

SECTION 2: WORKSAFE AFL VICTORIA COUNTRY

RULES AND REGULATIONS

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OBJECTIVES AND DEFINITIONS

Objectives

AFL Victoria Country and Leagues wish to ensure that teams fielded in competitions conducted by a League are as strong and well matched as possible. The continuing support of such competitions and the opportunity for players to develop and employ their skills both depend upon a League continuing to conduct vigorous competitions between evenly matched and financially viable clubs. In order to achieve these objectives, AFL Victoria Country has adopted these Rules and Regulations to supplement the provisions of player declarations of service between players and their clubs to provide a system that will:

- (a) ensure sufficient stability in the membership of Club teams to enable team spirit and public support to be maintained.
- (b) provide opportunities for players to enter competitions conducted by Leagues and for an orderly system for:
 - (i) players to move between Clubs; and
 - (ii) Clubs to move between Leagues.
- (c) provide Clubs with an incentive to expend time, effort and resources in a development of Australian Football:
- (d) provide Junior Leagues and Clubs with the opportunity to expand participation within all levels of underage football.

These Rules and Regulations apply to commissions affiliated to AFL Victoria Country and leagues, clubs and players linked through affiliation to these commissions.

Under these Rules and Regulations, a player or a Club is restrained in his/her or its freedom to transfer if it can be demonstrated that the restraint is necessary to achieve the objectives referred to above.

These Rules and Regulations also establish relevant bodies and a mechanism by which reportable offences and alleged conduct of persons can be referred to, heard and determined by the relevant body.

Australian Football competes with numerous other sports, not only with respect to public attendances, but also participation at a junior and senior level. At a time where athletes have numerous choices between competing sports, AFL Victoria Country and Leagues recognise that it is important to encourage such athletes to play Australian Football. This can be achieved, in part, if Australian Football is seen not only as a physical and skilfully demanding sport, but also a sport played within the Rules of game and in the spirit of true sportsmanship.

AFL Victoria Country and Leagues consider that Australian Football played within the competitions conducted by the Leagues should aspire to the game being played both competitively and fairly. It is against this background that relevant disciplinary bodies have been established and are given power to impose sanctions (such as suspension or a monetary sanction) in circumstances where the conduct of a person is in breach of rules and regulations applicable to that person or the Laws of Australian Football. AFL Victoria Country considers that the imposition of such penalties is reasonably necessary to ensure fair and responsible conduct and thereby encourage participation in Australian Football in the competitions conducted by Leagues affiliated to AFL Victoria Country.

Definitions

In these rules and regulations, unless the context requires otherwise, the following words have the following meaning:

AFL Victoria - means Australian Football League (Victoria) Limited.

AFL Victoria Country – the part of AFL Victoria which administers, manages and develops Australian Football in country and regional Victoria.

AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board – the body established by AFL Victoria Country to hear appeals from a decision of a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee.

Aggrieved Person – any person or organisation subject to the decision of a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, excluding umpires and witnesses.

Area – has the same meaning as “AFL Victoria Country Region” contained in the Statement of Rules of AFL Victoria Country.

Area Appeal Committee – the body established under regulation 7. 2..

Bye – That a bye shall be defined as a break in a draw

(a) That is caused by an uneven number of teams in a competition in any particular round.

(b) That is caused by a split round or suspension of a complete round of matches.

Club – a body which participates in Australian Rules competitions conducted by affiliated bodies.

Commission – body established to govern football in a designated region of Victoria; affiliated to AFL Victoria.

Days – means each day of the week save for a Saturday or Sunday but includes public holidays.

Region Manager – the person appointed to that position by AFL Victoria Country.

Hours – when related to appeals of any description does not include weekends

Investigations Officer – a person appointed by a relevant League to investigate a matter referred to him or her for investigation, who is AFL Victoria Country accredited.

Junior League or Club – An affiliated body which provides football competition at under 16 and a half (or upper age as determined by local commission) and younger age levels only.

Laws of Australian Football – the Laws of the Game as published by the Australian Football League.

League - a league associated with a State Body or Region Commission via an affiliation agreement

Region Manager – the person appointed to that position by AFL Victoria Country.

League Independent Tribunal – the tribunal appointed by the relevant League in accordance with regulation 8.1.

Ordinary Member – means a member appointed as such pursuant to the Rules of AFL Victoria Country Affiliated League, Affiliated Body or League.

Regional Commission - an organisation that:

(a) is affiliated with AFL Victoria; and

(b) which the League is a member of and/or affiliated with.

1.0 CLEARANCES – PLAYERS

1.1 Player who has Previously Played:

Any player who has played football with an affiliated club at any time must obtain a clearance from the club and League with which he/she last played (as determined by the Australian Football League National Player Registration & Transfer Regulations) before playing with their new club. Any player not having played during the previous 24 calendar months is free to register with the club of his choice provided the clearance application is processed as determined by the Australian Football League National Player Registration & Transfer Regulations.

1.2 Players Seeking Transfer In the event of a player of an AFL Victoria Country club who has transferred to a club in another AFL Victoria Country region, the metropolitan area, or, another

state, returning to the AFL Victoria Country area from which their transfer was effected, he/she shall not be regarded as bound to his/her former club and shall not be required to obtain a clearance from such club before being eligible to play with another club in AFL Victoria Country, subject to compliance with National Player Transfer Regulations.

In the event of a player of an AFL Victoria Country club who has transferred to a club of another league within the same AFL Victoria Country Area wishing to transfer to another club of the league from which they were cleared he/she shall not be regarded as bound to the club from which they were cleared and shall not be required to obtain a clearance from such club before being eligible to play with another club in his/her former league subject to compliance with National Player Transfer Regulations.

Note:(a) Refer specific relevant clauses of agreements with the V.F.L., AFL Victoria and V.A.F.A.

1.3 Penalty for playing ineligible (and)/or unregistered players:

Any player registered with a club in the previous 24 months and not transferred to another club will be deemed to be registered to that club in the event of them playing a match without a current registration for that season. Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, a player is required to register / re-register for each new season. Local league laws are to be established as they see fit for the completion of registration / re-registration for the eligibility of a player participating in a match.

In the event that the League Secretary substantiates that any AFL Victoria Country registered player, playing with any club affiliated or unaffiliated with AFL Victoria Country, without having first been granted the necessary registration, clearance and/ or permit to play, required under these Rules, and is therefore deemed ineligible and unregistered, shall be deemed to be ineligible. The AFL Victoria Country club with which the player concerned played shall provide a written submission outlining reasons behind the misdemeanour and forward such submission to the League Manager who in turn will address the matter with the Region Manager and the club then be subject to:

- (a) If the Senior Club wins the game:
 - (i) fine not less than \$500,
 - (ii) reversal of match points,
 - (iii) loss of all points For pertaining to that game,
 - (iv) and may be subject to further penalty as determined by the League
- (b) If the Senior Club loses the game
 - (i) fine not less than \$500,
 - (ii) loss of all points for pertaining to that game,
 - (iii) and may be subject to such penalty as determined by the League
- (c) If the Junior Club wins the game:
 - (i) fine not greater than \$250,
 - (ii) reversal of match points,
 - (iii) loss of all points for pertaining to the game, and
 - (iv) may be subject to further penalty as determined by the League
- (d) If the Junior Club loses the game
 - (i) fine not greater than \$250
 - (ii) loss of all points for pertaining to that game, and
 - (iii) may be subject to such further penalty as determined by the League.

If a club wishes to appeal any penalty applied under regulation 1.3 this appeal will be to the AFL Regional Commission according to its own constitution.

1.4 Clearance procedure:

Each clearance application shall be endorsed by the applicant player and if such player be under the age of eighteen (18) years the clearance application shall be endorsed by the player's parent or guardian and lodged with the Club with which he/she desires to play; the club / league shall forthwith date the application and enter into the Competition Management Platform...

Once a player's application for a clearance and/or registration has been granted: –

- (a) the player shall become eligible to register with the Club to whom he/she has sought the clearance registration; and
- (b) the League in which the Club plays shall register the player as a player of that Club and allow him/ her to play.

A player whose application for a clearance has been lodged, as provided for under these rules, shall not be permitted to lodge an application to play with another club until finality has been reached regarding his/her original application.

Leagues may not impose a 'cut off' time for the handling of clearances prior to 6.00pm on the Friday before a round of matches.

1.5 Uncontested Clearance – Junior Players

A registered player of an affiliated junior league/ association shall be cleared to the club of his/her choice between 1 November and 30 November or after the 1st day of February in the year next following that in which he/she became ineligible by virtue of age, to continue as a registered player of that junior league/association and this clearance may be granted at any time during the season.

If, in the opinion of the respective Region Manager with which such junior league/association is affiliated, the clearance is unreasonably withheld, the Region Manager shall be empowered to grant the necessary permit to allow the Player concerned to play with the club of his choice.

1.6 Block clearances:

In the event of a transfer of a club to another League, all registered players shall automatically be transferred with such Club to the new League. The Appointed League Official from which the club is transferring shall supply a certified list of all registered players of the club concerned to the club's new League.

1.7 Clearance appeals body:

A Player who is refused a clearance to transfer from his/her current Club may lodge an appeal in accordance with regulation 7.5.

1.8 Effect of Refused Clearance on Playing Agreement:

Any agreement between a Player and the Club with which he/she desires to play will terminate in the event that the Player is unsuccessful in obtaining a clearance from the Club and League with which he/ she last played.

A Player is "unsuccessful in obtaining a clearance" if following the refusal by the Club and League with which he/she last played, the Player appeals to the Area Appeal Board or subsequently to the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board and the Players appeal is unsuccessful.

Where the agreement between a Player and the Club with which he/she desires to play is terminated by virtue of this regulation, the Player shall reimburse or repay to the Club any prior payment, consideration, advantage or benefit given, provided or applied pursuant to the agreement and subject thereto, each party will be released from all obligations under the agreement.

1.9 Closing date for clearances and permits:

Except for clearances as provided for in Reg. 1.1 and 1.2 and as herein after provided, all applications for clearances must be lodged with the Appointed League Official of the club with which the player wishes to play between 1st November - 30th November and 1st February - 30th June in each year. Any applications lodged after 30th June shall be invalid and not considered. Permits to play will not be granted to players transferring from interstate where the transfer notification is received by the relevant Appointed League Official after 30th June in any year.

(i) Junior Permits within Victoria can be applied for after 1st July providing that there exists a current interchange agreement between the two Leagues involved in the interchange. If a player has not played in the previous 24 months and wishes to register, he/she can do so at any time during the year and is not bound by the June 30 cut-off. If the player has played in the previous 24 months, he/she requires a clearance and is then subject to AFL Victoria Country Rule 1.9.

1.10 Time limit and issue of permit upon failure to return a clearance application

1.10.1 As of the 1st November until 30th November and 1st February through until 30th June each year, a clearance application lodged by a player or coach of any team, if for any reason the clearance application is not endorsed and received within six (6) calendar days from the date of its dispatch by the League to which the player is desirous of transferring the following procedure shall apply; Refer National Player Transfer Regulations.

1.10.2

Clearance applications submitted electronically must contain the following information: -

- Players Name,
- Address,
- Date of Birth,
- Player Registration number,
- Club the player desires to be cleared from and its Affiliated League,
- Club the player desires to be registered with and its Affiliated League.

1.11 Players Transferred in Employment:

Notwithstanding anything elsewhere appearing in these Regulations, in the event of a player who has been in the service of their employer for three consecutive months immediately preceding their transfer, being transferred by their employer after the 1st July to another branch of the same employers business within an AFL Victoria Country affiliated area they shall be entitled to make application for a clearance and permit to play with a League in the Area to which they have been transferred at any time after the 1st July, provided that such transfer is completed in time to permit the player playing at least one competition match, with a club in the League to which he is being transferred, prior to the first final match of that League. Provided further that where such League prescribes its own domestic residential or a minimum number of qualifying matches in excess of one for a player to participate in Finals matches, such domestic rules shall take precedence.

The child of a person who is transferred in employment under the above condition is eligible to make application for a clearance and/or permit after the 1st of July to play in the region to which his parent(s) is transferred or a contiguous region.

This Regulation is effective only for players transferred after 1st July in each season and a player on temporary transfer being re-transferred by their employer to a branch in another region or back to their original branch, shall receive an immediate clearance and permit to play in such region or with their original club, as the case may be. Such clearance to be made available to the player by the club with whom he/she is then registered, and any such player shall not be required to fulfill domestic residential qualifications.

Players as defined above are subject to National Player Transfer Regulations.

1.12 Players in Armed Forces:

Notwithstanding anything elsewhere appearing in these regulations, a player engaged in the Armed Forces, including a National Service Trainee, transferred in the course of their duties, shall be entitled to receive a clearance and permit to play with a league in the region to which he/she is transferred, any time after the 1st July provided that such transfer is made and completed in time to permit his/her playing of at least one competition match with a club in the League to which he/she is being transferred prior to the first finals match of that body.

The player shall be eligible to play with his/her former club at any time during the currency of the season, including finals and be not subject to domestic rules, in respect of eligibility for finals. In the case of a member of the Armed Forces, including a National Service Trainee, such player shall automatically revert to their former League and club immediately upon termination of their Service duties.

1.13 Permit – Underage Compassionate Permit

(a) In the event of a player eligible to play in an underage junior affiliated competition being required to move residence for compassionate reasons from one Region Commission Area to another Region Commission Area after 1st July, he/she shall be eligible to make application to his/her club for a clearance and, subject to the satisfaction of the Region Manager concerning the compassionate reasons, receive a permit to play from the respective Region Manager to which he/she transfers, providing that in the season of receiving a permit under this rule, the player shall only be permitted to play in underage grades or competitions.

(b) Where a player under the age of 16 years as of the 1st of January in a given year and is in a situation where the parents have separated and have special custody arrangements such players may be eligible to apply for a permit to play at a second or alternate club which is more than 150km away from their original club or upon approval of the AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager.

A player eligible under this permit may only participate in one game per weekend and may be eligible for finals providing they have qualified under the local provisions however they may only play in one finals series per weekend. Permits will not be granted where a local Area Agreement can be applied.

The ultimate verification and approval of this special Family Permit will rest with the respective Region Manager after lodgement of the Family Permit Form and proof of separation and residence of both parents.

Family Permits cannot be applied for or approved after June 30th in each year and is only applicable for that year.

1.14 Transfer Fees – AFL Victoria Country Clubs:

No AFL Victoria Country club shall offer, pay, demand or receive a transfer fee for a player transferring between two AFL Victoria Country clubs. No AFL Victoria Country club shall offer, pay, demand or receive a transfer fee for players transferring between a VFL and AFL Victoria Country club and an AFL Victoria Affiliated club and an AFL Victoria Country club. In the event of an AFL Victoria Country club or clubs being found in breach of this rule the matter shall be referred to the Area Appeals Board for adjudication and if necessary, penalty.

The Area Appeals Board shall determine any penalty which may include the following:

- 1) a substantial fine
- 2) such penalty as is determined by the Area Appeals Board.

1.15 Registered Player:

A player who is registered with a Club may only play with another Club if: –

- (a) they have obtained a clearance to and become registered with another Club in accordance with these Regulations; or
- (b) they are otherwise ‘permitted’ to play for another Club under these Regulations.

1.16 Disbanded and/or Amalgamated Club Player:

If a player’s club has disbanded the player must obtain a clearance from his/her club’s league. Where a player’s club amalgamates with another club, or clubs, the player shall automatically become attached to the combined club.

1.17 Player of Disbanded League:

If a player’s League has disbanded, the player must obtain a clearance from his/her club and its Region Manager.

1.18 Player of Disbanded Club and Disbanded League:

If a player’s club and League have disbanded the player must obtain a clearance from his/her Region Manager.

1.19 Refused Permit or Disqualification

(a) Any person who has been refused a permit to play or has been disqualified shall not be allowed to hold any position whatever in connection with any club until such permit be granted or the period of disqualification has expired or is removed by the body imposing the disqualification.

(b) A player acting as coach to his/her club at the time of any disqualification for a field offence shall not be debarred from performing duties as coach to that club during the period of his/her disqualification.

(c) Non-playing coaches found guilty of an offence and disqualified shall not be permitted to undertake coaching duties or hold any position in conjunction with any club during the period of disqualification. In the event that the non-playing coach is a player with the club in another grade, and he/she is reported for an offence as a player and suspended as a result of such report, such suspension shall not prevent him/her from participating as a non-playing coach in the other grade.

1.20 Eligibility of Suspended Player to Seek a Clearance/Providing False Information:

(a) A player under suspension by their league's tribunal shall be eligible to apply for a clearance, however such player cannot be eligible for competition matches until the period of suspension has expired or such suspension has been removed by the authority imposing the suspension. However, where an AFL Victoria Country player's suspension expires after the closing date for clearances and such player seeks a clearance, the clearance may be granted after expiration of the suspension provided such clearance has been lodged prior to the closing date for the clearances (as per rule 1.9) and is endorsed by the appropriate Region Manager. A person seeking registration or a transfer from one club or league to another shall not falsely or recklessly furnish false information to a club, league or relevant tribunal, if found to have done so the relevant Commission shall deal with the player and the Club as it deems fit.

1.21 Registration of Players / Minimum Age Entry Levels

(a) Each League shall adopt and use the National Player Transfer System. Where a player has not attained the age of eighteen (18) years the registration must be acknowledged by a parent or guardian, or a person authorised in writing by a parent or guardian so to act. The player transfer cannot be acknowledged by a club official unless they are a parent or guardian of the player.

(b) Each player shall pay a registration fee annually as determined by AFL Victoria Country.

(c) to be eligible to be registered players must have obtained seven (7) years of age at April 30th in the year of competition. Leagues can apply higher minimum ages of registration when competition ages are higher than Under 10 years of age.

(d) A person seeking registration or transfer from one club or league to another shall not knowingly or recklessly furnish false information to a club or league or relevant tribunal, if found to have done so the relevant Football Body shall deal with the player and the Club as it deems fit.

1.22 Signing Registration:

(a) Where a player intends to play football for a Club for the first time or, having played for another Club intends to re-commence playing for a Club for which they have previously played, then before commencing or recommencing with such Club, the player must: –

(i) complete and lodge a current "AFL Victoria Country Clearance/Registration Form" and

(ii) become registered with that Club.

(b) Regulation 1.22 does not apply to a player who is required to obtain a day permit or area permit in accordance with these regulations.

(c) Players are permitted to be registered at one club only at any one time.

1.23 Coaches:

Any person or player desirous of coaching (playing or non-playing) any team must comply with the regulations governing the transfer of players and upon receiving such permit to coach, shall also be

eligible to play. This rule does not apply to registered players in an open age competition acting as non-playing coach to a team in an underage competition.

2.0 PERMITS

2.1 Permits to Major Leagues:

Affiliated Leagues in an Area shall be required by the respective Leagues, detailed in Statement of AFL Victoria Country Rules and Purposes to adopt a provision permitting any player of a District or Junior League to play with a club in a Major League provided the player resides within the radius of such Major League club (with the exception of Junior League players playing within a current interchange agreement between leagues), without a clearance, for not more than eight matches in any one season.

Provided that before each such match, the player shall obtain permission electronically through the Competition Management platform from their parent club using a type two (2) permit.

All such permits (type 2 permits) shall be filed by the respective Officials and retained for production whenever required.

Any player having in any one season played eight matches under the provisions of this rule and desiring to continue to play with a Major League club, shall only be permitted to do so upon applying for and receiving a clearance from their club and League in the usual manner or where such is refused upon an appeal being lodged and upheld.

This clearance may be granted at any time during the current season.

In the case where a registered player of a club of a District League is not within the specific radius of any Major League, he/she shall be entitled to apply for a day permit to any club in the Major League nearest to his/her own residence.

Players from District and Junior Leagues who are playing on permits in Major Leagues and are reported for a field offence shall have the charge heard by the Major League tribunal which in the event of finding the player guilty shall determine the penalty which shall then apply to matches of the club in the grade of competition where the offence occurred. The suspended player is not eligible to resume with their District League club until his/ her penalty (matches suspended for) has been completed by the Major League club where the offence occurred.

2.2 Eight Matches:

This provision shall be restricted to a maximum of eight matches with a Major League club (with the exception of Junior League players playing within a current interchange agreement between leagues), in any one season, but such eight matches need not necessarily be with the same club of a Major League provided that any player having played under permit with one Major League club and desiring to play with another Major League club must, in addition to having the written permission of their parent club, also obtain the written consent of the Major League club with which they have previously played under permit and such club shall thereupon cease to have any jurisdiction over such player.

Any player seeking a permit to play in a Major League with which such player has been registered in the past 24 months requires such permit to be endorsed by the club in the Major League with which the player played in the previous 24 months.

2.3 Rule for District and Junior Leagues:

It shall be obligatory upon any District and Junior League to insert in its rules the provision laid down in this regulation, but no player can play with a Major League unless their parent club shall first grant him the necessary permit required under the provision of this regulation (type 2 permit).

2.4 Endorsement:

A Day permit granted pursuant to this Regulation to provide for even teams shall not require any endorsement or approval by the League of the club granting the permit (type 1 permit).

2.5 Transfer of Player:

Any player having played on permit under the provisions of this regulation and desiring to transfer from their parent club to another Major League club in the same League must also have their clearance approved by the last Major League club with which they played in that League under permit, but the right of such Major League club to endorse the clearance shall not extend beyond the season during which the last permit to play with such Major League club was granted.

2.6 Issue of Day Permits & Teams of Clubs competing in different Competitions:

One day permits shall be restricted to the Commission area concerned.

A Major League may limit the use of incoming day permits issued pursuant to the provisions of Regulation 2.1 and 2.2 as that Major League may deem fit.

For the purpose of interpretation of Regulations 2.1 to 2.7, a Major League shall be deemed to be the first eighteens only of the clubs comprising such Major League.

Any player who is older than under 16 and a half who is a member of a team which is affiliated with a Senior club, wherein the player participates in a different competition to that of the Senior club, may play with the Senior club, without the need to obtain a matchday permit.

2.7 One Match per Day:

(a) A player shall not be permitted to play with a District or Junior League club and a Major League club on a one-day permit on the same day.

(b) Players are allowed to play with a VFL senior team or the NAB League Competition on the one day. Players may only do so when the VFL senior team player or NAB League Competition player has played less than twenty-five minutes of actual playing time and has been granted a medical clearance from the VFL or NAB League club, then they may return to play with their AFL Victoria Country club on the same weekend.

2.8 Day Permits – No Appeal:

There is no right of appeal against the refusal to grant a day permit.

2.9 Permits for Players of Opposing Teams:

Affiliated Leagues may approve the granting of a day permit to reserve grade and under-age players to play with the players opposing Reserve grade team or under-age competition team where the opposing team does not have the required number of players for that match. (These permits are to be entered as type 1 permits within the Competition Management platform.)

Where a Senior grade team does not have the required number of players for a match and requires extra players from an opposition team the Affiliated League may apply to the relevant Region Manager, for approval to grant requested day permits.

Affiliated Leagues approving the granting of such permits must obtain from their Region Manager, approval for the system under which the League will grant day permits for players to play with the opposing clubs.

2.10 Area Permits:

(a) Notwithstanding anything contained in these Regulations requiring the production of a clearance by a player, Leagues of an area and Leagues in adjacent areas may enter into written agreements to allow an interchange of players to meet local conditions, provided however that the provision of Regulation 2.1 (Permits to Major Leagues) must in all cases be strictly complied with when a registered player of a District or Junior League club desires to play with a club in a Major League. Permission may be granted for Areas to enter into written agreements to permit the transfer of players from District and Junior Leagues for the purpose of interpretation of this Regulation. The written agreements must be submitted to, and approved by, the respective Region Manager concerned before the agreements become operative.

The respective Region Managers shall be empowered to approve agreements to operate between Affiliated AFL Victoria Country Leagues including underage competitions for the interchange of players between the competitions.

(b) A registered player of an affiliated club who is an age which permits them to play in an underage competition up to and including under 15 years of age shall be required to obtain a permit from their club to play with a club or competition other than an Underage grade of their league. Such permission may be granted at any time during the season and may be granted subject only to the conditions of an Area Agreement between the relevant leagues.

(c) Area Agreements shall operate under the following conditions:

An Agreement between the Football League and the Football League **from** or **for** (circle to indicate) the Season.

This agreement is signed pursuant to AFL Victoria Country rules and regulations pertaining to clearances and permits and in particular the Clause 2.10 – Area Permits, whereby an interchange of players between clubs of the abovementioned Leagues may take place without clearance or permits and is subject to any provisions contained within this agreement.

(d) As per the AFL National Player Registration & Transfer Regulations, Area Agreements / Interchange Agreements are ongoing from year to year unless revoked by one of the football bodies party to the agreement by advising AFL Victoria.

PROVIDED HOWEVER:

(i) That this permit is in force for the current season only.

(ii) That the player(s) concerned are acquainted with AFL Victoria Country regulations 2.1 and 2.5 regarding one day permits to Major Leagues and eight (8) matches.

(iii) Prior to each match the player shall obtain permission electronically from their parent club using a type two (2) permit. The permit shall be similar to a one-day permit form and dispersed as

required under Regulation 2.1 of AFL Victoria Country Rules and Regulations.

(iv) Players of any club having a bye will not be allowed to play with another club on that day, unless he/she has previously played with that club in the current season under this agreement. The club playing the player from the other League shall show his/her registered club on the match team sheet. Players of third 18 teams of Senior Grade competitions are not to be classified as players of Junior age competitions.

(v) A local interchange agreement can override clause (iv) to restrict junior players playing on permit when their club has a bye.

(vi) That this agreement cannot be altered unless agreed to by the Region Manager.

(vii) That in order for a player playing under such Area Permit to participate in a finals series in that season the player must have played a minimum of five (5) games in the team of the grade in which he/she has been selected to play in the finals and has met any additional league eligibility requirements.

2.11 Permits – Students Living Away from Home

(a) A player resident away from their usual place of abode while attending a secondary/TAFE college, institution or university on a full time and continuous basis and playing in any competition may, **during registered school holidays and registered semester vacations, receive a permit to play with the club with which the player was last registered before being cleared to his/ her current club** from the respective Region Manager where such former club is located. If required by the respective Region Manager, the player shall supply documentary evidence of his/her attendance at the said college, institute or university.

(b) In order for a student playing under such permit to participate in a finals series in that season a student must have played a minimum of 5 games in the team of the grade in which they are selected to play in the finals and met any other local finals requirements.

2.12 Permits – Special Regulations relating to the VAFA

Permit for any player using this agreement must be in place prior to July 1st. Refer to online VAFA agreement on the AFL Vic Country website under Community Football.

2.13 Special Circumstance Permit – Drought/Recess

Temporary Permits in Drought Effected Leagues Affiliated Clubs in Drought effected Leagues, as determined by AFL Victoria Country, where their season will be delayed (unable to begin on their scheduled starting date as previously fixtured) shall be required to adopt a provision permitting any player of a Major or District League to play with a club in another League without a clearance for not more than eight matches in any one season provided that before each such match(es) he/ she shall obtain permission in writing from his/her parent club so to play.

This written permission may be for one or two weeks at a time only Permits cannot be issued for players to represent multiple clubs.

Any player having in any one season played eight matches under the provisions of this rule and desiring to continue to play with the League club, shall only be permitted to do so upon applying for and receiving a clearance from their club and League in the usual manner or where such is refused upon an appeal being lodged and upheld. This clearance must be applied for prior to July 1. Once the registered club's season begins all existing permits cease to exist in each case.

Players who are playing on permits in other Leagues and are reported for a field offence shall have the charge heard by the League tribunal in which the alleged offence occurs which in the event of finding the player guilty shall determine the penalty which shall then apply to matches of the club in the grade of competition where the offence occurred. Players are unable to play for any team if suspended.

Temporary Permits for Players of Clubs in recess

Leagues who have clubs who go into recess, as determined by AFL Victoria Country, shall be required to adopt a provision permitting any player of a Major or District League to play with a club in another League without a clearance for not more than one season provided that before or during the season he/ she shall obtain permission in writing from his parent club/league so to play.

All such permits shall be filed as a Type 2 Permit by the respective Secretaries and retained for production whenever required. Permits cannot be issued for players to represent multiple clubs. Any player having played under the provisions of this rule and desiring to continue to play with the League club, shall only be permitted to do so upon applying for and receiving a clearance from their club and League in the usual manner or where such is refused upon an appeal being lodged and upheld. This clearance must be applied for prior to July 1.

Once the registered club comes out of recess all existing permits cease to exist in each case.

2.14 Players suspended while on permit

Players who are playing on permits in other Leagues and are reported for a field offence shall have the charge heard by the League tribunal in which the alleged offence occurs which in the event of finding the player guilty shall determine the penalty which shall then apply to matches of the club in the grade of competition where the offence occurred. Players are unable to play for any team if suspended.

3 CLUBS/ADMISSION OF NEW CLUBS

For rules 3.0 and 4.0 Secretary read also as AFL Victoria Community Football Manager.

3.1 General

For the purposes of Regulations 3 and 4, a decision of the Board means a decision of AFL Victoria, or a decision of the Commission means a decision of an AFL Regional Commission Any alterations to regulations 3 and 4 by Commission can only occur after approval from AFL Victoria.

3.2 New Clubs

An Affiliated League may only: –

(a) admit a newly formed club as a member or the representatives of such a club as members of the Affiliated League; or

(b) include a newly formed club in the Affiliated League's fixture of matches to be played in its football season; or

(c) permit a newly formed club to participate, compete or take part in any football match played under the authority, control or direction of the Affiliated League, where it has first sought and obtained the written consent of the AFL Regional Commission.

3.3

(a) Where an Affiliated League proposes to permit or admit a newly formed club or Umpire Group under Regulation 3.2, it shall lodge an application in writing with the Region Manager during the period commencing on 1 August and ending on 30 November in each year.

(b) The AFL Regional Commission shall as soon as practicable grant or refuse the application and notify the Affiliated League of its decision in writing.

(c) A decision of the AFL Regional Commission to refuse an application does not take effect unless at a meeting held in accordance with Regulation 3.4, the AFL Regional Commission confirms the decision.

3.4

A meeting of the AFL Regional Commission to confirm or revoke its decision to refuse an application must be held not earlier than seven (7) days and not later than twenty-eight (28) days after notice has been given to the Affiliated League in accordance with Regulation 3.5.

3.5

For the purposes of giving notice in accordance with Regulation 3.4, the Region Manager shall, as soon as practicable, give written notice to the Affiliated League: –

(a) advising of the AFL Regional Commission decision to refuse the application;

(b) stating the date, place and time of the meeting at which the Affiliated League may address the AFL Regional Commission; and

(c) informing the Affiliated League that it may do the following: –

(i) attend the meeting; and

(ii) give to the AFL Regional Commission before the date of the meeting, written submissions in support of a revocation of the Commission's decision.

3.6

(a) At a meeting of the AFL Regional Commission to confirm or revoke a decision to refuse an application under Regulation 3.3(b), the Commission:-

(i) shall provide the Affiliated League an opportunity to be heard;

(ii) shall hear and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner;

(iii) is not bound by the rules of evidence or practices and procedures applicable to courts of record, but may inform itself as to any matter in any such manner as it thinks fit;

(iv) may regulate the proceedings before it in such manner as it thinks fit; and

(v) shall determine by ordinary resolution whether to confirm or revoke the decision.

(b) The AFL Regional Commission shall not be obliged to give reasons for confirming or revoking its decision to refuse an application under Regulation 3.3(b).

3.7 Existing or Amalgamated Clubs

3.7.1 Unless Regulation 3.17 applies an Affiliated League shall not: –

(a) admit an existing or amalgamated club as a member or the representatives of such a club as members of the Affiliated League; or

(b) include an existing or amalgamated club (or an underage club) in the Affiliated League's fixture of matches to be played in its football season; or

(c) permit an existing or amalgamated club to participate, compete or take part in any football match played under the authority, control or direction of the Affiliated League, until:–

(i) the existing or amalgamated club has obtained the written consent of the immediate past Affiliated League with whom the existing or amalgamated club was affiliated ("the Governing Affiliated League"); and

(ii) the decision by the Governing Affiliated League to give its consent is approved by the AFL Regional Commission (each AFL Regional Commission if the club is changing regions) pursuant to Regulation 3.11; or

(iii) the AFL Victoria allows an appeal made by the existing or amalgamated club under Regulation 4.2

3.7.2 Negotiations with clubs/leagues: –

(a) An Affiliated League or Club shall not engage in negotiations with another league or club without first notifying the Region Manager of their intentions.

In the event that the Region Manager is not notified in writing of their intention to approach, discuss or negotiate a potential move of an affiliated club from an existing league, the matter will be referred to the AFL Regional Commission for determination or action should the breach of this rule be proven.

Unless Regulation 3.17 applies or the AFL Victoria Community Football Manager otherwise allows (at his or her absolute discretion), a Club/League seeking permission to negotiate with an AFL Victoria Country Affiliated Club/League, in relation to a transfer, must apply to the Region Manager for such permission prior to July 31st and the club seeking the transfer must apply for a transfer from the Governing Affiliated League prior to October 31 in the same year.

(b) Upon receipt of such notice by the club or league the Region Manager shall notify the parties involved of his approval or otherwise for the club and or league to approach, discuss or negotiate any potential club movement.

(c) Unless Regulation 3.17 applies or AFL Victoria Community Football Manager otherwise allows (at his or her absolute discretion), if an approach, discussion or negotiations in any given year fail to result in the movement of a club to a new league, any further application to approach, discussion or negotiations may not take place for a period of two years.

3.8 (i) Transfer of Club within the same AFL Regional Commission

(a) An existing or amalgamated club proposing to: –

(i) transfer wholly to another Affiliated League; or

(ii) transfer an underage team or teams to another Affiliated League within the same AFL Regional Commission, shall lodge an application ("Transfer Application") in writing with the Governing Affiliated League and the AFL Regional Commission within the time specified in Regulation 3.8(b).

(b) A Transfer Application relating to the transfer of:–

(i) the whole club shall be made during the period commencing on August 1 and ending on October 31 in each year; Permission granted by an Region Manager ceases to take effect if an application is

not lodged within the timeframe (3.8 b) i) or is unsuccessful by either being denied by the Governing Affiliated League and the decision not appealed or appealed but the appeal denied by the AFL Regional Commission. The right to seek future permission is restricted in relation to the above – please refer Rule 3.7.2 c). or

(ii) an underage club shall be made during the period commencing on 1 August and ending on 31 March in the following year.

A transfer of an underage club or teams after 31 October, and within the time limit specified, may only take place where a club has the prior written consent of both Affiliated Leagues involved in the transfer of the club.

(c) Regulation 3.8(i) does not apply in respect of any application by an existing club under Regulation 3.17.

3.8 (ii) Transfer of Club into another AFL Regional Commission

(a) An existing or amalgamated club proposing to: –

(i) transfer wholly to another Affiliated League; or

(ii) transfer an underage team or teams to another Affiliated League within another AFL Regional Commission, shall lodge an application (“Transfer Application”) in writing with the Governing Affiliated League and the governing AFL Regional Commission within the time specified in Regulation 3.8(b).

(b) A Transfer Application relating to the transfer of:–

(i) the whole club shall be made during the period commencing on August 1 and ending on October 31 in each year;

(ii) Permission granted by the Region Manager ceases to take effect if an application is not lodged within the timeframe (3.8 b) i) or is unsuccessful by either being denied by the Governing Affiliated League and the decision not appealed or appealed but the appeal denied by an AFL Victoria panel consisting of members of the current governing AFL Regional Commission, proposed new AFL Regional Commission and AFL Victoria according to the procedures outlined in regulation 4. The right to seek future permission is restricted in relation to the above – please refer Rule 3.7.2 c). or

(ii) an underage club transfer shall be made during the period commencing on 1 August and ending on 31 March in the following year. A transfer of an underage club or teams after 31 October, and within the time limit specified, may only take place where a club has the prior written consent of both Affiliated Leagues and AFL Regional Commission involved in the transfer of the club.

3.9 The Transfer Application shall: –

(a) state the Affiliated League to whom the club or underage team of the club proposes to transfer.

(b) contain full and detailed particulars in support of the existing or amalgamated club’s application.

(c) be accompanied by the signed minutes of the existing or amalgamated club’s meeting at which the existing or amalgamated club’s members resolved to transfer from the Governing Affiliated League; and

(d) be signed by a majority of Executive members of the existing or amalgamated club.

3.10 Other than where Regulation 3.17 applies, within twenty-one (21) days of receiving a Transfer Application, the Governing Affiliated League shall: –

(a) notify the existing or amalgamated club in writing whether it has consented to or refused the Transfer Application; and

(b) where it refuses the Transfer Application, provide written reasons to the existing or amalgamated club.

3.11 Upon the Governing Affiliated League notifying the existing or amalgamated club of its decision under Regulation 3.10, the following provisions shall apply: –

(a) where the Governing Affiliated League consents to the Transfer Application:–

(i) the Governing Affiliated League shall immediately lodge the Transfer Application and evidence of its consent with the AFL Regional Commission;

(ii) the AFL Regional Commission shall as soon as practicable, approve or reverse the decision of the Governing Affiliated League; and

(iii) the Region Manager shall notify all affected parties of the AFL Regional Commission's decision to approve, vary or reverse the decision of the Governing Affiliated League.

(b) where an Affiliated League refuses the Transfer Application, and both the Governing Affiliated League and Affiliated League are members of the one AFL Regional Commission the existing or amalgamated club may appeal to the AFL Region Commission in accordance with Regulation 4.

(c) where an Affiliated League refuses the Transfer Application, and the Governing Affiliated League and Affiliated League are members of different Commissions the existing or amalgamated club may appeal to the AFL Victoria Country in accordance with regulation 4. AFL Victoria will establish a panel as it sees fit.

(d) where the Governing affiliated League refuses the transfer application and both the current affiliated league and the Regional Commission are the one body, the existing or amalgamated club may appeal to the Regional Commission in accordance with Regulation 4 with the Regional Commission to establish an independent panel who are not members of the Regional Commission to hear the appeal as they see fit.

3.12

(a) Where an Affiliated League does not notify an existing or amalgamated club of its decision within twenty one (21) days of receiving a Transfer Application under Regulation 3.10 or 3.17, then upon application by the existing or amalgamated club, the AFL Regional Commission may: –

(i) approve or refuse the Transfer Application; or

(ii) make such other determination as it in its absolute discretion thinks fit.

(b) For the purposes of Regulation 3.12(a): –

(i) an application by an existing or amalgamated club is made by lodging a copy of the Transfer Application with the Region Manager; and

(ii) once the Transfer Application is lodged with the Region Manager, an Affiliated League is unable to approve or refuse the Transfer Application.

3.13 An existing or amalgamated club desiring to transfer, to a league affiliated to a controlling body other than AFL Victoria Country, shall obtain approval to transfer in accordance with the terms of the agreement between AFL Victoria Country and the controlling body.
N.B. Refer to AFL Victoria Regulations relating to club transfers.

3.14 An existing or amalgamated club may only lodge one (1) Transfer Application in each year.

3.15 Transfer of a League to another AFL Regional Commission

Unless Regulation 3.17 applies, a league which desires to transfer to another AFL Regional Commission shall lodge a written application with its current Region Manager and a deposit of \$1,000. The application must be lodged prior to 31 October in the year preceding the year in which the transfer will take effect if granted. The application for transfer will be forwarded by the Region Manager within nine (9) days of receipt to the Country Football Manager and shall be dealt with within a period of thirty (30) days by AFL Victoria.

Prior to convening a meeting of an AFL Victoria panel, the applicant league and the two affected AFL Regional Commissions shall tender written submissions to AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager outlining the facts, reasons and arguments concerned in such application. The application must be lodged with AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager within nine (9) days of the date of receipt by the Region Manager. The deposit may be forfeited either in whole or part, if in the opinion of the AFL Appeals Panel the application is considered frivolous.

3.16 (1) – Expulsion (or fining) of an affiliated Club by an affiliated League, due to inadequate player numbers.

AFL Victoria Country affiliated leagues electing to fine or expel a member club of their league on the grounds of an inability to field a side(s) (other than the first senior team) must;

a) in the case of a fine – consult with AFL Victoria Country Region Manager of the AFL Regional Commission they are affiliated with.

b) in the case of expulsion of a club – consult with AFL Regional Commission they are affiliated with.

In either case a hearing could be held by the AFL Regional Commission. The matter to be heard in accordance with AFL Victoria Country Rules and Regulations (refer AFL Victoria Country Rules 4.4 and 4.5 for procedures relating to the Appeal).

3.16 (2) – Expulsion or suspension of an Affiliated Club by an Affiliated League, for whatever reason, other than inadequate player numbers; apply as per b) above.

3.17 Transfer of existing clubs where an Affiliated League ceases to operate or is winding up

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules and Regulations or any determination of a Regional Commission or AFL Victoria Appeals Panel, if an Affiliated League ceases to operate, disbands or commences the formal process to disband or wind up, the existing clubs of such Affiliated League shall be entitled to apply to transfer to another Affiliated League(s) either in the same AFL Regional Commission or another AFL Regional Commission.

(b) An application to transfer under Regulation 3.17(a) shall be in the form specified in Regulation 3.9 save that the application does not have to comply with Regulation 3.9(c).

(c) Within twenty-one (21) days of receiving an application to transfer under Regulation 3.17(a) the proposed relevant Affiliated League shall:

(i) notify the relevant existing club in writing whether it has consented to or refused the transfer application; and

(ii) where the proposed Affiliated League refuses the transfer application, provide written reasons for its decision to the existing club.

(d) Where the proposed relevant Affiliated League refuses the transfer application under Regulation 3.17(a), the existing club may appeal to that decision to AFL Victoria Country in accordance with Regulation 4.

(e) Where the relevant Affiliated League consents to the transfer application under Regulation 3.17(a) the relevant Affiliated League must promptly notify the Regional Commission of its decision to approve the transfer application. The Regional Commission shall, as soon as practicable, approve or reject the decision of the relevant Affiliated League to approve the transfer application, and notify all relevant parties of its decision.

Where the Regional Commission rejects the transfer application under Regulation 3.17(a), the existing club may appeal the decision under Regulation in accordance with Regulation 4.

4.0 APPEALS OF CLUBS

4.1

For the purposes of this regulation the Appeal Board where indicated as AFL Victoria Country shall be the AFL Victoria panel as it sees fit. Where indicated it shall be the AFL Regional Commission to which the club is affiliated.

4.2 (i)

(a) An existing or amalgamated club may appeal to the AFL Regional Commission in respect of a decision of an Affiliated League to refuse a Transfer Application to another league within the AFL Regional Commission it is affiliated with, provided the appeal is lodged in writing ("the notice of appeal") with the Region Manager within seven (7) clear days of receiving written notification of the refusal.

(b) The notice of appeal shall be accompanied by

(i) a copy of the Transfer Application

(ii) the sum of \$500 for Senior clubs and \$250 for Junior clubs, for costs of the appeal, which shall not be refunded in any circumstances; and

(iii) a further sum of \$1500 for Senior clubs and \$750 for Junior clubs which sum shall be dealt with as follows:

- where the AFL Regional Commission upholds an appeal the sum paid by the club shall be refunded; or

- where the AFL Regional Commission dismisses the appeal and determines that the Club's reason(s) for the appeal did not have sufficient merit, it may determine in its absolute discretion, that all, or part of the sum not be refunded.

4.2 (ii)

- (a) An existing or amalgamated club may appeal to AFL Victoria in respect of:
- (i) a decision of an Affiliated League to refuse a Transfer Application to another league within a different AFL Regional Commission it is affiliated with; or
 - (ii) a decision of an Affiliated League to refuse a transfer application under Regulation 3.17(a) provided the appeal is lodged in writing ("the notice of appeal") with the AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager within seven (7) clear days of receiving written notification of the refusal.

4.3

An appeal shall be considered by the Appeal Panel within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of the notice of appeal by the Region Manager, or such other period as the Appeal Panel may determine.

4.4

- (a) Prior to determining the appeal, the existing or amalgamated club and both Affiliated Leagues (or where the appeal relates to a decision of an Affiliated League to refuse a transfer application under Regulation 3.17(a), that Affiliated League only) shall, within the time specified by the Appeal Panel, lodge with the Region Manager written submissions which contain:—
- (i) any facts, reasons and arguments concerning the Transfer Application and the appeal; and
 - (ii) any other matters which they desire to be taken into account by the Appeal Panel in determining the appeal.

- (b) The Region Manager shall as soon as practicable but prior to the hearing of the appeal, distribute the written submissions to the parties concerned in the appeal.

4.5

- (a) The hearing before the Appeal Panel shall be: —
- (i) inquisitorial in nature; and
 - (ii) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as a proper consideration of the matters before it permits.

- (b) The Appeal Panel:—

- (i) shall consider and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner;
- (ii) is not bound by the rules of evidence or by practices and procedures applicable to courts of record, but may inform itself as to any matter in any such manner as it thinks fit;
- (iii) may regulate the proceedings before it in such manner as it thinks fit; and
- (iv) may confirm, reverse or modify the decision of an Affiliated League and make such orders and give such directions in such manner as it thinks fit.

- (c) The Appeal Panel shall not be obliged to give reasons for its decision.

4.6

An existing or amalgamated club may only lodge one (1) appeal in each year under this Regulation 4.

4.7 AFL Victoria Country Reviews - Implementation and Appeals

Where the WorkSafe AFL Victoria Country or AFL Regional Commission has conducted a review of a WorkSafe Affiliated League(s) or AFL Regional Commission the recommendations are required to be accepted provided that the following requirements have been met:

- All Reviews must be approved by the AFL Victoria Community Football Manager prior to commencement.
- Review – framework distributed to all affected stakeholders named in the framework
- Review – consultation meetings offered to all affected stakeholders named in the framework
- Review – draft review recommendations distributed to all affected stakeholders named in the framework
- Review – submissions on draft review recommendations from all affected stakeholders named in the framework considered by the Review Panel
- Review – submissions on draft review recommendations for stakeholders not originally included in the initial review framework considered by the Review Panel
- Review – final review recommendations distributed to all affected stakeholders named in the framework
- Review – appeal against the implementation of the review recommendations by an affected stakeholder(s)

Any appeal against the implementation of the final review recommendations would be heard by AFL Victoria following the procedures of 4.7.1.

4.7.1 Appeals of Stakeholders

(a) For the purposes of this regulation if the review was conducted by AFL Victoria and impacts across two AFL Regional Commissions the Appeal Panel shall be the AFL Victoria Appeals Panel. AFL Victoria will establish the AFL Victoria Appeals Panel as it sees fit.

(b) For the purposes of this regulation if the review was conducted by an AFL Regional Commission and impacts across a single AFL Regional Commission the Appeal Panel shall be the AFL Victoria Appeals established as it sees fit.

4.7.2

(a) An affected stakeholder to a review may appeal to the Appeal Panel in respect of review recommendations, provided the appeal is lodged in writing (“the notice of appeal”) with the AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager within seven (7) clear days of receiving written notification of the final review recommendations.

(b) The notice of appeal shall be accompanied by:

- (i) a copy of the final review recommendations
- (ii) the sum of \$500 for Senior appellants and \$250 for Junior appellants, for costs of the appeal, which shall not be refunded in any circumstances; and
- (iii) a further sum of \$1500 for Senior appellants and \$750 for Junior appellants which sum shall be dealt with as follows:
 - where the Appeal Panel upholds an appeal the sum paid by the club shall be refunded; or
 - where the Appeal Panel dismisses the appeal and determines that the appellants reason(s) for the appeal did not have sufficient merit, it may determine in its absolute discretion, that all, or part of the sum not be refunded.

4.7.3

An appeal shall be considered by the Appeal Panel within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of the notice of appeal by the Region Manager, or such other period as the Appeal Panel may determine.

4.7.4

(a) Prior to determining the appeal, the appellant shall, within the time specified by the Appeal Panel, lodge with Country Football Manager or their nominee written submissions which contain: –
(i) any facts, reasons and arguments concerning the review recommendations and the appeal; and
(ii) any other matters which they desire to be taken into account by the Appeal Panel in determining the appeal.

(b) The person managing the appeal process shall as soon as practicable but prior to the matter being dealt with by the Appeals Panel, distribute the written submissions to the parties concerned in the appeal.

4.7.5

(a) The hearing before the Appeal Panel shall be: –

(i) by submission only

(b) The Appeal Board:–

(i) shall consider and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner;

(ii) is not bound by the rules of evidence or by practices and procedures applicable to courts of record, but may inform itself as to any matter in any such manner as it thinks fit;

(iii) may regulate the proceedings before it in such manner as it thinks fit; and

(iv) may confirm, reverse or modify the review recommendations and make such orders and give such directions in such manner as it thinks fit.

(c) The Appeal Panel shall not be obliged to give reasons for its decision.

4.7.6

An appellant may only lodge one (1) appeal in each year under this Regulation 4.7.

5.0 UNBECOMING CONDUCT

5.1 Appointment of Investigation Officer:

Each league shall only appoint an AFL Victoria Country accredited investigation officer to investigate any matter referred to him pursuant to Rule 5.2 (unbecoming conduct).

5.2 Unbecoming Conduct:

(a) (i) The League, League Executive members, Club, Player, League, Region Manager or a AFL Victoria Country appointed official, who alleges that a player or an official of a club, umpire, official of an umpires' Association, AFL Victoria Country Official, League official, Club, player advocate, or League appointed official has been guilty of conduct which is unbecoming to a player, umpire, such official, or club, or which has or is likely to bring the game of football into disrepute, may lodge with the League a Notice in writing setting out particulars of the allegation. Unless the notice is lodged by the League or a Region Manager, a deposit of \$500 shall accompany the notice which shall be forfeited in whole or part in the event that the Investigation Officer or Independent Tribunal considers it frivolous. A Notice under this paragraph must be **lodged with the League within five days** after the date of the act or omission to which it relates unless the League agrees to extend this period to a maximum of thirty (30) days.

An extension agreed to by the League may be subject to such conditions as the League thinks fit and such request for an extension is to be provided to the League in writing outlining the reasons for the extension request.

When a League grants an extension, it shall do so in writing and advise all parties to the matter. See Appendix 4 in Section 3 of this handbook for a Notice of Investigation Template.

(ii) **Within two (2) days of the request** for an investigation the League is required to provide all parties notification of the investigation outlining details of the requested incident or matter for investigation.

(b) Notice of any allegation received under paragraph (a) shall be referred to the Investigation Officer for investigation by him/ her. The Investigation Officer may investigate the allegation as he sees fit. **Such investigation shall be completed within 10 days** of the matter being referred to the Investigation Officer unless, at the completion of the 10 days, one (1) extension of time being not more than ten (10) days is then granted by the League at the request of the Investigation Officer.

Request for extension of time must be received in writing by the League.

(c) If the Investigation Officer, after investigation of the allegation, is of the opinion that the Player, Official or Club in question may have been guilty of conduct unbecoming to a Player, an Official or Club or is likely to bring the game of football into disrepute and that the allegation ought to be dealt with by the League Independent Tribunal as hereinafter provided, he/she may lodge with the League a Notice in writing setting out details of the allegation. (Refer to pro forma notice in Section 3 of this handbook).

(d) If a Notice is lodged with the League under paragraph (c), the League administrator who appointed the investigator may provide the alleged offender/s the discretion to plead guilty and take the relevant set penalty for the alleged offence as described in the set penalty schedule below. If a player wishes to enter an early guilty plea and accept the minimum set penalty offered by the League, the players club secretary must contact the League administrator no later than 12 noon on the first business day following the release of the Investigation officer's findings. Such request shall be made in writing and delivered by email to the League Secretary/General Manager/ CEO. If the alleged offence falls outside of the offences listed within the set penalty schedule below or either the investigation officer, player/s being investigated, the player/s allegedly offended against, the League or the President / Secretary of either club request that the matter proceeds to tribunal, by no later than 12 noon on the first business day following the release of the Investigation officer's findings, then no set penalty will be offered and the matter will be dealt with according to section (e) of Rule 5.0.

Set Penalty Schedule

- (a) (i) intentionally striking another person (2 match set penalty) carelessly striking another person (1 match set penalty)
- (iv) charging another person (2 match set penalty)
- (v) engaging in rough conduct against an opponent (2 match set penalty)
- (ix) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of an opponent (1 match set penalty)

- (x) scratching another person (1 match set penalty)
- (xi) tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg (1 match set penalty)
- (h) using abusive, insulting, or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (j) carelessly making contact with an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (k) disputing a decision of an umpire (1 match set penalty)
- (m) attempting to strike another person (1 match set penalty)
- (n) attempting to kick another person (2 match set penalty)
- (o) attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg (1 match set penalty)
- (p) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured player (2 match set penalty)
- (q) engaging in a melee, (1 match set penalty)
- (r) instigating a melee (2 match set penalty)
- (s) wrestling another person (1 match set penalty)
- (t) pinching another person (1 match set penalty)
- (u) engaging in an act of staging (1 match set penalty)
- (v) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language (1 match set penalty)
- (w) use of an obscene gesture (1 match set penalty)
- (x) engaging in time wasting (1 match set penalty)
- (y) interfering with a player kicking for goal (1 match set penalty)
- (z) intentionally shaking, climbing or otherwise interfering with a goal or behind post (1 match set penalty)
- (aa) failing to leave the playing surface when directed to do so by an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (bb) wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9 of the AFL Laws of Australian Football (1 match set penalty).

(e) If a Notice is lodged with the League under paragraph (c), and the League determines that it should be heard at Tribunal the League Secretary shall fix a date, time and place for the hearing of the allegation before the League Independent Tribunal, **being a date not later than 9 days after lodgement of the Notice** and shall advise the Player, official or club, in question of those particulars and forward to the Player, Official, or club, care of the Club Secretary in question a copy, with a copy also to be forwarded to the Club Secretary of the Notice lodged under paragraph (c). Such notices shall be forwarded only to the charged player or official or club prior to the Hearing with such notice to be forwarded to the player and club at least 48 Hours prior to the Hearing and the charged player or official or club shall be informed at the time as to whom it is proposed to call as witnesses.

Notices should include any other relevant information pertaining to the matter at hand. See Appendix 3 in Section 3 of this Handbook for a charge sheet template.

(f) In any proceeding brought before a tribunal or Appeals Board under this rule the Investigation Officer may personally appear before it and lay the necessary charge or charges and act as the prosecuting officer for the League.

(g) If the League Independent Tribunal is of the opinion that the Player, Official or Club in question has engaged in unbecoming conduct or conduct which has or is likely to bring the game of football into disrepute, it may make such orders and give such directions in the matter as it thinks fit.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the League Independent Tribunal: –

- (i) may impose a fine of such amount as it thinks fit on the Player, Official or club in question: or
- (ii) must suspend the Player, Official or Club in question for such matches as it thinks fit, if the Player, Official or Club is found guilty

(h) In any hearing before an AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board the Investigations Officer will be the informant and witness for the league or Association but will usually not be the prosecuting advocate in the hearing.

6.0 AFFILIATED/UNAFFILIATED CLUBS

An affiliated club is a club which is a member of a League/Association which is affiliated with AFL Victoria Regional Commission.

6.1

An affiliated club is a member who is affiliated to an AFL Victoria Regional Commission and must pay an affiliation fee annually to AFL Victoria.

6.2

Clubs in recess must pay an Affiliation Fee including Public Liability Insurance to the level of one senior team rate to AFL Victoria Country.

6.3

After a period of two years in recess the club in recess will be deemed to have disbanded unless, after an application from the club, AFL Victoria Country extends the term.

7.0 DISCIPLINARY MATTERS AND APPEALS

7.1 League Independent Tribunal

7.1.1 Appointment by League

Each League shall, in accordance with its Statement of Rules/Constitution and any relevant rules or regulations, appoint from time-to-time persons to a disciplinary tribunal to be known as the League's Independent Tribunal. A League Independent Tribunal must, when hearing a matter, consist of 3 members, one of whom shall act as chairman.

7.1.2 Qualification

A person shall not be appointed to the relevant League Independent Tribunal if that person in the twelve months preceding the date of the proposed appointment

- (a) has held any office of the League.
- (b) has held any office of a Club competing in a competition conducted by the League.

7.2 Area Appeal Committee

7.2.1 Appointment and Members of Appeal Committee

Subject to the remaining provisions of Regulation 8.1, an Area Appeal Committee shall consist of the relevant Region Manager, AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager and other member as AFL Victoria sees fit. For the purposes of hearing and determining a matter, an Area Appeal Committee shall comprise 3 persons one of whom shall act as chairman.

7.3 AFL National Age Dispensation Policy Appeals

The relevant Appeal Body for Country Leagues is the Commission or Commission appointed panel for

any appeals in relation to the AFL National Age Dispensation Policy as detailed on the AFL Victoria website at www.aflvic.com.au under the Community / Worksafe AFL Victoria Country tabs and select the Policies section.

7.4 Jurisdiction of League Independent Tribunal and Area Appeals Committee

7.4.1 League Independent Tribunal

The following matters shall be referred to a League's Independent Tribunal for hearing and determination:

- (a) reportable offences under the Laws of Australian Football;
- (b) a matter referred by a relevant league or Association on the recommendation of an Investigation Officer;
- (c) any appeal by a club/s, player/s or official/s against the decision of the affiliated League or its independent tribunal for non-reportable offences.
- (d) any other matter referred to it by the relevant League or AFL Victoria Country Football Manager.

7.4.2 Area Appeal Committee

The relevant Area Appeal Committee shall, in accordance with these Regulations, hear and determine:

- (a) any appeal by a player against a decision of either their current Club or League to refuse his application for a clearance; or
- (b) any other matters referred to it by AFL Victoria Country Football Manager; or
- (c) any appeal by a club/s, player/s or official/s against a decision of the affiliated league or its independent tribunal for non-reportable offences.

7.5 Appeals Against Refused Clearances – Players & Other Appeals under 7.4.2

7.5.1 Player May Appeal

- (a) A player may appeal to their relevant Area Appeal Committee if:
 - (i) they are not granted a clearance to transfer from their current Club to another Club within the same League;
 - (ii) they are not granted a clearance to transfer from their current Club to another Club which plays in a League located within the same Region; or
- (b) A player may appeal to the Area Appeals Committee if he is not granted a clearance to transfer from their current club to another club which plays in a club located in another AFL Victoria Country Region.
- (c) A player may only appeal if the refused clearance is in respect of transfer application which is lodged between 1st November and 30th November and 1st February and 30th June in the relevant year under the requirements of the AFL National Player Registration & Transfer Regulations.
- (d) Where a player lodges more than one AFL Victoria Country Clearance/Registration Form in which they seek a clearance to the same or a different Club, they may only appeal with respect to one decision to refuse his/her application for a clearance in each year.

7.5.2 Form of Appeal and Appeal Fee

An appeal by a Player under Regulation 7.5.1 or by a Club, Player or Official under regulation 7.4.2 (c) must be brought by lodging with the Region Manager or their appointed deputy of the relevant Area, a duly completed Notice of Appeal in or substantially in the form prescribed found on the AFL Vic website. The Notice of Appeal must be accompanied by:

(a) payment of an application fee of \$250.00 to AFL Victoria Country (via the Region Manager), which sum shall not be refunded in any circumstance; and

(b) payment to AFL Victoria Country (via the Region Manager) of a further sum of \$500.00 for Senior Clubs, for Junior Clubs a sum of \$250, which sum will be dealt with as follows:

(i) where the Area Appeal Committee upholds the appeal and grants a clearance to the player, the sum paid by the Player shall be refunded; or

(ii) where the Area Appeal Committee dismisses the appeal and considers that the appeal did not have sufficient merit, it may determine in its absolute discretion that all or part of the sum paid by the Player, Club or Official not be refunded.

7.5.3 Timing of Appeal

A Notice of Appeal must be lodged with the Region Manager or their appointed deputy no later than 10 days of the decision by the League Secretary or appointed representative of the Club which refused the clearance.

An appeal shall be considered by the Area Appeal Committee within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the notice of appeal by the relevant Region Manager, or such other period as the Area Appeal Committee may determine.

(a) Prior to determining the appeal, the parties to the appeal (club requesting the transfer and the club opposing the transfer or parties to an appeal under 7.4.2 b) & c) shall, within the time specified by the Area Appeal Committee, lodge with the relevant Region Manager, or their appointed deputy of the relevant Area, written submissions which contain:–

(i) any facts, reasons and arguments concerning the Transfer Application and the appeal; and

(ii) any other matters which they desire to be taken into account by the Area Appeal Committee in determining the appeal.

(b) The relevant Region Manager shall as soon as practicable distribute the written submissions to each party and seek final submissions from each party which, in turn, will be distributed to the Area Appeals Committee.

(c) The Area Appeal Committee:–

(i) shall consider and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner;

(ii) is not bound by the rules of evidence or by practices and procedures applicable to courts of record, but may inform itself as to any matter in any such manner as it thinks fit;

(iv) may grant or deny the transfer and make such orders and give such directions in such manner as it thinks fit.

(d) The Area Appeal Committee shall not be obliged to give reasons for its decision.

7.5.4 How an Appeal may be Lodged

A Notice of Appeal may be lodged by hand, registered post, electronically or facsimile, addressed to the Region Manager or their appointed deputy.

7.5.5 Convening Appeal and Timing for Hearing of Appeal

Upon receipt of a Notice of Appeal, the following shall apply:

(a) within 48 Hours of receiving the Notice of Appeal, the Region Manager or their appointed deputy shall provide a copy of that Notice to the player's current Club which has refused the player's application for a clearance or the League who has made the decision which is being appealed – refer 7.4.2 b) & c);

(b) within 48 Hours of receiving the Notice of Appeal from the Region Manager or their appointed deputy, the current Club must advise the Region Manager or their appointed deputy in writing whether it intends to oppose the player's appeal (the "opposing notice") – clearance appeals only.

(c) if the current Club does intend to oppose the player's appeal, it must, at the same time as lodging the opposing notice, pay to AFL Victoria Country – clearance appeals only:

(i) if the appeal is dismissed the costs for the appeal will be returned; and

(ii) a further sum of \$500 for Senior clubs and \$250 for Junior clubs, which sum shall be dealt with as follows: - clearance appeals only

- where an Area Appeal Committee dismisses an appeal made by a player/ club, the sum paid by the Club shall be refunded; or
- where the Area Appeal Committee upholds the player's appeal and determines that the Club's reason(s) for refusing the clearance did not have sufficient merit, it may determine in its absolute discretion, that all, or part of the sum not be refunded;

(d) If the current Club does not, within the prescribed time, lodge an opposing notice or pay the required amounts, the player's clearance must be granted by the relevant Region Manager without the Area Appeal Committee hearing the appeal - clearance appeals only.

In that event, the current club shall be fined \$150 payable to AFL Victoria within 10 days of the date of Notice of Appeal with all monies to be refunded to the appellant - clearance appeals only.

(e) if the current Club does, within the prescribed time, lodge an opposing notice and pay the required amounts, Regulation 7.5.6 shall apply.

7.5.6 Time and Notification for Appeal

(a) Upon receiving a notice of appeal and payment of the required amounts within the prescribed time, the Region Manager or their appointed deputy shall arrange to provide a decision on the outcome of the appeal within 14 days of receiving the notice of appeal, or as soon as practicable after that time; If the Region Manager does not fix a date, time and place for the decision of the appeal, AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager may, upon application by the player, refer the matter directly to the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board for hearing and determination.

(b) Variation of Hearing

The Area Appeal Committee may vary the timing of submissions initially specified for the appeal and upon doing so, shall immediately provide all parties interested in the appeal written notice of any such variation.

7.6 Sanction imposed by a Club – Player Appeal

7.6.1 Right of Appeal

A Player may appeal to the League Independent Tribunal of the League in which his/her Club plays, in respect of a decision by his/her Club to impose a sanction upon him/her, including without limitation a suspension or monetary sanction.

7.6.2 Form and Timing of Appeal

An appeal by a player must:

- (a) be in writing, signed by the player lodging the appeal;
- (b) provide full particulars of the decision of the player's Club;
- (c) be lodged with the Manager of the relevant League no later than 9 days after the player is notified of the sanction imposed by his Club: and
- (d) be accompanied by a payment to the League Independent Tribunal of \$500.00 for Seniors and \$250 for Juniors, which the League Independent Tribunal shall determine in its absolute discretion whether to refund none, all or part of the \$500.

7.6.3 Time for Hearing

- (a) Upon receipt of an appeal under this Regulation 7.6, the Secretary or appointed representative of the relevant League shall: –
 - (i) fix the date, time and place for the hearing of the appeal within 14 days of receipt of the appeal, or as soon as practicable after that time; and
 - (ii) give written notice of these particulars to the player and the relevant Club at least 72 Hours before the date and time scheduled for the appeal.
- (b) The League Independent Tribunal may vary the date, time and place initially specified for the appeal and upon doing so, shall immediately provide all parties interested in the appeal written notice of any such variation.

7.6.4 Player may still Lodge Clearance

Nothing in this Regulation 7.6 shall prevent a player from seeking a clearance from his Club in accordance with these Regulations.

7.6.5 No Further Right of Appeal

A decision by a League Independent Tribunal in respect of an appeal brought under this Regulation 7.6 shall be final and no appeal may be made to other AFL Victoria Country Appeal processes.

7.7 Procedure and Evidence before League Independent Tribunal and Area Appeal Committee

7.7.1 Application of this Regulation

Unless otherwise stated, the provisions contained in this Regulation 7.7 shall apply in respect of all hearings of a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee.

7.7.2 Regulate Own Procedure

Subject to the further matters set out in this Regulation 7.7, a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee may regulate any proceedings brought before it in such manner as it thinks fit.

7.7.3 Conduct of Hearing and Attendance

(a) Conduct

A hearing before a League Independent Tribunal shall be:

- (i) inquisitorial in nature; and
- (ii) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as a proper consideration of the matters before it permits

(b) Attendance

A person shall attend and appear before a League Independent Tribunal (Area Appeal Committee hearings are determined by submission – no attendance at such hearings are required) at the date, time and place fixed for hearing. Where a person fails to attend, other than a player reported for a field offence, before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, as the case may be, that body may hear and determine the matter in that party's absence.

Players reported for a field offence must attend the next tribunal hearing of the League Tribunal. The player cannot play unless the case has been heard. Where the Tribunal deems that the player has reasonably been unable to attend the hearing and therefore adjourns the matter the player shall be eligible to play pending resolution of the matter.

(c) Adjournment

In the event that an adjournment is sought by a charged player, because of legal action, such player will be automatically ineligible to play or participate in any official match until such charges have been heard.

7.7.4 Rules of Evidence

(a) Not Bound by Rules of Evidence

A League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee is not bound by the rules of evidence or practices and procedures applicable to courts of record but may inform itself as to any matter and in such manner as it thinks fit.

(b) Video Evidence – League Independent Tribunal

Where a League Independent Tribunal is conducting a hearing into a reportable offence or other alleged conduct of a person and it considers that video evidence is capable of determining the reportable offence or alleged conduct, the League Independent Tribunal may after hearing evidence make a finding solely on the basis of that unaltered video evidence.

7.7.5 Specific Procedure for Player Clearance – Player declaration in Dispute – Area Appeal Committee Only

Where a player has lodged an appeal for a clearance and an issue before the Area Appeal Committee is the validity of a player declaration between the player and their current Club, the following procedure shall apply:

- (a) the Area Appeal Committee shall adjourn the hearing of the matter for a period of 14 days, or

such other period as determined by the Chairman of the Area Appeal Committee;

(b) within 7 days of the adjournment, the player and the Club the player is seeking a clearance to shall provide written submissions to the Chairman regarding the player declaration in dispute:

(c) the Area Appeal Committee shall determine the validity of the player declaration based upon the written submissions provided by the parties. In undertaking that task, the Area Appeal Committee may obtain its own legal advice concerning the issues requiring determination;

(d) where the Area Appeal Committee determines that the player declaration is valid and enforceable, it shall advise the parties in writing and the appeal shall stand dismissed. Such a decision shall be deemed to be a decision made under Regulation 7.7.11(a); and

(e) where the Area Appeal Committee determines that the player declaration is invalid and unenforceable, the Area Appeal Committee shall advise the parties accordingly in writing, re-convene the further hearing of the appeal, and proceed to determine the appeal based on any other relevant matters put before it.

7.7.6 Natural Justice and Other Obligations

A League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee Board shall:

(a) provide any person whose interest will be directly and adversely effected by its decision a reasonable opportunity to be heard in person or in writing as determined by the panel;

(b) hear and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner; and

(c) make a decision that a reasonable body could honestly arrive at.

7.7.7 Express Exclusion of Natural Justice – League Independent Tribunal Only

A League Independent Tribunal shall endeavour to hear and determine any reportable offence or matter referred to it before the person's Club is next scheduled to compete, irrespective of whether the hearing is scheduled at short notice or whether the hearing of the matter may affect the person's or the person's Club's preparation for the next scheduled match. To the extent that the rules of natural justice require that:

(a) a person be given adequate notice of or sufficient time to prepare for a hearing; or

(b) the hearing be scheduled at a time that does not affect the person or the person's Club preparation for the next scheduled match, those requirements are expressly excluded from these Regulations.

7.7.8 New Hearing

An Area Appeal Committee and a League Independent Tribunal (if it is hearing an appeal), shall deal with the appeal as a new hearing.

7.7.9 Standard of Proof

A League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee shall decide a matter before it to its reasonable satisfaction.

7.7.10 Onus of Proof

No person appearing before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee shall bear an onus of establishing the matters before the relevant body for determination.

7.7.11 Decision and Sanction

(a) Decision

If the case is heard by the Tribunal or Area Appeals Committee and a player is found guilty of an offence the player may be subject to penalty as determined by the tribunal or area appeal committee as permitted within regulation 11.0. Players may also be subject to further penalty at the discretion of the tribunal or panel based upon the strength of evidence put before the tribunal or Area Appeals Committee.

(b) Majority Decision

The question(s) before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee must be decided according to the opinion of a majority of members constituting the relevant body.

(c) Sanction – League Independent Tribunal

In the case of a League Independent Tribunal determining a sanction for a reportable offence or other conduct which has been sustained against a person, the League Independent Tribunal may have regard to any matters which it considers relevant to the question of sanction and without limitation may consider:

- (i) the seriousness of the reportable offence or conduct sustained against the person;
- (ii) any injury sustained or effect upon the person against whom the reportable offence or conduct has been committed;
- (iii) the prior record of reportable offences or conduct committed by the person; and
- (iv) in so far as they are relevant, any objectives contained in AFL Victoria Country Rules and Regulations or League Rules.

(d) Hearing on Sanction - League Independent Tribunal

Where a matter is sustained against a person by a League Independent Tribunal, the League Independent Tribunal shall provide that person a reasonable opportunity to be heard on the question of sanction before imposing any sanction. It is the responsibility of the guilty players advocate to attempt to mitigate the sanction.

(e) Set Sanctions

A League may pass a rule which prescribes a range of set sanctions for particular reportable offences, provided the rule complies with any guidelines published from time to time by AFL Victoria Country. Sanctions will apply to the matches identified by the tribunal or the next matches the person would be eligible to participate in.

(f) Payment of Monetary Sanction

Unless otherwise determined by a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, any monetary sanction imposed shall be paid to the relevant League or no later than 28 days after the decision of a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, as the case may be.

7.7.12 No Reasons

A League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee is not obliged to give reasons for any

decision made by it.

7.7.13 Unreasonable Restraint of Trade

A League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee shall not make a determination which amounts to an unreasonable restraint of a person's trade.

7.7.14 Guidelines

(a) AFL Victoria Country may make, revoke or amend guidelines for the practice and procedure with respect to a hearing before a League Independent Tribunal or an Area Appeal Committee. Such guidelines are expected to be adopted and followed by each League and League Independent Tribunal and each Area Appeal Committee of affiliated leagues.

(b) The current guidelines for the practice and procedure with respect to a hearing before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee is contained in the document headed "AFL Victoria Country Independent Tribunal and Appeal Board/ Committee – Guidelines for Tribunal and Appeal Board Members" section 3 of this Handbook. Guidelines do not overrule any AFL Victoria Country regulation where there is conflict.

7.7.15 Representation

At any hearing before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, a person, other than a witness, may appear in person or appear with and be represented by an advocate. No person shall be represented by an advocate who is a barrister or solicitor or qualified to practise as a barrister or solicitor. For the purposes of an AFL Vic Country tribunal hearing an offended against player is a witness.

7.7.16 Co-operation with League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeals Committee

(a) A person shall appear before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee if requested, unless the relevant body is satisfied that the person has a legitimate reason for not attending.

(b) Any person who appears before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee shall:

- (i) fully co-operate with the relevant body;
- (ii) truthfully answer any questions he or she is asked;
- (iii) upon request by the relevant body, provide any document in that person's possession or control which is relevant to the matter to be determined by the relevant body;
- (iv) not make any statement or act in a manner which is false or misleading or calculated to mislead or which is likely to mislead; and
- (v) act in a courteous and polite manner during the hearing and after a decision has been made.

(c) Where a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee considers that a person has contravened this Regulation 7.7.16, it may deal with the matter and impose sanctions upon the person as it in its absolute discretion deems fit. Provided the person is given natural justice to state their case before the tribunal prior to any sanction being imposed.

8.0 AFL VICTORIA COUNTRY Appeal Board – APPEAL FROM LEAGUE INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL OR AREA APPEAL COMMITTEE DECISION

8.1 AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board

8.1.1 Appointment

AFL Victoria Country Football Manager may from time to time appoint persons to a board to be known as the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board.

8.1.2 Members of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall consist of: –

- (a) a chairman and a deputy chairman, and
- (b) a panel of not more than 5 who in the opinion of AFL Victoria Country Football Manager, possesses a knowledge of Australian Football and is suitable for appointment (“panel members”).

8.1.3 Absent Members

If for any period and for any reason a member is absent or unable to attend a hearing of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board, AFL Victoria Country Football Manager may appoint a person who in his opinion is a suitable replacement.

8.1.4 Resignation

A member of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may resign by providing notice in writing to AFL Victoria Country Football Manager.

8.1.5 Removal

AFL Victoria Country Football Manager may remove a member of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board at any time in his absolute discretion.

8.1.6 Composition for Hearing

For the purpose of hearing and determining an appeal, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall be constituted by: –

- (a) the chairman or in the chairman’s absence, the deputy chairman who shall act as chairman; and
- (b) at least two panel members; and the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board as constituted shall conduct a hearing in respect of the appeal.

8.2 Regulation Paramount

Regulation 8 prescribes the procedures for an appeal commenced by a charged person or organisation, excluding umpires or witnesses in respect of a decision made by a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee.

To the extent that any provision in Regulation 8 is inconsistent with any other AFL Victoria Country rule or regulation, the provisions of Regulation 8 shall prevail.

8.3 Right of Appeal

(a) Only the charged person or organisation, subject to the decision of a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee under Rule 7.7.11, may appeal to AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board provided the appeal is brought no later than 2.00 pm on the second day after which the decision of the tribunal or relevant body was made.

(b) The right of a person to appeal to AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board does not apply to a decision of a League Independent Tribunal in respect of an appeal by a Player under Regulation 7.6.

8.4 Notice of Appeal

An appeal under Regulation 8.3 shall be brought by lodging with AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager a duly completed "AFL Victoria Country Notice of Appeal" in or substantially in the form prescribed, accompanied by: –

(a) any documents initially provided to the relevant body whose decision is the subject of the appeal.

(b) payment or evidence of payment to AFL Victoria Country of the sum of \$2500 for Senior clubs/ organisations and for Junior clubs/organisations a sum of \$1250 for costs of the appeal, which sum shall not be refunded in any circumstances; and

(c) payment or evidence of payment to AFL Victoria Country of the further sum of \$3,000 for Senior clubs/organisations and for Junior clubs/ organisations a sum of \$1500, which sum shall be dealt with as follows:–

(i) where the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board upholds the appeal, the sum of \$3000 or \$1500 shall be refunded; or

(ii) where the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board dismisses the appeal and considers that the appeal did not have sufficient merit, it may determine in its absolute discretion that all or part of the sum of \$3,000 or \$1500 not be refunded.

8.5 Lodgement of Notice of Appeal

An AFL Victoria Country Notice of Appeal shall be lodged by: –

(a) hand delivering; or

(b) electronically

that notice addressed to AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager, which must be received by no later than 2.00pm on the second day after the decision of the relevant body was made.

A Notice of Appeal is lodged within time if it is accompanied by evidence that the \$5500 for Seniors or \$2750 for Juniors required to be paid under Regulation 8.4 has been paid and in that respect, the AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager may accept a photocopy of a cheque for the relevant amount and an undertaking that the cheque has been posted to AFL Victoria Country as sufficient compliance with Regulation 8.4.

8.6 Time for Hearing of Appeal

8.6.1 Notification

Upon receipt of an AFL Victoria Country Notice of Appeal and the required sum of \$5500 (Senior) or \$2750 (Junior), AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager shall: –

(a) fix the date, time and place for the hearing of the appeal as soon as practicable; and

(b) advise all parties interested in the appeal in writing of those particulars.

8.6.2 Variation of Time or Place

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may vary the date, time or place specified under Regulation 8.6.1 and upon doing so shall immediately provide all parties interested in the appeal written notice of any such variation. Where the appeal relates to a suspension imposed upon an appellant by a League Independent Tribunal, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall endeavour to hear and determine the appeal before the day on which the appellant's Club is next scheduled to compete.

8.6.3 Attendance

All parties to the appeal shall attend and appear before the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board at the date, time and place fixed for the hearing of the appeal. Where a party fails to attend before the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may hear and determine the appeal in that party's absence or have the unavailable party available by phone or video link should the need arise.

8.7 Obligations of Appeal Board

8.7.1 Natural Justice and Other Obligations

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall: –

(a) provide any person whose interest will be directly and adversely affected by its decision a reasonable opportunity to be heard;

(b) hear and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner; and

(c) make a decision that any reasonable body could honestly arrive at in the circumstances.

8.7.2 Express Exclusion

Subject to Regulation 8.6.2 and 8.8, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall endeavour to hear and determine an appeal brought under this Rule 8 before the appellant's Club is next scheduled to compete, irrespective of whether the appeal is heard at short notice or whether the hearing of the appeal may affect the appellant's or the appellant's Club's preparation for the next scheduled match. To the extent that the rules of natural justice require that: –

(a) a person be given adequate notice of or sufficient time to prepare for an appeal; or

(b) the appeal be scheduled at a time that does not affect the appellant's or the appellant's Club's preparation for the next scheduled Match, those requirements are expressly excluded from these Regulations.

8.8 Adjournment and Stay of Sanction

8.8.1 Person to Serve Sanction

Subject to Regulation 8.8.2, where a League Independent Tribunal imposes a sanction which prevents the appellant from participating in a match, the appellant shall serve that sanction pending the determination of the appeal.

8.8.2 Power to Adjourn and Stay of Sanction

Subject to Regulation 8.8.3, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may of its own motion or upon application of any party to the appeal, order: –

(a) that an appeal be adjourned; and/or

(b) a stay of the execution of the sanction imposed by a League Independent Tribunal pending the determination of the appeal.

8.8.3 Exceptional and Compelling Circumstances

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall make an order under Regulation 8.8.2 only where it is satisfied that there are exceptional and compelling circumstances that make it harsh and unconscionable if an order was not made staying the execution of the sanction. In determining that

question, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall without limitation have regard to: –

(a) the merits of the appeal and the appellant's prospects of success;

(b) the interests of other Clubs and Players; and

(c) the effect on the results of the competition conducted by the relevant League.

8.9 New Hearing

(a) Subject to Regulation 8.9(b), the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall deal with the appeal as a new hearing.

(b) The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may have regard to any record of the proceeding before a League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, including a record of any evidence taken at the hearing.

8.10 Procedure and Evidence

8.10.1 Regulate own Procedure

Subject to the further matters set out in this Regulation 8, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may regulate any proceedings brought before it in such manner as it thinks fit.

8.10.2 Conduct of Appeal

The hearing before the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall be: –

(a) inquisitorial in nature; and

(b) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as the proper consideration of the matters before it permits.

8.10.3 Rules of Evidence

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board is not bound by the rules of evidence or by practices and procedures applicable to courts of record, but may inform itself as to any matter in any such manner as it thinks fit.

8.10.4 Video Evidence

Where the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board is conducting a hearing into a reportable offence or other alleged conduct of a person and it considers that video evidence is capable of determining the reportable offence or the alleged conduct, the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may make a finding solely on the basis of that unaltered video evidence.

8.10.5 Specific Procedure: Validity of Playing Player Declaration

Regulation 7.7.5 shall apply to the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board where an issue before it is the validity of a player declaration between the appellant and a Club and any reference to the Area Appeal Committee shall be read as a reference to the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board.

8.11 Power of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board

8.11.1 Decisions

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may confirm, reverse, increase or modify the decision of the body the subject of the appeal and make such orders and give such directions in such manner as it

thinks fit. Any decision of the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board is not restricted in any way by the local rules or regulations of the League in question.

8.11.2 Certain Regulations to Apply

Regulations 7.7.11(c) and (d) and Regulation 8.6.3 shall apply to appeals before AFL Victoria Country Appeal Committee and any reference to the League Independent Tribunal or Area Appeal Committee, as the case may be, shall be read as a reference to AFL Victoria Country Appeal Committee.

8.12 Onus of Proof

No person appearing before the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall bear an onus of establishing the matters before it for determination.

8.13 Standard of Proof

The AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall decide a matter before it to its reasonable satisfaction.

8.14 Majority Decisions

The question on appeal before the AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board must be decided according to the opinion of a majority of the members constituting AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board.

8.15 No Reasons

The Appeal Board is not obliged to give reasons for a decision under Regulation 8.11.

8.16 Representation

At any hearing before AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board, a person or organisation, excluding umpires or witnesses may appear in person or appear with and be represented by an advocate. No person shall be represented by an advocate who is a barrister or solicitor or qualified to practise as a barrister or solicitor, excepting Investigation Officers who are barristers or solicitors or qualified to practise as a barrister or solicitor.

8.17 Questions of Law and Fact

In the hearing and determination of an appeal, AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall decide all questions of law and fact and without limitation, shall determine the meaning of any words.

8.18 Costs

Parties to an AFL Victoria Country Appeal can apply for reasonable costs by contacting AFL Victoria Football Operations Department.

8.19 Abandon Appeal

(a) An appellant may abandon an appeal no later than 48 Hours prior to the time set down for the hearing by giving written notice to AFL Victoria Community Football Operations Manager, in which case the payments made by the appellant under Regulations 8.4 (b) and (c) shall be refunded.

(b) Where an appellant abandons the appeal within 48 Hours of the time as set down for the hearing or during the conduct of the appeal and AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board considers that the appeal did not have sufficient merit, AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may determine in its absolute discretion that all or part of the payment made under Regulation 8.4(c) not be refunded.

8.20 Validity of Hearing

(a) Where there is any procedural irregularity in the manner in which an appeal has been brought, AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board may still hear and determine the appeal unless it is of the opinion that the irregularity has caused or may cause injustice if the appeal was heard.

(b) A decision of AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board is not invalid because of any defect or irregularity in, or in connection with, the appointment of an AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board Member.

8.21 Co-operation with AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board

(a) A person shall appear before AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board if requested, unless AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board is satisfied that the person has a legitimate reason for not attending.

(b) Any person who appears before AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board shall:

(i) fully co-operate with AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board;

(ii) truthfully answer any questions he or she is asked;

(iii) upon request, provide any document in that person's possession or control which is relevant to the matter to be determined; and

(iv) not make any statement or act in a manner which is false or misleading or calculated to or which is likely to mislead.

(c) Where AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board considers that a person has contravened this Regulation 8.21(a) or (b), it may deal with the matter and impose sanctions upon the person as it in its absolute discretion deems fit.

8.22 Exhaust Internal Appeal

A person shall exercise his or her right of appeal under this Regulation 8 and have any appeal heard and determined by AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board before commencing any proceedings or becoming a party to any proceedings in a court of law.

8.23 Further Time

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules and Regulations, where any time limit is imposed for the doing of any act or thing or for any other purpose (including the time within which a person may appeal to the relevant Area Appeal Board or AFL Victoria Country Appeal Board), AFL Victoria Community Football Manager may in his/her absolute discretion extend or allow any further period of time within which a person may do any act or thing under these Rules & Regulations.

9.0 VILIFICATION AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Full details of the policy are available on the AFL Victoria website www.aflvic.com.au under the Community / Worksafe AFL Victoria Country tabs and select the Policies section.

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10.0 ORDER OFF RULE

In accordance with the AFL Laws of Australian Football, permission has been granted to AFL Victoria Country requiring all affiliated Leagues to adhere to the following guidelines for the Order Off rule:

(A) A player who commits the following AFL Laws of the Australian Football offences shall be reported and ordered off the ground for the remainder of the game and is able to be replaced after 20 minutes of actual playing time. The player red carded can take no further part in the game: –

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Football): (a) intentionally or carelessly

- (ii) kicking another person
- (iii) kneeing another person
- (vii) head butting an opponent or making contact to an opponent using the head
- (b) eye-gouging another person
- (c) stomping on another person
- (d) intentionally making contact with or striking an umpire
- (e) attempting strike an umpire
- (f) spitting at or on an umpire
- (j) carelessly making contact with an umpire

(cc) engaging in any other act of misconduct or serious misconduct

(B) A player who commits the following AFL Laws of Australian Football offences shall be reported and ordered from the ground for 15 minutes of actual match playing time: –

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Football):

- (a) intentionally or carelessly (i) striking another person
- (iv) charging an opponent
- (v) engaging in rough conduct against an opponent.
- (vi) bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front on when the player has their head over the ball.
- (ix) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of an opponent.
- (x) scratching another person
- (xiii) tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg
- (g) behaving in an abuse, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire.
- (h) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire.
- (k) disputing a decision of an umpire
- (l) spitting at or on another person
- (m) attempting to strike another person
- (n) attempting to kick another person
- (w) use of an obscene gesture

(C) A player who commits the following AFL Laws of Australian Football offences, depending upon the severity of such offence, may be ordered from the ground for 15 minutes of actual match playing time. The player may also be reported.

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Rules Football):

- (o) attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg
- (p) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured player
- (q) engaging in a melee,

- (r) instigating a melee
- (s) wrestling another person
- (t) pinching another person
- (u) engaging in an act of staging
- (v) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language
- (x) engaging in time wasting
- (y) interfering with a player kicking for goal
- (z) intentionally shaking, climbing or otherwise interfering with a goal or behind post
- (aa) failing to leave the playing surface when directed to do so by a field umpire
- (bb) wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9 of the AFL laws of the Game

(D) Any player reported for a second offence listed in (B) and (C) shall be sent from the field for the remainder of the match and is able to be replaced after 20 minutes of actual playing time. The player red carded can take no further part in the game.

(E) For underage matches, field umpires may order a player off the ground for 15 minutes without reporting him.

Note: This would only apply when a player has not committed a reportable offence but has breached the law and given away a free kick in a deliberate or undisciplined manner or behaves in a manner detrimental to the image of the game.

The intention of this rule is to provide the player with a cooling off period.

Implementation

Only field umpires and emergency field umpires have the power to send players from the ground.

When ordering a player off, an umpire shall signal his intention by pointing to the interchange area with an outstretched arm and holding a coloured card above his/her head with the other.

A Red Card indicates the player is ordered off for the remainder of the match and is able to be replaced after 20 minutes actual playing time. The player red carded can take no further part in the game.

A Yellow Card indicates the player is ordered off for 15 minutes of actual match playing time and cannot be replaced within that time.

A player ordered from the ground must leave the ground through the interchange area, report to the Interchange Steward or appropriate official on leaving the field and before returning.

In the event of a player failing or refusing to leave the field when ordered off, he/she shall be reported for misconduct. The player's captain or deputy shall be advised by the umpire that his team shall forfeit the match unless the player leaves the field immediately. If the player still refuses to leave the field, his/her team shall forfeit the match.

Boundary and goal umpires have the power to report however they do not have the power to order players from the ground, they shall advise one of the field umpires, of their report at the next appropriate break in play and the field umpire shall, with the umpire making the report, advise the player he/she has been reported and that player will be ordered from the ground.

For a player to be sent from the ground for the remainder of the match due to being reported twice (on two separate occasions) under Sections (B) and (C) of the Order Off Rule that player must have been reported on both occasions by a field umpire or league appointed boundary or goal umpire.

11.0 SET PENALTIES & REPRIMANDS

All AFL Victoria Country affiliated Leagues shall adopt set penalties for reportable offences and such set penalties shall contain the following provisions.

11.1. Any player reported for the following offences (as numbered in the Laws of Australian Football) may apply for a set penalty suspension of the relevant number of matches as identified.

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Rules Football):

- (a) intentionally or carelessly
- (i) intentionally striking another person (2 match set penalty) carelessly striking another person (1 match set penalty)
- (iv) charging an opponent (2 match set penalty)
- (v) engaging in rough conduct against an opponent (2 match set penalty)
- (ix) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of another person (1 match set penalty)
- (x) scratching another person (1 match set penalty)
- (xi) tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg (1 match set penalty)
- (h) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (j) carelessly making contact with an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (k) disputing a decision of an umpire (1 match set penalty)
- (m) attempting to strike another person (1 match set penalty)
- (n) attempting to kick another person (2 match set penalty)
- (o) attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg (1 match set penalty)
- (p) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured player (2 match set penalty)
- (q) engaging in a melee, (1 match set penalty)
- (r) instigating a melee (2 match set penalty)
- (s) wrestling another person (1 match set penalty)
- (t) pinching another person (1 match set penalty)
- (u) engaging in an act of staging (1 match set penalty)
- (v) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language (1 match set penalty)
- (w) use of an obscene gesture (1 match set penalty)
- (x) engaging in time wasting (1 match set penalty)
- (y) interfering with a player kicking for goal (1 match set penalty)
- (z) intentionally shaking, climbing or otherwise interfering with a goal or behind post (1 match set penalty)
- (aa) Failing to leave the playing surface when directed to do so by an umpire (2 match set penalty)
- (bb) wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9 of the AFL Laws of Australian Football (1 match set penalty)

Players are encouraged to apply for the minimum set penalty.

If the reported player has been previously suspended or reprimanded in the current or the preceding season the player shall not be able to accept the set penalty until offered by the League Secretary/ General Manager.

The League Secretary / General Manager is the only person empowered to decide, after studying a player's tribunal history whether a player can accept the minimum prescribed penalty or will be required to attend the Tribunal hearing.

If a player wishes to accept the minimum set penalty the club secretary must contact the League Manager, no later than 12 noon on the first business day immediately following the match for approval.

Such requests shall be made in writing, delivered, sent by facsimile or email to the League Secretary/ General Manager / CEO,

If the case is heard by the Tribunal or Area Appeals Board and a player is found guilty of an offence (as outlined in 1 or 3) the player may receive the prescribed set penalty as a minimum (suspended sentences can only be provided for if the prescribed set penalty is applied - i.e... player found guilty and suspended for 3 matches for striking with 2 matches suspended, player to serve 1 match), or a reprimand (refer following).

Players may also be subject to further penalty at the discretion of the tribunal.

Reprimands

If the case is heard by the Tribunal and a player is found guilty of an offence the player may receive a reprimand. Only the offences as listed following can carry a reprimand as the minimum penalty.

Reprimands can be applied where a player is found guilty of an offence as follows and any reprimand is to be determined at the Independent Tribunals discretion taking into consideration, but not limited, to a player's playing record and player's previous tribunal history.

Offences Where a Reprimand May Apply (at the discretion of the Independent Tribunal)

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Football)

- (a) intentionally or carelessly
- (i) striking another person
- (iv) charging another person
- (v) engaging in rough conduct against an opponent
- (ix) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of an opponent
- (p) making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured player.
- (x) scratching another person
- (xi) tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg
- (m) attempting to strike another person
- (o) attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg
- (
- (q) engaging in a melee
- (s) wrestling another person
- (t) pinching another person

- (u) engaging in an act of staging
- (v) using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language
- (w) use of an obscene gesture
- (x) engaging in time wasting

- (y) interfering with a player kicking for goal
- (z) intentionally shaking, climbing or otherwise interfering with a goal or behind post
- (bb) wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9 of the AFL Laws of Australian Football.

11.2. Umpires shall report and charge any player in accordance with the normal procedures for offences listed in 11.1 but the report shall not be heard by a Tribunal unless so requested by either the Umpire who lodges the report, the reported player, the player allegedly offended against or the President/Secretary of either club.

If the report is not requested to be heard by a tribunal by any party named above the player is automatically given the identified set match penalty.

Such requests shall be made in writing, delivered, sent by facsimile or email to the League Secretary/General Manager, no later than 12 noon on the first business day immediately following the match.

11.3. Any player reported for the following offences shall appear before the League Tribunal:

22.2.2 (Laws of Australian Football):

- (a) intentionally or carelessly
- (ii) kicking another person
- (iii) kneeing another person
- (vi) bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front-on when that player has their head down over the ball
- (vii) head butting or making contact to an opponent using the head
- (b) eye-gouging another person
- (c) stomping on another person
- (d) intentionally making contact with or striking an umpire
- (e) attempting to strike an umpire
- (f) spitting at or on an umpire
- (g) behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire
- (l) spitting at or on another person
- (cc) engaging in any other act of misconduct or serious misconduct

(Note: – misconduct covers offences not covered specifically under other laws, e.g., urinating in view of spectators, exposing themselves in front of spectators, etc.)

11.4. These set penalties do not apply to club officials.

12.0 TREATMENT OF BLEEDING PLAYERS

Please refer to the AFL Laws of Australian Football Rule 24.

13.0 FINALS ELIGIBILITY –NAB LEAGUE AND VFL PLAYERS

(a) For the purpose of finals qualification and player eligibility, the NAB League Home and Away games shall be considered the equal of AFL Victoria Country senior competition and NAB League matches shall be considered matches of the players senior AFL Victoria Country team for the purpose of eligibility to play in AFL Victoria Country finals.

(b) For purposes of finals eligibility within an AFL Victoria Country affiliated league, a player who has played more than twelve (12) 1st 18 home and away games for a club affiliated with a senior state league competition in that season will not be eligible to play finals within an AFL Victoria Country affiliated competition.

14.0 COACHING ACCREDITATION

All coaches of AFL Victoria Country clubs are required to obtain Level 1 Accreditation specific to the age of the players they are coaching, prior to the commencement of the season. The penalty to be imposed by leagues if coaches continue to coach having not obtained the necessary accreditation must be

- i) a \$200 fine (Senior) or \$100 fine (Junior) and
- ii) the loss of match points for the matches won by the team whilst the unaccredited coach continues to coach.

In the event of no match points being received the league must apply the above fines. Fines are applied once only (\$200 or \$100) and are not applicable to every match. In the instance where coaches are not accredited and commit to completing the next available (or otherwise agreed upon) AFL Victoria Coach Accreditation Course, the following bonds for clubs are to apply \$200 (Senior) and \$100 (Junior). Where a coach fails to complete the agreed upon AFL Victoria Coach Accreditation Course the bond paid by the club is forfeited.

15.0 OFFICIAL CLUB RUNNERS/ TRAINERS/WATER CARRIERS/ PLAYERS

15.1 Eligibility / Player Eligibility

No person who is a registered player or an official of any club of an open or junior age team, who is under disqualification or suspension by his/her home club or League, shall act as an official runner or water carrier in any competition match, or any other match in which an AFL Victoria Country affiliated club or League is participating.

Any player listed on the team sheet must be at the ground, dressed in football playing attire and ready to take the field if called upon.

Coaches

Further provided that no coach or assistant coach of an AFL Victoria Country team shall act as a runner, trainer or water carrier in a match in which the team that he/she coaches is participating.

Listing of Officials

All official runners, trainers and water carriers shall be listed on the official team sheet and for the purposes of interpretation of this regulation shall be deemed to be officials of the club for the match. All officials should be registered on the Competition Management platform.

Number of Trainers/Water Carriers

No team shall be permitted to have more than the combined total of 6 trainers and water carriers

Doctors

Registered doctors are not required to be registered as an official on the day or included on the official team sheet.

Infringements

Any club that infringes this rule shall appear before the League's Independent Tribunal to determine the penalty. The penalty applicable for determination by the Independent Tribunal shall include the following:

- (a) Substantial fine, and/or
- (b) Loss of points for the match, and/or
- (c) Such other penalties as determined appropriate by the Tribunal.

15.2 Duties

All official runners, trainers and water carriers are to be dressed in a uniform determined by the league.

The sole duty of the runner shall be to confer with the player or players of his/her club and to immediately leave the playing arena in accordance with bylaws of the local league.

The sole duty of a water carrier shall be to convey water to players and to immediately leave the playing arena in accordance with by-laws of local league.

The duty of a trainer shall be to render medical assistance and convey water as required.

The officiating field umpire may, upon infringement of this rule, order the runner, trainer or water carrier of the offending club from the arena for a period of 15 minutes.

Any infringement of this rule or other infringement reported by the officiating umpire that shall include a field umpire, boundary umpire, goal umpire and emergency umpire, shall be referred to the league's independent tribunal.

16.0 REPRESENTATIVE TEAM AVAILABILITY

Any AFL Victoria Country registered player who is not available for selection in an AFL Victoria Country Representative Team, without providing an adequate reason to the Selection Committee will incur a penalty of not being permitted to play in the next match in which his/her club is engaged.

17.0 CLUB TEAM NUMBERS – COMMUNITY CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUES

Championship competing leagues clubs on weekends when club matches are played in addition to Championship matches may increase the number of players per team by 2.

18.0 SERVICE AWARDS:**18.1 Recognition of Service Medallion:**

Former Victorian Country Football League (VCFL) and current AFL Victoria Country affiliated leagues, clubs and umpire groups may nominate suitable persons to be recipients of the Recognition of Service Medallion, where it is desired to acknowledge outstanding service. Conditions of the award are as follows.

The award is to be made to persons who have rendered outstanding service to former VCFL and current AFL Victoria Country leagues, clubs or umpire associations/groups.

The award is to recognize an administrator or volunteer's outstanding contribution to Australian Football with a former VCFL or current AFL Victoria Country affiliate, over an extended period of time. A playing or umpiring career is not necessarily considered when assessing a nominee's qualifying status.

Nominations of people to be the recipients of the award are to be furnished through the affiliated League to the Region Manager for presentation to AFL Victoria for approval. All nominations must be lodged with the AFL Victoria Country Football Manager twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting at which such nomination will be considered.

A record of the service rendered by the nominated person is to be forwarded with each application for issue of the medallion. Unless the conditions of nominating for a Recognition of Service Medallion have been observed Recognition of Service Medallions will only be approved under extenuating circumstances.

19.0 PERCENTAGE WHEN CLUB FORFEITS

Percentage calculation for forfeited matches –

(a) Where a team forfeits during the progress of a match or

(b) Where a team fails to appear.

Refer to AFL Laws of Australian Football 11.2.2 (a) and (b)

(c) Where a match result is altered by protest or dispute.

The team winning the protest or dispute to be awarded full premiership list points and their points scored FOR in such match to be recorded as usual in the calculation of percentage. The offending team shall lose their points scored FOR in such match and as such the calculation of their percentage adjusted accordingly. Scores for the match are to be adjusted following that round of matches.

The AFL Victoria Country rule 19. (c) to be read in conjunction with AFL Law 11.2.2– please note AFL Victoria Country has been granted an exemption to AFL Law 11.2.2 (b) and the AFL Victoria Country rule 19 (c) is to be applied in all cases.

20.0 LEAGUES

20.1 Major Leagues:

For the purposes of AFL Victoria Country permit regulations the following are classed as major leagues; Ballarat Football League, Bendigo Football League, Goulburn Valley League, Hampden Football League, Mornington Peninsula Nepean Football League, North Central Football League, Ovens and Murray Football League, Gippsland League, Sunraysia Football League, Wimmera Football League, Murray Football League, Bellarine Football League, Geelong Football League, and the Central Murray Football League..

20.2 District Leagues:

All other affiliated Football bodies shall be known as the District Leagues.

20.3 Junior Leagues

All affiliated football bodies that provide for football competitions at under 16 and a half or lower age groups or as determined by the local Regional Commission only shall be known as the Junior Leagues.

20.4 Age grouping determination:

It is the responsibility of AFL Victoria Country and or Commission to set or approve any changes in the age grouping structure within an Area or Commission, in consultation with affected leagues.

21.0 UMPIRES

21.1 Registration:

Field Umpires officiating at matches under the control of affiliated Leagues supplied by an affiliated League, Country Region or official umpiring association shall be registered with, and required to pay an annual registration fee to the Regional Commission. Those not supplied from an official umpiring association body shall register with respective League under such conditions as are from time to time determined by the League. It shall be permissible for umpires so registered with the League to be appointed and officiate in an area other than that for which the Region Manager acts in AFL Victoria Country. The fees and expenses of AFL Victoria Country umpires are to be submitted annually to AFL Victoria by Community Umpiring Manager for approval and adoption.

21.2 Approaches to Umpires:

Only the team captain shall be permitted to speak to Field Umpire during the progress of a match at intervals. Any player or official in breach of this rule may be reported by the Umpire and the matter referred to the league independent tribunal and if found guilty their club shall incur the following maximum penalty:

1st offence \$100.00

2nd offence \$200.00

3rd or any further offence \$400.00

22.0 DOMESTIC MATTERS

Subject to the provision herein applied, each League or AFL Regional Commission shall have power to draw up rules not inconsistent with these Rules and provide for the management of its own domestic affairs. In the event of conflict between AFL Victoria Country Regulations and rules, and all amendments to its rules AFL Victoria Country Regulations will take precedence.

23.0 INTERPRETATIONS OR RULINGS FROM REGION MANAGERS

23.1 Questions not Provided for:

In the event of any question arising not provided for in these Rules, AFL Victoria shall have power to decide such question.

23.2 Decisions of AFL Victoria:

All decisions arrived at by AFL Victoria shall be final. Where the question of interpretation or ruling is involved in connection with appeals, disputes, etc., it is desired that the League or the competent authority concerned obtain such interpretation or ruling on AFL Victoria Country Rules and/ or Regulations from, or through, the appropriate Region Managers or AFL Victoria.

23.3 Authority –Region Manager or AFL Regional Commission:

The Region Manager or AFL Regional Commission may make decisions in that area providing that they are not in contradiction to the Rules, Regulations and Resolutions of AFL Victoria Country.

24.0 LICENSING

24.1 Each player in each team of each Club shall wear a uniform (including without limitation guernseys and shorts) that:

- (a) complies with the minimum standards of quality and appearance and layout for uniforms as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time; and
- (b) features the official AFL Victoria Country Logo (as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time), in a manner and on a location on each item of the uniform as specified by AFL Victoria Country from time to time.

24.2 Each Umpire of each Match shall wear a uniform (including without limitation guernseys and shorts) that:

- (a) complies with the minimum standards of quality and appearance and layout for uniforms as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time; and
- (b) features the official AFL Victoria Country Logo (as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time), in a manner and on a location on each item of the uniform as specified by AFL Victoria Country from time to time.

24.3 Each Club and League shall ensure that the football used in any match:

- (a) complies with the minimum standards of quality for footballs as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time; and
- (b) features the official AFL Victoria Country Logo (as determined by AFL Victoria Country from time to time) in a manner and on a location on the match football as is specified by AFL Victoria Country from time to time.

24.4 Each Club shall ensure that its players comply with this regulation.

24.5 Each League shall ensure that any affiliated Clubs comply with this regulation.

24.6 Sanction: A sanction of up to \$50 for a player wearing an incorrect uniform in each senior grade match, up to a maximum of \$500 per team per match. A sanction of up to \$50 for any Umpire wearing an incorrect uniform in any Match. A sanction of up to \$50 where an incorrect football is used in a senior grade match. A sanction for non-compliance with this regulation by any other teams (including junior teams), Clubs or Leagues as determined by AFL Victoria Country on a case-by-case basis, upon the recommendation by AFL Victoria Country Football Manager or Region Manager. Any sanction shall be payable to AFL Victoria Country.

25.0 DOPING POLICY

The Doping Policy of the Australian Football League for the time being in force, shall apply to and be binding upon all Leagues, Associations and Bodies affiliated with the AFL, or affiliated with an Affiliated body of the AFL (refer Anti-Doping Messages for Community Leagues on the AFL Victoria website www.aflvic.com.au under the Community / Worksafe AFL Victoria Country tabs and select the Policies section).

26.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

All Affiliated Leagues and Clubs are directed to introduce the Match Day checklist as detailed in the Marsh National Risk Protection Programme and available at <https://au.marsh.com/sport/afl/clubs.html>.

27.0 AFL AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL MATCH POLICY

(a) AFL Victoria Country has adopted the AFL Australian Football Match Policy for junior affiliated leagues. Any Junior leagues wishing to adopt by-laws that are not consistent with the AFL Australian Football Match Policy must obtain approval from the Region Manager.

(b) Female Football

AFL Victoria Country has adopted the AFL Female Community Football Guidelines for junior and youth girls football competitions. Any junior and youth girls' competitions affiliated to AFL Victoria Country leagues wishing to adopt bylaws not consistent with the AFL Female Football Match Guide must obtain approval from their local Region Manager.

28.0 CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

AFL Victoria commits to the safety and wellbeing of all children. Affiliated leagues and clubs are to implement Child Safe Guideline practices as detailed on the AFL Victoria website www.aflvic.com.au under the Community / Worksafe AFL Victoria Country tabs and select the Policies section

29.0 PLAYERS EXCEEDING PERMITTED NUMBER

Please refer to the AFL Laws of Australian Football – Players Exceeding Permitted Number law 5.5.

30 VARIATION OF TIME

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules and Regulations, where any time limit is imposed for the doing of any act or thing or for any other purpose, AFL Victoria Community Football Manager may in his/her absolute discretion extend or bring forward the time within which a person may do any act or thing under these Rules & Regulations.