure and not swing free. Players with plaited ponytails must either roll the plait into a bun or remove the plait and play with a loose ponytail.

13.4.3 **The NFNL recognize that where religious or cultural beliefs conflict with your standard dress code, modifications may be required. This may include, but is not restricted to the following:**

- a) **The wearing of traditional Muslim head scarf. Headscarves can be tied but not fastened with any pins or sharp objects.**

b) The wearing of compression garments (long) to cover the legs.

c) The wearing of long sleeve top to cover arms (netball).

13.5 Logos

13.5.1 The teams of each club shall wear their registered club coloured guernseys/dresses, bearing the League logo, at all games.

13.5.2 Clubs may apply to the CEO for approval to incorporate sponsors' logos on their uniforms as per Schedule 22.

13.5.3 No logos will be approved for addition to the back of playing shorts.

13.5.4 The teams of each club shall wear their registered club coloured shorts, bearing the League logo, at all games.

13.5.5 Application may be made by clubs for logos, outside of the above listed dimensions, which may be approved at the absolute discretion of the CEO.

13.5.6 The teams of each football club shall wear their registered club coloured socks, bearing the League logo, at all games.

13.5.7 No player will be permitted to compete in any official League football match without a number on the back of the playing guernsey. No two players in the one team shall have the same number. Each number shall be a whole number between one (1) and ninety-nine (99).

13.5.8 Except with the prior permission of the League, clubs fielding senior and reserves teams are to have one set of guernseys for both teams numbered in whole numbers greater than zero (0) with a maximum of two digits.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

14. TEAM LISTS

14.1 For all football competitions a Team Sheet shall

- a) List the full names and jumper numbers of the Players in the team.
- b) Identify the captain.
- c) List the names of the coach, runner and any other official participating in the match.
- d) Team sheet provided to umpires must replicate the online team sheet.
- e) Clubs will be required to submit a finals team list to the NFNL to be placed on the NFNL Website during the final's series (Seniors, Reserves, Under-19s and Women's only).

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15. UMPIRES

15.1 General

- 15.1.1** At the completion of the match, the team managers will lodge with the field umpire(s) the goal umpires' score cards (where club appointed goal umpires have officiated), the timekeeper's card and any Player Send off Sheet.
- 15.1.2** All clubs must lodge at the League offices a "Report on Field Umpire" form as supplied by the League for all official matches played by senior and junior grades of that club by no later than 5:00pm on the Tuesday following the weekend in which the match was played.
- 15.1.3** The League shall appoint the Field Umpire(s) for each home and away and finals match.
- 15.1.4** The League may appoint Goal and/or Boundary Umpires for a home and away match. Where no Goal and/or Boundary Umpires are appointed, each club shall supply such umpires. Where only one Goal and/or Boundary Umpire is appointed, the home club shall supply such additional umpire(s) as required. The League shall appoint the Goal and Boundary Umpires for finals matches.
- 15.1.5** Field, Goal and Boundary umpire fees shall be set annually based on the Northern Football Netball League's recommendation.
- 15.1.6** In the event of a match not taking place, other than where the Adverse Weather Committee has cancelled a match or round or in the case of a forfeit, umpires shall receive half of their usual fees.
- 15.1.7** In the event of a match not taking place because of a forfeit, the Affiliated Club giving the forfeit must pay all of the umpire fees, unless the umpires receive notice that the match will not take place at least twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled commencement time for the match.
- 15.1.8** Where a person is involved in an incident which may constitute a Reportable Offence, an umpire appointed by the League shall report that person and the matter will be referred to the Tribunal for hearing and determination. The reporting umpire is to be prepared to attend the subsequent Tribunal hearing.
- 15.1.9** Umpires shall wear the uniforms prescribed by the League. Umpires shall be on the playing field five (5) minutes before the scheduled starting time of each match. The Secretary of an Affiliated Club shall notify the CEO of any infringement of this By-Law.
- 15.1.10** The field umpire shall report to the NFNL any incident involving players, officials, or spectators outside of the playing time that they consider requires further investigation by the NFNL.
- 15.1.11** Umpires shall be required to attend meetings when notified by the Umpires' Appointment Board. Any umpire not present at roll call may be dealt with by the Umpires' Appointment Board as it deems fit.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.2 Goal and Boundary Umpires

- 15.2.1** The goal umpires shall record the scores on the cards provided by the League and check the scores on the cards between quarters and at the conclusion of the match. Any discrepancy between the scores shall be rectified as soon as possible in consultation with the field umpire. The cards shall be properly completed and signed by the goal umpires. If the goal umpires disagree on the score, but the timekeeper's score is the same as one of the goal umpires' scores, this score shall be recognized as the official score of the match. Failing which, any disputes shall be referred for hearing and determination by the Board.
- 15.2.2** Club goal umpires shall be attired in a white NFNL goal umpire bib and have a minimum of 2 goal flags. Club boundary umpires shall as a minimum be attired in a white NFNL Boundary Umpire shirt. Other uniform requirements can be found in Schedule 8
- 15.2.3** In all matches the home club shall be responsible for a scoreboard, which shall be in operation throughout the whole game. The scoreboard must be clearly visible to the goal umpires, who shall check its accuracy at the conclusion of each quarter. Umpires shall report to the CEO, via the Umpires' Report, any occasion on which an Affiliated Club fails to operate a scoreboard.
- 15.2.4** The League appointed field umpire(s) have the power to veto a decision made by a club goal or boundary umpire and make an alternative decision if the field umpire(s) is of the opinion the club umpire has made an incorrect decision. The League appointed field umpire's decision shall be final.
- 15.2.5** Club boundary umpires are not permitted to pay a free kick for a breach of Australian Rules Football Law 11.3.4 (b): "No player (other than the 4 initial players) or team official shall enter the centre square from the time the field umpire commences his or her approach to the centre circle to bounce the football until the football touches the ground, in the act of bouncing, or leaves the field umpire's hand in the act of being thrown up".
- 15.2.6** Where a player and/or official is involved in an incident which may constitute a reportable offence, only the umpires appointed by the League shall report that person and the matter will be referred to the Tribunal for hearing and determination.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.3 Official Powers

- 15.3.1** All football umpires appointed by the Umpires Board shall have the power to report players, clubs and officials in accordance with the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" adopted by the League from time to time, and for any breach of these By-Laws.
- 15.3.2** All football umpires have the power to over-rule a clear incorrect decision made by a club goal or boundary umpire in any junior or senior game.
- 15.3.3** Where a League appointed umpire is verbally abused by officials, interchange players or supporters in the proximity of the coaches' box, the following shall apply:
- a) In the first such instance of abuse one of the field umpires shall warn the officials located within the coaches' box area.

- b) If the abuse occurs again, the field umpire(s) shall stop the match and award a free kick to the opposing team.

15.4 Netball Umpires

- 15.4.1** The Northern Football Netball League will appoint an Umpire Administrator to oversee the recruitment, appointments, development and badging of all umpires throughout the season.
- 15.4.2** All umpires must have a current VNA membership. Umpires officiating must be A, B or C Grade accredited or approved trainees as part of the development team.
- 15.4.3** Umpires shall not be changed during a game, except for in exceptional circumstances.
- 15.4.4** Umpires must supply their own whistle.
- 15.4.5** Umpires are to be dressed appropriately in umpire's attire: League approved shirt, League approved navy blue shorts or skirt (purchased from the League), and correct sport shoes.
- 15.4.6** Finals Umpires shall be appointed by the League. Any conduct deemed to be unbecoming or bringing the game into disrepute will be reportable by one or both officiating umpires. Any report is to be recorded and submitted to Northern Football Netball League by 10am Monday post-match.

15.5 Penalty for Assault

- 15.5.1** In the event of a player or club official of any Affiliated Club being found guilty on a charge of assaulting any umpire appointed to officiate by the Umpires Board, or NFNL/Club official, the club to which he/they belong, or offending party, may be dealt with by the Board by way of:
- a) A Fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
 - b) Disqualification from the competition; and/or
 - c) Loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams.
- 15.5.2** In the event of a player or official's family member being found guilty on a charge of assaulting any umpire appointed to officiate by the Umpires Board, or NFNL/Club official, the club to which they are affiliated with may be dealt with by the Board by way of:
- a) Fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
 - b) Disqualification of Club from the competition; and/or
 - c) Loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams; and/or
 - d) De-registration of participating family member from all competition.

16. REPORTABLE OFFENCES

16.1 Order-off Laws – Football Seniors and Juniors

16.1.1 The NFNL adopts the AFL Laws of Australian Football in relation to the order off rules. Schedule 21 details the circumstances and application of the Order off Laws.

16.1.2 Players may be replaced if sent off the field.

16.1.3 If a player receives a red card whilst playing in a lower grade, they are then ineligible to play in a higher grade on the same day or same weekend.

16.1.4 If a junior player is playing a senior, reserves or under-19 match on a Saturday and receives a red card, this makes him ineligible to play in his/her age group on Sunday.

16.2 Order Off Laws – Netball

16.2.1 Schedule 21 details the circumstances and application of the Order off Laws for Netball.

16.3 Report Procedure

16.3.1 At the time of making any such report of any player or club official, the League appointed field umpire (including emergency umpire) and/or goal and boundary umpires shall take down the numbers of the player(s) reported and the victim (if any) of the incident.

16.3.2 The reporting umpire shall ensure all details of the incident are contained in the authorised report sheet. It is the responsibility of the reporting umpire to forward the report sheet to the CEO.

16.3.3 Both team managers shall attend the umpire's rooms, five (5) minutes after the conclusion of the game to obtain the "all clear". At this time the umpire(s) will advise the team managers of any report(s) that have been laid during the match. The field umpire(s) will then provide both team managers a copy of the report(s). Failure by a club official to obtain all clear will result in a Fine for breach in accordance with Schedule 20.

16.3.4 If the player/official has been reported for one of the following offences under the Australian Football League's "Laws of Australian Football", the case will automatically be heard by the Independent Tribunal:

- a) Intentionally making contact with, or striking, an umpire.
- b) Attempting to make contact with, or strike, an umpire.
- c) Intentionally or carelessly kicking another person.
- d) Intentionally or carelessly kneeling another person.
- e) Intentionally or carelessly stomping on another person.
- f) Attempting to kick another person.
- g) Spitting at or on an umpire.
- h) Spitting at or on another person.

- 16.3.5** For all other offences, if offered by the officiating umpire, the player has the choice of accepting the prescribed set-penalties specified on the Player/Official Report Sheet. Reported Officials are not able to accept a set penalty and must attend a tribunal hearing.
- 16.3.6** Where the player has the option of choosing to accept the prescribed penalty, the club delegates, after receiving a copy of the report, will then have fifteen (15) minutes to consult with the reported member in which to decide whether the player/club will accept the prescribed penalty or wish the report to be heard by the Tribunal. At the end of the fifteen (15) minutes, both delegates will again attend the umpire's room. If the player/club accepts the prescribed penalty and the reporting umpire concurs, the delegates representing the reported player and the reporting umpire(s) will then sign the report form where indicated. If the player/club can't decide within the 15 minutes allocated after the match, the club then has until 10:00am on the Monday following the game to advise the NFNL office of their decision. It is the responsibility of the club to notify the league by 10:00am Monday. Failure to do so and the set penalty shall apply.
- 16.3.7** Should any party not apply for the prescribed penalty, the umpire will note the dissenting party on the report sheet.
- 16.3.8** The CEO or his appointee may refer any report to the Independent Tribunal.
- 16.3.9** Where a player does not accept a prescribed penalty, the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal. The Tribunal has the unfettered discretion to impose a penalty in excess of the prescribed penalty.
- 16.3.10** The CEO or his appointee may refer any report to the Independent Tribunal.
- 16.3.11** Where a player/club is offered and accepts a prescribed penalty the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that grade in which the club plays, unless notification is received by the club that the prescribed penalty has not been accepted and the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal.
- 16.3.12** Where a player/official is reported and subsequently suspended by the Independent Tribunal, the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that grade in which the player was reported and the club competes
- 16.3.13** For the purposes of netball suspensions incurred during a winter season which are not served in entirety by the end of the same winter season, summer competition matches will not count toward matches served under the suspension. The player will serve the suspension in the following winter competition and may be permitted to play in the summer competition upon application to the League. However, a player suspended during the summer competition will serve their suspension during the summer competition, with any games not yet served at the end of the summer competition to then be served in the following winter competition.
- 16.3.14** An individual suspended in any competition under the jurisdiction of the NFNL will be ineligible to participate in all competitions of any code under the jurisdiction of the NFNL for the duration of the suspension. This includes both netball and football competitions.

- 16.3.15** Clubs which play clubs from other competitions who supply umpires must, in the event of their player or official being reported by those umpires, appear before that reporting umpire's League Independent Investigation Tribunal for investigation.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

16.4 Tribunal Hearings

- 16.4.1** All Tribunal hearings shall proceed in accordance with the Independent Tribunal Procedure (Schedule 2) to these By-Laws.
- 16.4.2** In the event of a breach of protocol in Tribunal proceedings, any stakeholder may lodge an appeal with the CEO in writing detailing the protocol failure. If such protocol is proven to have been breached the Board may review the findings of the Tribunal and make determination on whether or not the original findings are upheld or dismissed.
- 16.4.3** A person found guilty at tribunal will receive a minimum of a one match suspension. Suspended sentences or reprimands will not be given.

16.5 Suspended Coaches

- 16.5.1** **Where a coach is under suspension from the NFNL they:**
- a) **May attend as a spectator only.**
 - b) **Cannot enter the playing field (including the coaches box) at any time (including the ¼ and ¾ time breaks).**
 - c) **Cannot enter the team rooms at any point prior, during or after the game.**
 - d) **Cannot actively be involved in coaching the team in any way while the game is being played. e.g., From beside the coaches' box behind the fence, using a radio device to communicate with the bench from another part of the ground, addressing the players from outside the playing field or through a third person.**
- 16.5.2** **Where a playing coach is suspended for a reportable offence that has occurred as a player, the club may seek an exemption from the League for the playing coach to officiate whilst under suspension. The League may rule at its discretion that they may continue to coach in a normal capacity whilst under suspension.**

17. MELEE RULE

- 17.1** **Definition** - An incident involving six (6) or more players and/or officials who are pushing, grappling, wrestling or otherwise struggling with one another and which, in the opinion of the umpire(s) is likely to bring the game of Australian Football into disrepute or prejudice the interests or reputation of the NFNL or the competitions conducted by the NFNL.
- 17.2** **Volunteer Involvement** - Under no circumstances are volunteers (coaches, runners, trainers, water carriers, club umpires etc.) permitted to approach or become involved in a melee involving players from either competing team. This includes attempting to separate or restrain players who are involved in the melee

17.3 Incident and Penalty Procedure

- 17.3.1** In the event of a melee taking place and following three (3) continued instructions from the umpire(s) to break up the melee, if the melee continues, the umpire(s) shall report the incident to the league. The field umpire(s) appointed by the NFNL shall record on the umpires match report at the conclusion of the game and incident where the melee has taken place. This will include the quarter and the position on the field where the melee took place.
- 17.3.2** Such form shall be signed by the umpire(s) and a copy of the umpire match report containing notification of the incident handed to each club as per normal match day procedure.
- 17.3.3** Fines shall be charged to the clubs account.
- 17.3.4** All melees occurring during NFNL finals games will be referred directly to the Board for consideration with regard to penalty.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

18. MATCH REVIEW PANEL – FOOTBALL

- 18.1** A nominated representative of an NFNL club (e.g., President, Secretary, Senior Coach or Football Manager, or any other person so delegated with the authority by the club) or NFNL CEO, Football Operations Manager or Umpire/s can request that the NFNL Match Review Panel look into a specific incident/s that did not result in an official report by the officiating Umpire(s).
- 18.1.1** Requests to look at specific incidents need to pinpoint exactly when and where the incident occurred.
- 18.1.2** The NFNL will then approach our match footage provider (with information provided) and ask them to see if any footage of the alleged incident is available. If there is footage of the incident, a grab shall be sent to the Operations Manager of the League via email.
- 18.1.3** The footage will then be forwarded on to the Match Review Panel who shall have a set amount of time to review the footage and determine whether or not the player shall be referred to the Independent Tribunal to answer a charge. NFNL rules shall be used when referring the incident to the tribunal and a specific charge shall be nominated when the club is informed about the report.
- 18.1.4** The MRP may offer a set penalty, at their discretion.
- 18.1.5** It is important to note that the Match Review Panel shall take no part in deciding the outcome of the case if it is referred to the Tribunal. This decision is a determination of the Independent Tribunal.
- 18.1.6** Match Review Panel requests must be received by 10:00am on the Tuesday following the round of matches. The following deadlines will apply following the determination of the Match Review Panel:

- 18.1.7** Clubs will have 24 hours should they wish to request an investigation should the Match Review Panel determine there is no case to answer.
- 18.1.8** Match Review Panel requests referred to the Tribunal will be heard by the Tribunal in the same week, on either Tuesday or Wednesday night as prescribed in the NFNL By-Laws.
- 18.1.9** Only footage captured through the official NFNL match filming program is eligible for submission to the Match Review Panel. Incidents captured through other sources may be assessed by the Match Review Panel (at the CEO's discretion) or can be tendered through the NFNL Investigation Procedure.
- 18.1.10** The MRP may implement a yellow card, at their discretion.
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19. INVESTIGATIONS

- 19.1** Any issue may be referred to an Investigation Officer who shall investigate any matter which has been deemed relevant by the CEO to whether or not a person may have committed a reportable incident.
- 19.2** A request for an investigation of an incident, for which footage is available, may be referred to the MRP at the discretion of the CEO.
- 19.3** Requests for investigation must be received by 4:00pm on the Tuesday following the incident.
- 19.4** In the case of a club registered player or club official lodging an investigation request, a bond of \$300.00 is to be paid to the office of the CEO at the time of lodgment.
- a) The bond, minus a 20% administration fee, may be returned upon resolution of the investigation in accordance with the Rules and By-Laws, except in the case where it is determined that the investigation was frivolous or vexatious, in which case the CEO at his/her absolute discretion may retain whole or part of the bond.
 - b) If an investigation is unable to reach an outcome (i.e., Suspension of player at a Tribunal Hearing), the club lodging the investigation is liable for the costs of the investigator.
- 19.5** For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this By-Law, upon request by the Investigation Officer, any person shall:
- a) Fully cooperate with the Investigation Officer.
 - b) Truthfully answer any questions asked by the Investigation Officer.
 - c) Provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the Investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Investigation Officer.
- 19.6** A person who fails to observe and comply with By-Law 19.5 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Board in its absolute discretion. The Investigation Officer must promptly notify the CEO of the failure of any person to observe and comply with By-Law 19.5 above.

- 19.7** The Investigation Officer shall, as soon as practicable but in any event no later than ten (10) working days after the Investigation commenced, compile a report of the Investigation, including transcripts of all interviews, and submit the report to the CEO. The CEO shall then determine the appropriate action based on the evidence provided.
- 19.8** For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this By-Law, upon request by the Grievance Committee, any person shall:
- a) Fully cooperate with the Grievance Committee.
 - b) Truthfully answer any questions asked by the Grievance Committee.
 - c) Provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Grievance Committee.
- 19.9** A person who fails to observe and comply with By-Law 19.8 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Board in its absolute discretion. The Grievance Committee must promptly notify the CEO of the failure of any person to observe and comply with By-Law 19.8 above.
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20. GRIEVANCE AND PROTESTS

20.1 General

- 20.1.1** In accordance with the Rules, a registered player, Club, League registered umpire, member of the Umpires Board, a member of the NFNL Board, an employee of the NFNL, or at the direction of the Board, the CEO, may raise a grievance concerning the result of a match or any act, matter or thing involving any club, registered player or official.

20.2 Lodgment of Grievance and Protests

- 20.2.1** The grievance must be lodged with the office of the NFNL by no later than 5:00 pm on Monday following the date when the incident or grievance is alleged to have occurred. A lodgment of Grievance should include all relevant documents and/or a detailed description of the event and circumstances within the knowledge of the person lodging the grievance that gives rise to the grievance.
- 20.2.2** If the grievance is against the CEO of the NFNL, the grievance may be lodged directly to the Board (or board member) of the NFNL.

20.3 Grievance Procedures

- 20.3.1** The CEO is to review the grievance and may deal with it immediately, if requested, or conduct a preliminary investigation and within five (5) working days determine that the grievance is to be dismissed or referred to either of:
- a) An Investigation Officer.
 - b) A Tribunal of the NFNL.
 - c) A Grievance Committee.

d) A Conciliation Officer.

e) The Board.

20.3.2 The CEO is to maintain a register detailing the nature of the grievance. This is to be tabled at all Board meetings.

20.3.3 In the event of a grievance being made against an employee of the NFNL or Board Member, the CEO is to advise the Chairman of the Board of such grievance as soon as possible.

20.3.4 In the event of a grievance being passed to the Board for resolution, the Board may appoint at a minimum a panel of three Board Members to deal with the grievance.

20.4 Bond

20.4.1 In the case of a club registered player or club official lodging a grievance, a bond of \$300.00 is to be paid to the office of the CEO at the time of lodgment. In the case of a grievance being lodged by a League registered umpire or member of the Umpires Board, the lodgment of a bond is not required. The bond may be returned upon resolution of the grievance in accordance with the Rules and By-Laws except in the case where it is determined that the grievance was frivolous or vexatious in which case the CEO at his/her absolute discretion may retain whole or part of the bond.

20.4.2 An administration fee, in accordance with Schedule 20, will be withheld from the bond. In the case of a grievance being referred to the Independent Tribunal which results in a player/official being found guilty, the club to which the guilty party belongs will also be charged the administration fee.

20.4.3 If the office of the NFNL receives more than one grievance on substantially the same matter, the CEO at his discretion may treat all subsequent grievances in the same manner as the initial grievance and shall inform the body to which the matters were referred of the new grievance.

20.5 Grievance Committee

20.5.1 Once a grievance has been referred by the CEO to the Grievance Committee, it shall be dealt with by the Grievance Committee in accordance with this By-Law ("Grievance").

20.5.2 The CEO shall take all reasonable steps to bring the grievance to the attention of the player, club and/or official, the subject of the grievance ("the Respondent") within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the grievance.

20.5.3 No later than ten (10) working days after referral from the CEO, the Grievance Committee shall convene a hearing into the grievance. The CEO will take all reasonable steps to notify the parties involved of the time, date and location of the meeting of the Grievance Committee.

20.5.4 The operation of the Grievance Committee shall be in accordance with the Grievance Committee Procedures (Schedule 3).

20.5.5 After the consideration of the evidence put before it, the Grievance Committee shall give a decision to resolve the grievance.

20.5.6 The Grievance Committee may:

- a) Impose a Fine for breach on the Respondent up to a maximum of \$1000 for each matter complained of.
- b) Suspend the Respondent from participating in any match or event organised by the League.
- c) Recommend to the Board that match points awarded to the Respondent in a relevant match, if a club, be deducted.
- d) Recommend to the Board that the Respondent be suspended or expelled by the Board from the League in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

20.6 Conciliation

20.6.1 The CEO may refer any Grievance made pursuant to By-Law 20.5 for conciliation to be dealt with in accordance with this By-Law.

20.6.2 Where a dispute has arisen between a Club and one of its members, and the Club has resolved to refer the matter to the League for resolution, the parties may agree upon a mediator to mediate the dispute, or otherwise permit the League to appoint a mediator to assist the parties in resolving the dispute.

20.6.3 If the dispute is between any member club, registered player or official and another member club, registered player or official or between any member club, registered player or official and the League, the parties may nominate a preferred mediator or permit the League in its absolute and unfettered discretion to appoint a mediator.

20.6.4 In the event of any reportable offence taking place during the progress of any official match or on the day of the match, the field umpire(s) in all sections and all official League goal and boundary and emergency umpires shall have the power to report players or officials in respect of the offence to the Northern Football Netball League Tribunal, including:

- a) Any alleged breach of these By-Laws relating to the conduct of matches in the League; or
- b) Any alleged breach of the Policies and Codes of Conduct published in the Schedule to the By-Laws by the Board from time to time.

20.6.5 The disputing parties and the appointed mediator shall read carefully the League's Conciliation Agreement (a copy is annexed to these By-Laws – Schedule 4) and sign the Conciliation Agreement. The conduct of the conciliation shall proceed in accordance with the Conciliation Agreement.

20.6.6 The outcome of the conciliation shall be reported by the mediator to the CEO, including as to whether the parties resolve the dispute, but not the terms of any settlement between the parties, except with the permission of the parties. Should conciliation not be successful in resolving the dispute, the parties shall observe the terms of the Conciliation Agreement, and any further direction given by the CEO in accordance with By-Law 20.5 (save as to any further conciliation of the dispute).

21. CONDUCT UNBECOMING, PREJUDICIAL OR LIKELY TO BRING THE GAME INTO DISREPUTE

21.1 Where the Board is of the opinion that an Affiliated Club or any Official, player or Member thereof, or Member or any other person has contravened the Statement of Purposes, Rules or By-Laws of the League or has been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or likely to prejudice the reputation, or interests of the League, or to bring the game of Australian Football/Netball into disrepute, the Board may deal with in any such manner as the Board in their absolute discretion thinks fit and without limiting their power, they may:

- a) appoint any person to enquire into any matter.
- b) conduct their own enquiry into any matter.
- c) refer any matter to the Tribunal; or
- d) impose any penalty that it deems fit including but not limited to, imposing a monetary penalty or bond, a suspension, a disqualification or providing for the loss of or forfeiture of or Premiership points or other privileges, benefits or entitlements.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

22. NFNL LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND RECOGNITION OF SERVICES AWARD

22.1 Life Membership

22.1.1 An individual may be nominated for NFNL Life Membership if they have:

- a) Given years continuous service to the NFNL/DVFL in a volunteer or honorarium position (generally these would most likely be positions with the NFNL media, Board, tribunal, development etc.); or
- b) Played 300 Senior **Men's** games within the NFNL/DVFL (player).
- c) **Played 235 Senior Womens games within the NFNL/DVFL (player).**
- d) **Umpired 300 Senior Men's or Womens Games within the NFNL/DVFL.**

22.1.2 All life members would have the right to address the forum at a General Meeting or Special General Meeting, but not have a voting right.

22.2 Meritorious Service Award

The NFNL would make a suitable presentation to any member of any stakeholder club/body, who is already a life member of their affiliated club/body, who provides fifteen (15) years of continuous service to their affiliated clubs/bodies and every five (5) years after that. This would be reliant on affiliated club/bodies to notify the NFNL of current members who would be in a position to receive such recognition.

22.3 300 Club

This is a club established to recognize all players/umpires who have played or umpired 300 open age club games in the Senior and Reserves within the NFNL. (This would also include games players/umpired within the former DVFL.)

23. PLAYER AWARDS

23.1 League Best and Fairest

23.1.1 Official League field umpires shall lodge one set of best and fairest votes (3, 2, and 1) in official League Home and Away matches in under-13, under-14, under-15, under-16, under-17, under-18, under-19, reserve and senior men and women football matches, as well as all netball matches. Where two League field umpires are officiating in a match, one set of best and fairest votes will be lodged on behalf of both umpires.

23.1.2 Any player who has been found guilty of a reportable offence and suspended in a Home and Away match will be ineligible to win a best and fairest award. This includes suspensions incurred from excessive sendoff cards in a season.

23.1.3 **Best and Fairest vote tallies in an age group or division where there may have been games forfeited by teams, at the discretion of the league may be counted on equal number of games polled by a player if deemed required to determine overall winner placings.**

23.2 Coaches Player of the Year

23.2.1 Coaches Player of the Year will only be awarded in Senior Men's and Senior Women's football competitions.

23.2.2 Coaches are required to provide 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 votes for the five best players on the ground. Votes should be given regardless to which team a player represents, allowing a coach to cast votes for opposition players as well as their own.

23.2.3 Votes are to be submitted by 5pm on the Monday following each game via an online form, provided by the NFNL.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

24. PRESENTATION NIGHT TICKETS

24.1 Each year the NFNL shall conduct a Best and Fairest presentation for Junior and Senior competitions and Netball competitions.

24.2 All Senior Clubs shall be allotted ten (10) tickets for the League Senior Presentation Night.

24.3 All Womens teams shall be allotted four (4) tickets for the League Senior Presentation Night.

24.4 All Netball Clubs shall be allotted two (2) tickets for the League Senior Presentation Night.

24.5 Junior clubs shall pay a levy determined by the league for junior presentation night.

- 24.6** Tickets shall be billed at the prices prevailing from time to time.
- 24.7** Clubs may purchase additional tickets to presentation nights directly from the NFNL.
- 24.8** Board discretion on ticket allocation for Clubs who only have under-12s and below.
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25. ALCOHOL

- 25.1** No alcohol is to be consumed or sold at any football venue (including within licensed clubrooms) where junior matches are being staged until at least 30 minutes after the conclusion of the final match of the day.
- 25.2** No alcohol is to be brought into, consumed or sold at any NFNL netball venue at any time.
- 25.3** Clubs shall be responsible for the conduct of its members, supporters and followers.
- 25.4** Any beverage (alcohol or otherwise) that is sold in a glass receptacle cannot be consumed outside of a club's social rooms during all NFNL matches.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

26. UNAUTHORISED MEDIA STATEMENTS

- 26.1** No club shall permit any of its officers or members to make any statement to the media (including radio, television and all newspapers) in connection with any policies or acts of the Board without the prior approval of the Board.
- 26.2** Without the prior approval of the NFNL, a club shall be liable to:
- a) A Fine for breach at the discretion of the League; and/or
 - b) Suspension from the League; and/or
 - c) Expulsion from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.
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27. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

- 27.1** Information Technology is rapidly advancing and as it does it provides various forums such as "Big Footy" and "Facebook" in which anyone can record comments anonymously. The NFNL recognises that it cannot prohibit people from using social media forums; however, such forums when referencing the NFNL Community or individuals within the NFNL Community, should be used as per the guidelines outlined in the NFNL Media Policy at Schedule 18. Where comments are considered to be prejudice to the values of the NFNL, action may be taken in accordance with the NFNL Social Media Policy (Schedule 23).
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28. FINE FOR BREACHES

- 28.1** The value of all penalties shall be determined by the Board from time to time and may be adjusted by the Board at any time.

29. FINE FOR BREACHES – APPEALS

29.1 No appeals against a Fine shall be heard until the initial Fine has been paid.

30. POLICIES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

30.1 All players and officials at all League matches shall be subject to the Policies and Codes of Conduct as issued by the Board from time to time (refer Schedules). Any amendments shall not be effective unless first ratified by the Board.

31. CLUB ANNUAL REPORTS

- 31.1** All Affiliated Clubs (Senior and Junior) must forward to the CEO, no later than December 15 each year, one copy of their Annual Report.
- 31.2** All Affiliated Clubs shall forward to the CEO, no later than December 15, a copy of the Affiliated Club's Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, as supplied to the Incorporations Board, and a list of all club office bearers for the coming season.
- 31.3** Any change of office bearer is to be notified to the NFNL within 21 days of that change.
- 31.4** The Finance committee of the NFNL shall review all Affiliated Club Account information to determine Club viability to meet their NFNL financial obligations. Any Club that the Finance committee believes may not meet their obligations shall be requested to meet with the NFNL Board to address their situation.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

32. MEETINGS

32.1 Compulsory

The Board may convene compulsory meeting(s) for Club officials as stipulated by the Board from time to time. These meetings shall include, but are not limited to: Club Administrator Courses, Senior and Junior Coaches Forums, Junior Meetings and Finals Participants Meetings.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

32.2 Representatives

- 32.2.1** Two representatives of clubs must attend all Annual and Special Meetings of the League. Such representatives shall be the President and/or Secretary and/or one other member of the club.
- 32.2.2** Any club calling a meeting of other clubs other than in accordance with the Rules of the League without the prior authority of the Board shall be liable to:
- a) A fine in accordance with Schedule 20; and/or

- b) Suspension from the League; and/or
- c) Be expelled from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.

33. CLUB OFFICE BEARERS

33.1 Within seven (7) days of a club AGM, all senior and junior affiliated clubs must lodge with the League (on the form provided from time to time) a list of all club office bearers.

Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

34. MISCELLANEOUS

34.1 Club Playing Outside League

Affiliated Clubs shall not participate in a match involving any football club that is not affiliated with the League outside the fixture arranged by the League during the Football Season. Affiliated Clubs desiring to participate in matches involving a football club that is not affiliated with the League at times outside the Football Season shall first notify the CEO of their intention and shall not participate in such a match without the prior written approval of the League.

34.2 Communication to the League

All letters and written communications to the League shall be directed to the CEO. Communication is to be on Club letterhead. In the event that the communication is email, it is to be sent by an official of the Affiliated Club. Letters not received on Club letterhead or received on email from a Club official shall not be acted on.

35. SPECIAL RULES FOR JUNIOR FEMALE FOOTBALL (UNDER-10 TO UNDER-18)

35.1 Female Junior Rules Matrix

35.1.1 For overview of all Junior Female rules please see Schedule 32.

35.2 Permitted Numbers at Centre Bounces

35.2.1 Under-14 girls competitions and below can have a maximum of three (3) players from each team in the centre square when the football is bounced or thrown up to start a quarter or recommence play after a goal has been scored.

35.3 Match Rules

35.3.1 Under-14 girls competitions and below, no full possession in the ruck – players must tap the ball.

35.3.2 Team Numbers on Match Day

35.3.3 In under-14 girls competitions and below, a back and forward pocket and a midfielder are to be removed from the usual eighteen (18) player structure to accommodate fifteen (15) players.

35.3.4 The evening up rule (By-Law 11.10) applies to all junior female competitions.

36. SPECIAL RULES FOR UNDER-9/UNDER-10 FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS

36.1 **Junior Rules Matrix** - For overview of all Junior rules please see Schedule 32.

36.2 General

36.2.1 NFNL under-9 to under-10 competitions are to be played under the rules of the AFL Junior Football Match Guide.

36.2.2 **Wristbands are to be worn by midfield zone players to help distinguish player zones.**

36.3 Umpires

36.3.1 The NFNL will supply umpires for this competition. If for some reason the umpire does not show up to the game, the home team is to supply the umpire. This person must be the registered umpire for the team.

36.4 Coaches – Under 9 and Under 10 Football

36.4.1 Teams are permitted to have one (1) coach on the ground to assist with the education of footballers in the under-9 and under-10 competitions.

36.5 Adverse Weather – Under 9 and Under 10 Football

36.5.1 The two coaches should come together to decide whether the conditions are inappropriate for the under-9 to under-10 football to be played.

37. SPECIAL RULES FOR JUNIOR NETBALL

37.1 PLAYER AGE GROUP

37.1.1 **A Participant’s age group is determined by their age as of 31st December of that year.**

37.1.2 **The League may run competitions in the following age groups each season dependent on participation:**

Open Section (15 years and over).
17 & Under
15 & Under
13 & Under
11 & Under.
9 & Under.
Net Set Go (Ages 5 to12 years)

37.2 NETBALL COMPETITIONS

37.2.1 Team Numbers

a) **ALL AGES – 7 on court and 5 on bench**

- b) In junior age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of netball skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and well-being. League expectation is that in these underage matches, all players will play at a minimum half a game of netball.

37.2.2 Ball Requirements

Netball	
9/Under – Open Section	Size 5 Netball
Net Set Go	Size 4 Netball

- a) For all netball matches, the NFNL will supply a match ball.

37.2.3 Length of Quarters

Junior Netball	
9/Under – 17/Under	10 Minutes

37.2.4 Breaks

Junior Netball – All Sections	
1/4 Time	30 seconds
1/2 Time	1 minute
3/4 Time	30 seconds

37.3 PLAYING SURFACE

- 37.3.1 Junior netball matches can be conducted on either indoor or outdoor court surfaces.

37.4 ADVERSE WEATHER

- 37.4.1 In the event the Netball Manager deems the weather forecast to be hazardous to the safety of players, the Netball Manager reserves the right to cancel a match ahead of time.

- 37.4.2 All clubs will be directly advised from the League regarding cancelled matches to communicate to players

37.5 JUNIOR NETBALL COACHES

- 37.5.1 9&U teams are permitted to have one coach on-court to assist junior players with positioning.

- 37.5.2 11&U teams are permitted to have one coach move up and down the sideline of the court to assist players.

- 37.5.3 13&U and 15&U team coaches may not move alongside the court and must stay at their team bench.

37.6 JUNIOR NETBALL UNIFORM

37.6.1 Junior netball players have the option to wear either a club T-Shirt with black skirt, shorts, or pants, or a netball dress.

37.7 GENDER – JUNIOR NETBALL

The league observes the Netball Victorian Gender Regulation in regard to mixed competition:

- a) Mixed competition for the 11&U and 13&U age groups will have NO restrictions applied on the basis of gender.
- b) The league is committed to providing a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment where all people can contribute and participate.
- c) The league will endeavor to provide opportunities for males to participate in competitions.

37.8 JUNIOR NETBALL MATRIX

For overview of all Junior Netball rules please see Schedule 38.

38. ALTERATION TO BY-LAWS

The By-Laws may be amended by the Board from time to time pursuant to the Rules.

39. FINES FOR BY-LAW NON-COMPLIANCE

Fines may be imposed by the Board or the CEO for non-compliance with or violation of these by-laws:

- a) At the rates specified in Schedule 20; or
- b) If no rate is specified in Schedule 20, at a rate determined by the Board.

40. AMENDMENTS TABLE

Date of Issue	Amendment / Version	Remarks
April 2007	Initial Issue	
December 2010	Version 2	Complete review. Some amendments to initial issue not recorded.
December 2011	Version 3	As Presented to NFL clubs at AGM December 2011.
December 2012	Version 4	As presented to clubs at AGM December 2012.
February 2014	Version 5	As provided to clubs February 2014.
December 2014	Version 6	Complete review, approved by NFL Board December 2014.
November 2015	Version 7	Complete review, approved by NFL Board October 2015.

December 2016	Version 8	Complete review, approved by NFL Board October 2016.
November 2017	Version 9	Complete review, approved by NFL Board October 2017.
October 2018	Version 10	Complete review, approved by NFNL Board October 2018.
December 2019	Version 11	Complete review, approved by NFNL Board December 2019
October 2021	Version 12	Complete review, approved by NFNL Board September 2021
February 2022	Version 13	Complete review, approved by NFNL Board February 2022
November 2022	Version 14	Complete review, approved by NFNL Board November 2022