



FOOTBALL BYLAWS

Ballarat Football Netball League

BFLW FOOTBALL BYLAWS

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BFLW FOOTBALL BYLAWS

Preamble

These rules take precedence over, but must be read in conjunction with

- Laws of Australian Football
- AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook
- AFL Victoria Community Affiliate Regulations
- AFL Vic Country Rules

A breach of any BFNL bylaw will be processed in accordance with the BFNL Bylaw Breach Policy.

1. Interchange Agreement

Each year, all leagues affiliated with AFL Goldfields and AFL Central Victoria will enter into an [Interchange Agreement](#) to facilitate player interchange for Clubs with junior teams, supporting player numbers.

Clubs must familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of the agreement and ensure that the necessary approvals are in place before allowing any player to participate under the Interchange Agreement.

2. Player Transfer

Refer to Section 1 AFL Vic Country Rules and Section 3 National Community Football Policy Handbook

3. Coach Accreditation

Refer to Section 13 AFL Vic Country Rules and Section 6 National Community Football Policy Handbook

4. Registration

4.1 Player Registration

Clubs are responsible for ensuring all players are registered for the season on an annual basis.

4.2 Penalty for Playing Ineligible and/or Unregistered Players

Refer to Section 1 AFL Vic Country Rules and Section 3 National Community Football Policy Handbook

5. Interleague Policy

The League expects all member Clubs to support the Interleague campaign and encourage the participation of selected players and officials. Clubs may be requested to provide facilities for training and/or matches as needed.

The Match Committee is responsible for selecting the training squad. Adjustments to the squad may be made as necessary.

Players having played in three (3) or more Coates Talent League games will be ineligible for selection.

All squad members, including injured players, are expected to attend training unless excused by the Coach or a member of the match committee. Players who fail to attend training without prior notification will forfeit their place in the Interleague team.

6. Practice Matches

The League must be notified of all practice matches, including the participating Clubs, grades, times and venue. It is the Club's responsibility to ensure all policies and procedures are followed.

If Clubs wish to engage the BFUA to umpire Football practice matches, they must complete the [BFUA Practice Match Booking Form](#) at least two (2) weeks prior to the match.

7. Underage Eligibility

Competition	Date of Birth	Age	Born Between
Under 19	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2006	19	January 1 2006 and December 31 2008
	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2007	18	
	Born between 1 January and December 2008	17	
Under 16	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2009	16	January 1 2009 and December 31 2010
	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2010	15	
Under 14	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2011	14	January 1 2011 and December 31 2012
	Born between 1 January and December 2012	13	
Under 12	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2013	12	January 1 2013 and December 31 2014
	Born between 1 January and 31 December 2014	11	
	Born between 1 January and 30 April 2018	7	

In accordance with Section 3 of the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook, to participate in a competition, a player must be seven years of age by 30th of April in the applicable playing year.

Player's age eligibility to participate in a competition age group is as per the following AFL Victoria table:

Age Group	Min. Age to Participate*	Age turning in the applicable playing year
Under 12	9	10, 11 or 12
Under 14	11	12, 13 or 14
Under 16	13	14, 15 or 16
Under 19	15	16, 17 or 18

*Age as at 31 December in the year prior to the applicable playing year

8. Overage Exemption

Managed in conjunction with Section 4 of the National Community Football Policy Handbook

8.1 Application

A player who wishes to apply for dispensation to play in a competition below their applicable age group, must make an application through the player's Club to the League. Applications must be completed online via the form provided by the League for that applicable season.

Appendix 1 shows the criteria considered when approving / declining the pending application. Once the pending application is then sent, the club, parent of the player and Board Chairperson are to sign letter, only when all signatures are present is the application approved.

8.2 Effect of an Approved Application

Any player whose request for exemption is approved must be allocated to the next lowest competition age group by their Club.

If the permitted player subsequently plays in a higher competition than originally approved, any approval to play in a lower competition age group is automatically withdrawn.

Approved exemptions are only for the season in which the approval is granted.

The League may revoke the exemption granted at any time, provided that the reasons for such revocation are provided to the permitted player's Club.

8.3 Appealing an Outcome

Clubs may appeal decisions of the League to the relevant appeal body in accordance with the relevant State Football Body's rules and regulations.

A Player and/or Club may only appeal to the relevant appeal body in respect of a decision made by the League on one or more of the following grounds:

- i) that there was an error of law; or
- ii) that the decision was so unreasonable that no League acting reasonably could have come to that decision having regard to the evidence before it.

9. Football Uniforms

Must be read in conjunction with Section 21 of AFL Victoria Country Rules.

9.1 Football Jumpers

All football jumpers must display unique numbers, with each number recorded on the team sheet next to the corresponding player.

9.2 Replacement Jumper

If a jumper is replaced during a match, the Ground Manager and Central Umpire must be informed of the player's new number.

9.3 Undergarments

Bike shorts/compression shorts are permitted by players under their playing shorts but must be neutral (beige) coloured.

Compression tops are permitted by players under their playing jumper but must be neutral (beige or black) coloured.

Note: Should a club request a specific colour that matches the colour of their playing jumper, and all players that where a compression top wear this specific colour, the club can write to the board and ask for approval of this colour for that specific season.

Penalty: Clubs found to have a player wearing incorrect coloured undergarments will incur a \$50 fine per player, per offence.

9.4 Alternate Strips

Clubs may be required to wear an alternate strip or clash jumper in situations where the primary team uniforms of opposing Clubs are deemed too similar.

The BFNL Board reserves the right to require any Club to wear an alternate strip or clash jumper.

10. Wearing Gloves During Competition

Gloves are permitted to be worn in all BFLW competitions.

11. Prohibition of Items

Refer to Laws of Australian Football Clause 9.2

12. Stretchers

Clubs must ensure a sports specific stretcher is placed at the interchange area. It is recommended an additional stretcher is also placed at the interchange area.

Penalty: Clubs failing to comply with this bylaw will incur a \$200 fine.

13. Umpires

The BFNL will engage the BFUA to supply umpires for BFLW competitions.

13.2 BFLW

The BFUA will supply two (2) field umpires for Womens, Under 19 and Under 16 competitions and one (1) field umpire for the Under 14 competition.

Two (2) boundary umpires will be supplied for the Womens competition.

Clubs must supply all other umpires not listed.

Penalty: Clubs failing to supply umpires as per these requirements will incur a \$100 fine.

13.3 Boundary Umpires

Clubs must provide a Boundary Umpire, attired in a white shirt or jumper, when required.

Penalty: Clubs failing to provide a Boundary Umpire, when required will incur a \$100 fine.

13.4 Goal Umpires

Clubs must provide a Goal Umpire, attired in a white coat, when required. All Goal Umpires supplied by Clubs are to use white flags.

Penalty: Clubs failing to supply a Goal Umpire, when required will incur a \$100 fine.

Penalty: Clubs failing to comply with uniform requirements will incur a \$100 fine per offence.

14. Playing Times

All matches shall commence at times determined by the Board.

The following are the scheduled commencement times:

BFLW				
Grade	Day	Start	Quarters	Breaks
Womens	Sunday	12.45pm	4 x 20min	5 – 12 – 5
Under 19	Sunday	11.15am	4 x 15min	5 – 7 – 5
Under 16	Sunday	9.45am	4 x 15min	5 – 7 – 5
Under 14	Sunday	8.30pm	4 x 12min	5 – 7 – 5
Under 12	Friday	6.15pm	4 x 10min	3 - 5 – 3

If a match is interrupted by an injury, the clock must continue running, and the scheduled finish time must be adhered to. The match can only restart once the player's safety is ensured, and they are removed from the arena. Lost time cannot be recovered.

15. Submission of selected sides:

Each Club must submit their selected teams for BFLW competitions into PlayHQ by 8:00pm on the Friday night prior to a round. Players must have their allocated jumper numbers entered. Changes may be made after this time, however 15.1 Late Changes must be adhered to.

Penalty: Failure to submit selected side with players allocated jumper numbers recorded will incur a \$50 fine.

15.1 Late Changes

Late changes may be recorded by hand on the official match day team sheet however these changes must be made prior to the start of the match and submitted on PlayHQ immediately following each game in time for submission of results deadline. Any changes made must also be replicated on any other team sheet in circulation on the day.

Penalty: Failure to submit changes on PlayHQ will incur a \$50 fine.

16. Playing Numbers and Interchange Players

16.1 All BFLW Competitions (*Excluding Under 12*)

Under 14, Under 16, Under 19 and Womens competitions shall be a 16 per side competition, except in the following scenario:

- If there are enough players available (must be a minimum of 22 players available to play), Clubs may choose to field 18 per side. Both coaches **must agree** to play 18 per side. If no agreement is met, the game must be played with 16 players per side.

Clubs are allowed up to eight (8) interchange players per side.

16.2 Under 12 Competition

The Under 12 competition shall be a 12 per side competition. Clubs are allowed unlimited interchange players.

17. Players Exceeding Permitted Number

If a team has more than the allowed number of players on the field, the provisions outlined in Section 5.5 of Laws of Australian Football will apply.

Penalty: Clubs exceeding the permitted number of players on the field will incur a \$300 fine.

18. Incorrect Team Sheet Listings

In the case where a Club submits their team sheet prior to the start of the match to the Umpires and opposition and it has been determined that specific players, who end up participating in the same match and have not been included on the official team sheet for that match, will incur a loss of four (4) premiership points (if the match was won) and percentage.

19. Best Players – PlayHQ

Clubs must submit four (4) best players onto PlayHQ for every match played for points. These should be selected by the coach of the Team and must reflect the players that were adjudged the best in the match.

Penalty: Clubs failing to submit best players into PlayHQ will incur a \$25 fine per occurrence.

20. Footballs

The League will allocate match balls to each club before the season starts and will issue an invoice accordingly.

Competition	Material	Specification
Womens	Leather	Size 4 – Red or Yellow
Under 19	Leather	Size 4 – Red or Yellow
Under 16	Leather	Size 4 – Red or Yellow
Under 14	Synthetic	Size 3 – Red or Yellow
Under 12	Synthetic	Size 3 – Red or Yellow

The League may, from time to time, use an alternative colour or design football for special rounds or events, to raise awareness for designated causes.

21. Use of Two Footballs

In the event of extreme weather conditions, two (2) footballs may be used in a match with the change of footballs occurring at each quarter time break to ensure no advantage is gained by either Club. Both Clubs must agree to the use of two (2) footballs. If no agreement is met, only one (1) football may be used.

22. Officials in Bench Area

Only authorised persons may enter the playing arena during a match. Match Day Officials must remain within the marked area around the interchange box.

- Women and Under 19s: Up to four (4) officials (including Coach, Assistant Coach, etc.) are allowed within the marked interchange box area.
- Under 14: A maximum of one (1) Coach and one (1) Assistant Coach is permitted.

All competitions may have up to:

- 2 Runners
- 6 Trainers and/or Water Carriers

All officials, except Trainers and Water Carriers, must remain seated in the coach's box or within its marked perimeter during play. If no lines are marked, they must stay within the coach's box. If space is insufficient, or no box is provided, additional officials should remain outside the boundary line.

Trainers and Water Carriers can move around the ground but must position themselves against the fence, not on the boundary line when at rest. Unauthorised personnel must be removed by the umpire.

Clubs wishing to authorise additional officials must apply to the League before Friday 5:00pm of the week of the scheduled match.

For Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 competitions, the head Coach must always wear the league-approved coach's vest during the game for easy identification by the umpires. If there are joint coaches, both must wear the approved vest.

Penalty: Coaches and coaching staff who fail to remain within the designated area will incur a \$100 fine.

Penalty: Clubs will be fined \$100 per offence where a coach is not correctly attired with the approved coaches vest.

23. Mentors

Mentors are permitted in the Under 12 and Under 14 BFLW competitions only.

23.1 Duties of Mentors

The duty of a Mentor shall be to provide on-ground coaching to players learning to play the game and teach them the basics of the game whilst out on the ground. Mentors must not barrack and must keep their instructions clear and concise in relation to the positioning of players on the ground, the movement of play and the provision of feedback to player's decision making out on the ground. Mentors must always be 10m away from the location of the ball. Club or appointed BFUA Umpires can remove a Mentor from the ground if they feel the Mentor is not abiding by the above guidelines.

23.2 Number of Mentors

Clubs are permitted to have one (1) Mentor out on the ground at a time.

23.3 Mentor Uniform

All Mentors are to wear uniforms as approved by the BFNL at the commencement of each season. Mentor tops must be purple and carry the Club name and the word 'Mentor'.

24. Minimum Numbers to Constitute a Game

For all BFLW football competitions (excluding Under 12), the following rules apply:

- Eligible to Play for Points: A Club with ten (10) or more players (registered or borrowed) is eligible to play for points. This includes recording the score, percentage, best players, and goal kickers.
- Loaned Players: If a Club lends players to another and the game proceeds with ten (10) or more players per side, the rules in point (a) apply.

- c) Forfeiting Points: A Club with nine (9) or fewer players forfeits the game. Both teams are encouraged to play with available players, and the size of the field can be adjusted if needed.
- d) Assisting Opposition: Clubs must assist their opposition to field at least ten (10) players.
- e) Equal Numbers for Borrowed Players: If a Club lends players, both teams must have the same number of players to proceed. If there is an odd number, the team with more registered players may have an extra player.
- f) Points Split: If both teams cannot field ten (10) players, points will be split. The game may still proceed, but score, percentage, and goal kickers will not be recorded.
- g) Bye Round Assistance: The Team with a bye must assist other Clubs by providing as many players as possible.
- h) Best & Fairest Eligibility: Borrowed players cannot receive Best & Fairest votes, and goals kicked by them do not count towards League awards.
- i) Lending Players for Even Numbers: If a Team has fewer than sixteen (16) players, the opposition must lend players to ensure both sides have equal numbers. No players should remain on the bench.
- j) Should the game proceed with 10 players per side on the field, quarters will be adjusted to 10 mins each, no time on. ¼ and ½ time breaks will remain the same as per the age group.

25. Water carriers

25.1 Minimum and Maximum Age

Water Carriers must be a minimum of 12 years of age. For Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 competitions, Water Carriers must not be over the age of 18.

25.2 Duties of Water Carriers

The sole duty of a Water Carrier shall be to convey water to players and to immediately leave the playing arena. If a team's Water Carrier is found to be filling spaces on the ground, this will be noted in the umpires Match Report.

Penalty: Clubs in breach of this bylaw will incur a \$100 fine.

25.3 Number of Water Carriers

No team shall be permitted to have more than four (4) Water Carriers and no more than a combined total of six (6) Trainers and Water Carriers. In extreme weather conditions, Clubs will be permitted to appoint a further two (2) Water Carriers however this must first be approved by the Central Umpire(s).

25.4 Water Carrier Uniform

All Water Carriers are to wear uniforms as approved by the BFNL at the commencement of each season. Water Carrier tops must be a light blue shirt and carry the Club name and the words 'Water Carrier'.

Penalty: Clubs failing to comply with uniform requirements will incur a \$100 fine per offence.

26. Runners

26.1 Duties of Runners

The sole duty of the Runner shall be to confer with the player or players of their Club and to immediately leave the playing arena. If a team's Runner is found to be filling spaces on the ground, this will be noted in the umpires Match Report.

Penalty: Clubs in breach of this bylaw will incur a \$100 fine.

26.2 Number of Runners

Clubs may have a maximum of two (2) Runners. Should a Club use two runners, strictly only one Runner is permitted on the playing surface at a time. If two Runners are found to be on the ground simultaneously, the Umpire will pay a free kick against the offending team.

26.3 Runner Uniform

All Runners are to wear uniforms as approved by the BFNL at the commencement of each season. Runner tops must be fluorescent pink and carry the Club name and the word 'Runner'.

Penalty: Clubs failing to comply with uniform requirements will incur a \$100 fine per offence.

27. Trainers

27.1 Duties of Trainers

The duty of a Trainer/medical staff shall be to render medical assistance and convey water as required. Trainers may enter the arena at any time during the match or intervals, but only to attend to an injured player or replace a damaged uniform. No other purposes are permitted.

27.2 Number of Trainers

No team is permitted to have more than a combined total of six (6) Trainers and Water Carriers.

27.3 Trainer Uniform

All Trainers are to wear uniforms as approved by the BFNL at the commencement of each season. Trainer tops must carry the Club name and the word 'Trainer'.

Penalty: Clubs failing to comply with uniform requirements will incur a \$100 fine per offence.

27.4 Trainer Minimum Requirements

In accordance with Section 15 of the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

28. Ground Manager

Each BFLW Club must supply a Ground Manager for every home game. All Ground Managers appointed by the BFNL or Clubs shall be required to undertake the following as a minimum requirement for that position:

- Open the umpires' rooms 1 hour before the first game, ensuring the rooms are clean.
- Escort umpires to the change rooms to collect team sheets, meet with coaches and players, inspect boots, and return them to their rooms.
- Escort umpires to the ground centre and remain until their warm-ups are complete.
- Provide a spare ball.
- Ensure both teams are on the ground 5 minutes before the scheduled start time.
- Provide drinks (Home Club's responsibility) and tracksuits for umpires at each break.

- Escort umpires off the ground at halftime and after the game.
- Ensure a stretcher is placed by the home team inside the playing arena fence at the interchange area before the game starts.
- Prevent players or spectators from approaching umpires during the quarter and three-quarter time breaks.
- Restrict access to the umpires' room at all times.
- Ensure Water Carriers and/or Trainers do not linger on the field, perform their duties efficiently, and are properly attired. Also, monitor the number of Water Carriers and Trainers to ensure it does not exceed the maximum allowed by the BFNL.
- Ground Manager Fluoro Yellow Vest must be worn

Penalty: Failure to supply a Ground Manager will result in a \$500 fine.

Penalty: Failure to wear correct uniform will result in a \$100 fine.

29. Timekeepers

Each Club must provide a Timekeeper for all grades. The Home Club is responsible for supplying an audible signalling device and a backup device for the Timekeeper.

Timekeepers are required to keep the scores during all matches. Goal Umpires' scorecards will be used, but in the event of a dispute, the Timekeeper's scores will be submitted to the League as evidence, in accordance with Section 8.2.4 (d) Laws of Australian Football.

Penalty: Clubs failing to provide a Timekeeper will incur a \$250 fine.

Penalty: Clubs failing to provide an audible signalling device and backup siren/bell will incur a \$200 fine.

30. Time clocks

All time clocks displayed to the public at BFLW venues must run continuously from zero upwards without stopping for time-on.

Penalty: Clock is not used or is used incorrectly will incur a \$100 fine per offence.

31. Match Timing

The BFNL stresses the importance of adhering to the match day schedule to ensure all games finish on time. The following must be followed for all matches in any BFLW competition:

- Both Timekeepers must assess the match time at halftime.
- If the match is running behind schedule, the remaining time until the scheduled finish will be split equally, while allowing sufficient time for a three-quarter time break.
- If additional time is lost in the second half, the siren MUST sound at the scheduled finish time, regardless of the duration of the final quarter.

Penalty: Clubs that fail to sound the siren at the scheduled time, as per the official BFNL running sheet will incur a \$100 fine, per offence.

32. Stopping and Recommencing Time

Refer to Laws of Australian Football 10.6: Stopping and Recommencing Time.

33. Teams not breaking from the Huddle

Teams must break from the huddle when the single siren is blown to indicate the end of a break.

Penalty: Clubs in breach of this bylaw will incur a \$100 fine, per offence.

34. Leaving playing field

Only Women's teams shall be permitted to leave the playing field during the half time interval, including the finals series. All other teams must remain on the field at half time, except under extreme weather conditions. Teams must return within the scheduled time.

Penalty: Clubs leaving the playing field outside of this bylaw will incur a \$200 fine.

35. Late appearance

Clubs must appear on the playing arena at the scheduled time.

Penalty: Clubs failing to return to the playing field at the scheduled time will incur a \$25 fine, per minute late.

36. Ground Entry and Warm-Up

Clubs must not interfere with the opposing team's warm-up during entry to the ground, both at the start of the game and at halftime.

Each Club must warm up at opposite ends of the ground: the Club using the easternmost Coach's Box will warm up at the eastern end, while the other Club, using the westernmost Coach's Box, will warm up at the western end. This applies to all BFLW competitions.

Penalty: Clubs in breach of this will incur a \$200 fine.

37. Points and Ladder Calculation

In all matches, four (4) points shall be awarded for a win, two (2) points for a draw, and zero (0) points for a loss.

At the conclusion of the Home and Away season, if two or more Clubs have accumulated an equal number of points, their position will be determined by the percentage of goals and behinds scored for and against.

In the event of a bye in the BFLW fixture, four (4) points will be awarded to the team with the bye for the purposes of ladder calculation.

If there is an uneven number of games played across any competition, the League will adopt the Match Ratio format to determine ladder positions. Teams will be sorted based on the ratio of matches won. If multiple teams share the same match ratio, they will be ranked according to highest percentage, points for, followed by last head-to-head results.

38. VFLW Player Cap

Clubs may have a maximum of three (3) VFLW listed players play in a match. Clubs may have a maximum of five (5) registered VFLW players, except in the following case:

- If a VFLW-listed player returns to the same BFNL Club they were registered with in the previous season, they are considered a “Returning Player” and are not counted towards the five-player limit.

39. Coates Talent League Player Cap

Clubs may have a maximum of five (5) registered Coates Talent League players, except in the following case:

- If a Coates Talent League-listed player returns to the same BFNL Club they were registered with in the previous season, they are considered a “Returning Player” and are not counted towards the five-player limit.

40. BFLW Player Cap

The Ballarat Football & Netball League enforces a player cap per BFLW competition to help Clubs evenly distribute players across teams. The following player caps apply:

- Under 12 shall have a cap of 20 players
- Under 14 and Under 16 shall have a cap of 25 players
- Under 19 shall have a cap of 25 players, plus a maximum of five (5) VFLW/Coates Talent League listed players (excluding ‘Returning Players’)
- Women shall have a cap of 28 players, plus a maximum of five (5) VFLW/Coates Talent League listed players (excluding ‘Returning Players’)

A Club may only exceed the player cap if they have more than the specified amount of players above re-registering from the previous season. Players not registered with the Club in the prior year are subject to the cap.

Penalty: Any Club found to have breached the cap by clearing or registering new players will incur a \$500 fine and face additional penalties at the Board's discretion.

41. Yellow Cards (*Excluding Women and Under 19*)

This applies to all players in the BFLW Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16 competitions:

- a) Players who receive a red card must attend an independent tribunal unless a set penalty applies.
- b) A player's first yellow card in a season serves as a warning.
- c) A second yellow card in the same season results in an automatic one (1) match suspension.
- d) A third yellow card, and any subsequent yellow cards, result in a two (2) match suspension.

e) To appeal a yellow card, Clubs must email the BFLW Football Manager by the close of business on the first business day after the match.

f) The Tribunal will handle offending players according to AFL Victoria Country procedures.

42. Finals Eligibility

When reading Finals Eligibility bylaws the below hierarchy of competitions, must be taken into consideration when determining where a player can compete during the finals.

When players qualify to compete in finals, they qualify for that competition and any competition that sits above them on the hierarchy.

These must be read in conjunction with AFL Vic Country Rules and Regulations.

BFNL Competition Hierarchy:

1. Womens Competition
2. Under 19 Competition
3. Under 16 Competition
4. Under 14 Competition
5. Under 12 Competition

42.1 BFLW Finals Eligibility (all competitions)

42.1.1 A player must play at least three (3) Home and Away matches in a competition to be eligible for finals, except in the following cases:

- Where a registered BFLW player has played in three (3) Home and Away matches in a lower competition on the BFLW Competition Hierarchy is selected to play in a higher age group, provided this does not come at the expense of a registered and available player in that competition.
- Where a player who competes in the Coates Talent League has their Coates Talent League games counted as Womens competition matches played

42.1.2 Coates Talent League games are counted as Womens competition matches played.

42.1.3 A registered player, playing three (3) games during the Home and Away season in a competition, shall be eligible to play finals in that competition and any competition that sits above it on the competition hierarchy, provided all other finals eligibility criteria is met.

42.1.4 A player selected as an interchange player and whose name is on the list of players exchanged before the commencement of the match and who is at the ground in uniform and ready to play and remains ready until the conclusion of the match, shall for all purposes be deemed to have played in such match.

42.1.5 Any player who changes Club mid-season shall be deemed a new player for the Club, with which they have been granted a clearance to play and shall be required to therefore complete no less than three (3) Home and Away matches with their new Club before being eligible to play in the final series of matches.

42.1.6 Any player who has played more than two thirds of the season (season 2025 equates to 10 matches) in the Home and Away season with a specific competition shall be ineligible to compete in a final series of any competition that sits below that competition on the BFLW competition hierarchy.

A player may be eligible to play in a lower competition's finals only if:

- The team in the higher competition, where the player has played more than eight (8) matches, is still active in the finals and competing on the same weekend.
- All other eligibility criteria for the finals are met.

If the team in the higher competition is knocked out of the finals, the player is no longer eligible to play in the finals for any lower-ranked competition.

42.1.7 If a player participates in more than one (1) match during a round of Home and Away matches, the game will only be counted for the competition that sits highest on the BFNL competition hierarchy.

42.1.8 Where a Club competes in more than one competition during finals, a free interchange of players between grades shall be permitted. However, a player shall not be eligible to play in the final series of matches of any competition unless they have played at least three (3) games in that competition or a lower competition on the BFLW competition hierarchy.

42.1.9 No player is allowed to play in more than one (1) finals match during the same weekend of finals, except in the following case:

- When a player has first played in a competition and is required to play in a competition that sits higher on the BFLW competition hierarchy for the second match, due to a late change in player availability. This must not be at the expense of a registered and available player. In this case, the Club must notify the opposition and the League.

42.1.10 If a player has played more than two thirds of the season, (season 2025 equates to 10 matches) Home and Away games in a higher competition and is on the team that wins the 2nd Semi Final, skipping the Preliminary Final to go straight to the Grand Final, they cannot play in the lower competition during the Preliminary Final, even if both teams are still in the competition.

42.1.11 Finals eligibility is calculated at the conclusion of the BFLW Home and Away matches. Finals matches played are not included when determining finals eligibility.

42.1.12 Permit games played outside of BFLW competitions do not count towards a players finals eligibility (including games played in BFNL Mixed competitions).

42.1.13 Permit players from a Club outside of the BFLW cannot participate in BFLW Finals matches.

43. Independent Tribunal

The BFNL Board shall appoint persons to the Tribunal, who in their opinion, possess sufficient knowledge of Australian Football and are sufficiently qualified to completely perform the role of Chairman or Tribunal panel member. The BFNL Independent Tribunal will operate in accordance with the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

44. Investigations

Refer to Section 5 of the AFL Vic Country Rules and Section 22 of the National Community Football Policy Handbook

45. Melee Matrix

Where a melee occurs at any football match, the following process shall be followed:

1. Umpires to complete Match Report form noting the following:
 - a) Players actively involved from the one team
 - b) Duration of the melee
 - c) Level of aggression in melee
 - d) Umpires intervention in melee
 - e) Officials involved
 - f) Approximate time of match melee occurred (for Match Review purposes)
2. Upon receiving notification of a melee from the match report, the League and/or Match Review Panel will review any footage (if available). The League will then use the information in the Match Report against the Melee Matrix (see appendix 2) to determine an outcome. The League will then contact the clubs involved in the melee and provide Clubs an opportunity to:
 - a) Accept the resulting fine; or
 - b) Dispute the details completed in the form by provision of official Club submission that outlines their version of events and witnesses who can attest to what is written.
3. The Club submission will be forwarded to the BFNL Board to make final determination on:
 - a) Whether the initial fine shall remain in place and apply
 - b) Whether the initial fine may be reduced to a lower amount
 - c) Whether the initial fine should be overturned; or
 - d) Whether the initial fine should be increased
4. Clubs will be informed of the League's final decision and sent an invoice (if applicable) that must be paid within 30 days of the invoice being issued.

Melee Details	Points
Players actively involved from one team	
1 – 4 players	1
5 – 9 players	2
10 or more players	3
Duration of melee	
Less than 30 seconds	1
30 – 60 seconds	2
More than 60 seconds	3
Level of aggression	

Low (minor wrestling, push and shove)	1
Medium (wrestling, jumper punches, etc.)	2
High (striking and/or reports)	3
Umpire intervention	
1 umpire intervening	1
2 umpires intervening	2
3 or more umpires intervening	3
Officials involved	
1 – 2 officials handling own players	1
3 or more officials handling own players	2
Any official handling opposition players	3

Penalty: Points will be tallied from the Melee Matrix above and a fine imposed as calculated below:

Melee Grading	Points Accrued	Fine
Low	5 points	\$200
Medium	6 – 10 points	\$300
High	11 or more points	\$500

In addition the above fine, Clubs who are involved in more than one (1) melee during a season will incur further penalties as outlined below:

Melee	Additional Penalty
First Offence	-
Second Offence	\$500
Third Offence	\$1,000
Fourth Offence	\$2,000 and Senior Coach suspended for two (2) matches

46. Reporting Process



47. Classification Table

TABLE 2 - CLASSIFICATION TABLE

CONDUCT	IMPACT	CONTACT	BASE SANCTION	EARLY GUILTY PLEA
INTENTIONAL	SEVERE	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	5+ MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)	N/A
		BODY	4+ MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)	N/A
	HIGH	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	4 MATCHES	3 MATCHES
		BODY	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
	MEDIUM	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
		BODY	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
	LOW	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
		BODY	1 MATCH	FINE AND/OR REPRIMAND
CARELESS	SEVERE	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	4+ MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)	N/A
		BODY	3+ MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)	N/A
	HIGH	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
		BODY	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
	MEDIUM	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
		BODY	1 MATCH	FINE AND/OR REPRIMAND
	LOW	HIGH / GROIN / CHEST	1 MATCH	FINE AND/OR REPRIMAND
		BODY	1 MATCH	FINE AND/OR REPRIMAND
LOW IMPACT	MEDIUM IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT	SEVERE IMPACT	
Minimal or no impact on the match - the Player continued to play the majority of he match and suffered no or minimal ongoing issues.	Clearly some impact on the Player, and/or the Player left the field for a lengthy period of time, and/or some possible lower level ongoing treatment(s) required and/or may miss one Match	Major impact on the Player, and/or the Player was unable to participate in the remainder of the Match, and/or major ongoing issues that require medical intervention and/or may miss some Matches.	Major impact and serious injury to the Person, and/or likely to miss a significant number of Matches	

TABLE 8 – AUDITORY CLASSIFICATION TABLE

CONDUCT	RECEIVER	VOLUME	BASE SANCTION	EARLY GUILTY PLEA
THREATENING	UMPIRE*	ANY	4 OR MORE MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)*	N/A
	ANOTHER PERSON	LOUD	4 OR MORE MATCHES (TRIBUNAL)*	N/A
		MEDIUM OR LOW		
HIGH-LEVEL ABUSIVE / OBSCENE / INSULTING	UMPIRE	LOUD	4 MATCHES	3 MATCHES
		MEDIUM OR LOW	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
	ANOTHER PERSON	LOUD	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
		MEDIUM OR LOW	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
LOW-LEVEL ABUSIVE / OBSCENE / INSULTING	UMPIRE	LOUD	3 MATCHES	2 MATCHES
		MEDIUM OR LOW	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
	ANOTHER PERSON	LOUD	2 MATCHES	1 MATCH
		MEDIUM OR LOW	1 MATCH	FINE AND/OR REPRIMAND

APPENDIX 1

Player Exemption Reference Chart

Player Age	Height	Games played	Ability	
14 yrs	less than 159cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	20 games or less	Introductory football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review
15 yrs	less than 162cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	20 games or less	Introductory football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review
16yrs	less than 163cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	30 games or less	Basic football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review
17yrs	less than 165cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	30 games or less	Basic football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review
18yrs	less than 165cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	30 games or less	Basic football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review
19yrs	less than 165cm as at 1st Feb in the year you are applying for	30 games or less	Basic football skills, not received club accolade, not played Interleague or Coates League	If you answered YES to these questions please complete the exemption form for review

