

**NORTHERN
FOOTBALL LEAGUE
INCORPORATED**



BY-LAWS

**Adopted
December 2016**

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NORTHERN FOOTBALL LEAGUE INCORPORATED
BY-LAWS

1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

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

Seniors: Senior competition for open age players that does not restrict the playing of Under-19 or Junior footballers.

Reserves: Reserve senior competition for open age players that does not restrict the playing of Under-19 or Junior footballers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

League: The Northern Football League Incorporated.

NFL: The Northern Football League Incorporated.

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

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

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

Senior Competition: Matches scheduled as Senior, Reserve and Under-19.

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

1.2. The appendices and schedules attached should be read in conjunction with and form part of the By-Laws of the Northern Football League.

2. LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

2.1. All games shall be played in accordance with the "Laws of Australian Football" determined by the AFL, as adopted in Schedule 1 by the League.

3. AFFILIATION FEE AND OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS TO THE LEAGUE

- 3.1. Each affiliated Junior and Senior Club shall pay an annual affiliation fee of the sum prescribed by the Board.
- 3.2. Debts: All monies outstanding to the League are to be paid no later than thirty (30) days after the date of invoice issued by the League.
- 3.3. Clubs must be within the determined NFL trading terms by 3pm on the Friday prior to the following rounds to be eligible for match points in all football and netball matches:
 - I. Round 1 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;
 - II. Round 5 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;
 - III. Round 9 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches;
 - IV. Round 14 of Senior and Junior Football and Netball matches.
- 3.4. If a Junior or Senior Club is deemed to be un-financial all football and netball teams from the un-financial club will become ineligible for match points until the club is deemed to be financial by the CEO.
- 3.5. Where a match takes place with a club who is ineligible for match points, the opposition club must win the match to receive the match points. If the unfinancial club wins the match, neither team shall receive the match points.
- 3.6. The NFL Board shall have the right to approve an agreed payment plan for un-financial clubs. If a club breaches the agreed payment plan they will forfeit the right to another payment plan and will become ineligible for match points until they are deemed to be financial by the CEO.
- 3.7. All affiliated clubs participating in final series matches must be financial with the league before the conclusion of the home and away matches. In the event that a participating club is not financial, the league may at its discretion, remove all or any of its teams from their position in the final series matches and promote the next entitled financial teams in their place to participate in the finals series.

4. PLAYER REGISTRATION

4.1. General

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

- 4.1.4. No person may play in any matches authorised or conducted by the League, other than practice matches, unless that person has registered with an NFL Club with player details recorded on the online Competition Management System.
- 4.1.5. Any player found to have participated in a match authorised or conducted by the League without the appropriate permit granted pursuant to By-Law 4.1 may be dealt with by the Board in accordance with By-Law 4.4 and the club whom fielded that player may be dealt with by the Board in accordance with By-Law 4.4.
- 4.1.6. Any player registered with the League and permitted to play with an Affiliated Club who wishes to play with another Affiliated Club must apply to the League for a transfer within the League in accordance with the AFL National Transfer Regulations.

4.2. Playing Out Of Age Group/Grade

- 4.2.1. All players in the under-9 to under-18 age groups (inclusive) may play out of their registered age group/grade. However:
 - I. No player may play more than two years (age groups) above his/her registered age group.
 - II. Where a club fields more than one team in the same competitive age group up to under-18, a player is permitted to move between teams during the home and away matches, but once they have played five (5) matches in the higher graded competition team they may not move to the lower graded team for the remainder of the season.
 - III. Permits are required for movement between teams in the same grade to be lodged as per Schedule 19.
 - IV. Refer to finals eligibility for clarification of movement between age groups/grades and teams for finals participation.

4.3. Player Age Group

- 4.3.1. A player must be at least 7 years old as at April 30 in each year to be eligible to be registered with an NFL affiliated club.
- 4.3.2. A player's age group shall be based on a player's age as at January 1 in each year.

Example: A player's age group shall be based on the age they will be turning in that year. Thus, if a player turns 13 at any stage during the year they are eligible to play in the under-13 competition.

- 4.3.3. Football competitions that extend the age of a competition must adhere to January 1 as the age determination date, e.g. for an U/19 ½ competition in 2017, the age shall be extended back to July 1, 2016, thus allowing the player to be 19 ½ on January 1, 2017.
- 4.3.4. The Northern Football League may at its discretion grant a player permission to play down an age group where a legitimate reason exists, such as physical capacity or disability. Players seeking exemption need to provide relevant medical evidence for assessment to the Football Operations Manager. If no relevant medical evidence can be provided, the NFL will determine the application for exemption as it sees fit on full consideration of the circumstances presented.

4.4. Penalty for Playing Non-Permitted Players

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

- I. Not registered with the League; or
- II. Not permitted to play with that Affiliated Club; or
- III. Under suspension; or
- IV. Not qualified under rule 4.3.

Shall be liable to:

- I. A fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
- II. Disqualification from the competition; and/or
- III. Loss of all premiership points and scores obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams;
- IV. The Board may also deal with the player concerned as it sees fit;

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.5. Fees

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

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

4.6. Player and Official De-Registration

4.6.1. Please refer to Schedule 14 of the Northern Football League Rules.

5. PLAYER TRANSFERS

- 5.1. All intra-league transfers will be dealt with in accordance with the AFL National Player Transfer Regulations set out in Schedule 5 of these By Laws.
- 5.2. No more than three (3) junior players per age group will be permitted to be transferred from an affiliated club to another affiliated club per season unless both affiliated clubs consent to this number being exceeded.

6. COMMUNITY CLUB SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

6.1. Player Points System

- 6.1.1. Player points will be allocated as prescribed in Schedule 25 'AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy'.
- 6.1.2. The total player points (TPP) cap for season 2017 is:
 - I. 45 points for Division 1 Seniors;*
 - II. 45 points for Division 2 Seniors;*
 - III. 45 points for Division 3 Seniors;*
- 6.1.3. The total player points cap does not apply to Reserve, Under-19 or Junior competitions.

6.2. Player Payment Policy

- 6.2.1. Player Payment Policy will be actioned as prescribed in Schedule 28 'AFL VICTORIA PLAYER PAYMENTS POLICY'.
- 6.2.2. The total player payments cap for season 2017 is:
 - IV. \$225,000 for Division 1;*
 - V. \$150,000 for Division 2;*
 - VI. \$100,00 for Division 3;*

6.3. Player Contracts

- 6.3.1. Clubs who sign a player to a contract are required to use the Northern Football League standard playing contract. The contract can be found at the rear of Schedule 5 (Rules for National Player Transfers) in the Northern Football League Rules and By-Laws.
- 6.3.2. If a club elects to sign a player on a contract and does not use the Northern Football League standard playing contract, in the case where there may be a dispute between player and club over contract arrangements the Northern Football League may not be able to help resolve the dispute, as it states in the standard playing contract.

7. MISREPRESENTATIONS

- 7.1. Any player or club representative who makes any misstatement or misrepresentation in applying for registration or clearance may be dealt with by the Board by way of:
 - I. Fine not exceeding \$1000; and/or
 - II. Disqualification from the competition; and/or

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

8. FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS

8.1. Team Numbers

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

Women	
Div 1, 2 & 3	25 Players (18 on-field, 7 bench)

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

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

- 8.1.1. There is no limit to the number of players that can be registered at any one time by a junior team however players participating in matches are subject to the NFL junior rules regarding interchange players.
- 8.1.2. In junior age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and well-being. League expectation is that in these underage matches, all players will play at a minimum half a game of football.
- 8.1.3. No approval will be given to junior teams in age groups Under-13 to Under-18 to expand the interchange bench for home and away matches.
- 8.1.4. If a junior team in age groups Under-9 to Under-12 wishes to have more than the permitted number of players on the interchange bench during a game they will need to seek approval of the League.
- 8.1.5. The captain or acting captain of a team may at any time during a match request that the field umpire count the number of players of the opposing team who are on the playing surface.
- 8.1.6. Where the number of players on the field exceed the permitted number the field umpire will first note the scores at the time of the count and award a free kick to the captain of the opposing team to be taken at the centre circle or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending team. A 50-metre penalty is then added to the position where the free kick was awarded. The Board will determine at a later date if any other penalty is imposed.
- 8.1.7. Where player numbers are found to be correct and/or the request was without merit the field umpire will award a free kick to the captain of the opposing team to be taken at the centre circle

or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty against the offending team. A 50-metre penalty is then added to the position where the free kick was awarded. If the field umpire(s) are of the opinion a request was made to delay play or the request lacked merit, the umpire(s) shall report the captain for time wasting.

8.2. Football Requirements

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

- 8.2.1. All footballs used must have the NFL approved sponsor's logo.
- 8.2.2. In senior matches two new approved footballs must be supplied.
- 8.2.3. In reserve and under-19 matches one new approved football and one approved football in good condition must be supplied.
- 8.2.4. In non competitive junior age groups (under-9 and under-10) one football in good condition must be supplied.
- 8.2.5. In competitive junior age groups (under-11 to under-18) two approved footballs in good condition must be supplied, preferably one of these balls to be new.
- 8.2.6. For senior, reserve and under-19 matches the away captain may select which ball to use in the match.
- 8.2.7. In the event of a dispute as to the selection of the ball or its general condition the Field Umpire of the match shall have the right to select the match ball.
- 8.2.8. In wet weather, prior to the commencement of the match a senior official from both clubs will come together to decide on the number of balls used in that match. In the event of a dispute, the senior official from the home club shall have the right to decide.
- 8.2.9. Red balls can be substituted for yellow coloured balls but only if agreed to by an away club senior official. The colour selected shall be used throughout the match.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

8.3. Start Times for All Competitions

8.3.1. The starting times for junior and senior matches will be determined by the NFL office as per fixturing. A guide of overage start times is as follows:

Senior	2:10pm
Reserve	11:55am
Under-19	9:40am

8.4. Length of Quarters

8.4.1. Senior Competitions

Senior Men	20 Minutes + Time On (All Qtrs)
Reserves Men	1st & 2nd Qtr 20 Minutes (No Time On) 3rd & 4th Qtr 20 Minutes + Time On
Under-19	1st & 2nd Qtr 20 Minutes (No Time On) 3rd & 4th Qtr 20 Minutes + Time On
Women Div 1 & 2	20 Minutes (No Time On) (All Qtrs)
Women Div 3	15 Minutes (No Time On) (All Qtrs)

8.4.2. Junior Competitions

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

8.5. Breaks

8.5.1. Senior Competitions

8.5.1.1. 1/4 Time 5 Minutes

8.5.1.2. 1/2 Time 15 Minutes

8.5.1.3. 3/4 Time 5 Minutes

8.5.2. Junior Competitions

8.5.2.1. 1/4 Time 5 Minutes

8.5.2.2. 1/2 Time 10 Minutes

8.5.2.3. 3/4 Time 5 Minutes

8.6. Promotion/Relegation

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

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

8.6.2.1. The club cannot field a full complement of teams for the forthcoming season;

8.6.2.2. Playing facilities of the club are not of a sufficient standard for the division in which the team is to compete in the next season;

8.6.2.3. There are any other circumstances which, in the opinion of the Board, require a club to be promoted, relegated or refused promotion, including those clubs that have not met their financial commitments to the NFL.

8.7. Under-19 Competitions

8.7.1. All clubs have the option of fielding an under-19 team each season in the League. The allocation of clubs into appropriate divisions shall be determined by the Board. Nomination to field an under-19 team is to be submitted by March 1 on the year of competition.

8.8. 23rd Player Rule

8.8.1. An eligible under-19 player may play as a 23rd player in the affiliated club's senior team. The NFL shall nominate four (4) rounds prior to the commencement of the season where clubs are able to play the 23rd player. This player can not be the same player in all four games; it must be a different player in each of these games, the player must be nominated on the team sheet.

8.8.2. If a player has played three (3) or more career games in the senior team, he is unable to be used as the 23rd player in any of the nominated rounds

8.8.3. Playing under the 23rd man rule shall not affect a player's finals eligibility for reserve and under-19 competitions. Only once a player plays an additional match in the senior team will their finals eligibility for reserve and under-19 competitions be affected.

8.8.4. A player's points allocation under the AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program (Schedule 25) shall not count towards their team's points total when that player is playing under the 23rd man rule.

8.8.5. All clubs must inform the NFL, by 11am on the Friday prior to each round, the name of their 23rd player. The NFL will circulate to all clubs on the Friday afternoon a list of all 23rd players nominated by clubs. This list will also be placed on the NFL website.

8.9. Joining Clubs

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

8.10. Ground Equipment

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

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

8.11. Playing Surface

8.11.1. The Playing Surface shall be:

8.11.2. Oval in shape;

8.11.3. Between 150 metres and 185 metres in length;

8.11.4. Between 95 metres and 155 metres in width.

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

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

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

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

8.11.9. The following areas shall be marked on the Playing Surface:

8.11.9.1. A square, to be called the Centre Square, which shall be located in the centre of the Playing Surface and be 45 metres long by 45 metres wide;

8.11.9.2. A Centre Circle, three (3) metres in diameter, which shall be located in the middle of the Centre Square and have no line drawn across the circle;

8.11.9.3. An Interchange Area, two lines each one metre in length, should be marked 15 metres apart so as to intersect the boundary line at right angles, at the centre wing position on one side of the ground only;

8.11.9.4. A Goal Square at each end of the Playing Surface;

8.11.9.5. A Goal Line and Behind Line at each end of the Playing Surface;

8.11.9.6. 45 metre or 50 metre arcs at each end of the Playing Surface;

- 8.11.9.7. Coaches' line, drawn halfway between the boundary line and the fence/coaches box over which no official is to encroach during the game's playing time;
- 8.11.9.8. Trainers line, marked 15 metres either side of the coaches box from the boundary fence to the boundary line which indicates the place that trainers are to remain clear of the coaches box, unless in the case of providing medical treatment to an injured player in the coaches box area;
- 8.11.9.9. Four Water Carriers boxes, marked along the fence line in each pocket of the ground respectively.

8.12. Coaches Boxes

- 8.12.1. Coaches boxes or benches must be placed on opposite sides of the interchange area and each box/bench must be at least 35 to 40 metres from the marked interchange area;
- 8.12.2. If coaches boxes are fixed, the interchange area must be marked exactly in the middle between the two boxes;
- 8.12.3. Coaches boxes/benches and the interchange area must be placed on the same side of the ground unless prior approval from the CEO is received.]\
- 8.12.4. Fines will be imposed when home clubs fail to meet this requirement or any alternative requirement imposed by the CEO.
- 8.12.5. It is the responsibility of the home club to provide appropriate and suitable seating for the coach, interchange players and his or her support staff (support staff shall not exceed four (4) in number). Umpires may award a free kick against any support staff who does not comply with this rule.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

8.13. Entering Coaching Boxes

- 8.13.1. **Senior/Reserve/Under-19:** Where coach's boxes are situated on the playing surface outside the boundary line, teams are restricted to interchange players and five club officials, one of which is the runner.
- 8.13.2. **Junior:** Where coach's boxes are situated on the playing surface outside the boundary line, teams are restricted to interchange players and only four club officials, one of which is the runner.
- 8.13.3. To ensure that there is no unauthorised entry to the coaching box, a line between the boundary fence and boundary line is to be marked 15 meters either side of the edges of the coaching box as the area for all unauthorised persons to remain clear of.
- 8.13.4. Umpires shall report any infringement of By-Law 9.13.
- 8.13.5. Officials are not permitted to smoke within the playing arena.

8.14. Admission Prices

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

9. FIXTURES

9.1. Preparation

- 9.1.1. The League shall be responsible for the organisation of matches in each division by preparing fixtures for each team in each division for each season. The League may amend a fixture as required.
- 9.1.2. Each affiliated club shall have the opportunity to submit when requested, their preference for any special consideration for fixturing of the following season by the end of October.
- 9.1.3. The League shall distribute draft fixtures in November and clubs shall have two (2) weeks to raise any concerns with the League in regards to their proposed fixture.

9.2. Home and Away

- 9.2.1. The league shall conduct a series of 18 (or such number as the Board shall from time to time determine) Home and Away matches for senior, reserves and under-19s, and a series of 14 (or such number as the Board shall from time to time determine) Home and Away matches for under-18 age groups and below (excluding under-9 and under-10) to determine which of the Affiliated Clubs shall be entitled to compete in the finals matches to be arranged to decide the Premierships.

9.3. Failure to Fulfill Engagements

- 9.3.1. Should any Affiliated Club fail to fulfill its engagement to play in any premiership match, the league may disqualify them from further premiership matches or otherwise deal with such Affiliated Clubs as it thinks fit.
- 9.3.2. Any Affiliated Club failing to fulfill its engagement shall pay all umpires expenses relative to the said fixture plus an additional Fine for breach as set by the Board.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

9.4. Alterations

- 9.4.1. Clubs desiring to conduct senior, reserves, under-19 or junior grade matches on a day or time other than that published by the league in the official fixture may do so providing the following requirements have been satisfied:
 - I. That written agreement for a change to the fixture has been obtained from an office bearer of the opposing club;
 - II. That all appropriate licences and permissions to conduct the game have been received and copies forwarded to the League office prior to the game.

10. LADDERS

10.1. Point Allocation and Match Ratio Calculations

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

10.2. Junior Grading Games

10.2.1. Four (4) points shall be awarded for a win during junior grading games and two (2) points for a draw. No percentage point will be allocated during the grading games.

10.3. Weekly Ladders

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

10.4. Scores Used to Calculate

10.4.1. The scores used by the League to calculate the points and percentages for each competition shall be based upon the scores contained in the goal umpires cards. Should these scores disagree the timekeeping cards will be used as the basis for calculating points and percentages.

10.4.2. In all junior competitions (u18girls and below), the maximum percentage applied will be a total of 60 points score differential.

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

11. CONDUCT OF MATCHES

11.1. Entering Playing Surface

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

- I. Trainers and other authorised Affiliated Club Officials during ¼ time and ¾ time intervals;
- II. Approved trainers when and for so long as is necessary to attend an injured player or to replace such player when such approved trainer is wearing 'League Trainers" Vest;
- III. Medical practitioners, members of St. John Ambulances or other approved first aid attendants when and for so long only as necessary to attend an injured player.

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

- I. Stop play immediately;
- II. Seek assistance of the person(s) authorised to remove the unauthorised person(s) from the Playing Surface;
- III. Until the situation is rectified, all umpires will be accompanied from the Playing Surface by the Umpire Escorts of the two competing clubs who will remain with them until it is mutually agreed that they may leave;

IV. A decision on whether the game will be resumed will be at the sole discretion of the Field Umpire(s) based on consideration relating to personal safety and the general wellbeing of all umpires.

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

11.1.4. A free kick is to be paid against a team if its runner or any other on-field official is positioned within the 45 or 50 metre arc when a player is kicking in after a behind has been scored. In the event the free kick is against the team bringing the ball back into play, the opposing team shall take the free kick from the top of the 45 or 50 metre arc in that half of the ground. If the free kick is against the defending team, the player bringing the ball back into play shall advance to the top of the 45 or 50 metre arc in that half of the ground. An umpire may show discretion only in the event a trainer is in the area to attend to an injured player.

11.2. Match Day Players and Officials

11.2.1. Prior to the commencement of all matches (practice, home and away, and finals), each team of a Club shall prepare a "team list" of all players, on-field officials, runners, selectors, drink carriers and trainers, who are actively involved with the team on that day. All players are to be in numerical order. This list must contain an accurate statement of the players and their numbers allotted for that day. No two players are permitted to play in the same team wearing the same number. Each player on the team list must sign their usual signature beside their name. The team list shall be completed on the official form provided by the League.

11.2.2. At or prior to half time of each match, team managers must hand to the field umpire of the match the original copies of their team lists.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.3. Lodgment of Scores

11.3.1. For all official senior, reserves and under-19 games, all home fixture clubs are required to lodge on-line with the league the final scores, best players and goal kickers by no later than 5:30pm on the day of the match

11.3.2. For all official junior games, all clubs are required to lodge on-line with the league their final scores, best players and goal kickers by no later than 12 noon on the day following the match.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.4. Interchange Procedure of Injured Players

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

11.5. Officials Required For Junior Matches

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

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

11.5.2. *For roles and responsibilities of above volunteers please see Schedule 8.*

11.6. Centre Square

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

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

11.7. Forfeit of Matches

11.7.1. In competitive age groups (under-11 to under-18) a minimum of 14 players from both teams is needed to start a match.

11.7.2. If a match is forfeited due to lack of numbers, the teams may agree to conduct an unofficial practice match and the field umpires may be requested to assist if necessary.

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

11.7.4. Fines: If any club forfeits a scheduled match in either Senior or Junior competition, penalties may be imposed as below:

- I. A penalty not exceeding \$1000 for any game forfeited and may be imposed by the Board in accordance with Schedule 20;
- II. In addition to any financial penalty, the Board may, at its discretion withhold match points for the relevant competing team;
- III. Junior clubs may receive a fine at the discretion of the CEO, if they forfeit a game in the first four rounds.

11.8. Withdrawal of Team

- 11.8.1. In the event that a Club wishes to withdraw any team from competition for the remainder of the season, they must make such notification in writing to the CEO two (2) days prior to the next scheduled match. A notice must be provided two (2) days prior to scheduled match; otherwise, the match shall be considered forfeited.
- 11.8.2. Clubs may be fined if a team is removed from a competition for the remainder of the season. The fine will be applied at the discretion of the CEO.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.9. Evening Up Rule (Women's Div 2 & 3 & Junior Competitions Only)

- 11.9.1. Where one team has between 14 and 18 players and the second team has more players than the first team, both teams shall field the same number of players, therefore an equal number of players shall take the field.
- 11.9.2. For age groups under-9 to under-12, clubs must loan or accept the number of players required to even up the teams.
- 11.9.3. Team Managers, particularly from the team that requires the evening-up rule to apply, must ensure that the process is organised as early as possible and prior to the teams taking the field.
- 11.9.4. If a club does not have jumpers available of a suitable and appropriate size for the age group to facilitate the loan of players, there is no requirement to even-up playing numbers on the field.
- 11.9.5. For age groups under-13 to under-18, if players are not offered to the team with less than 18 players, then playing numbers must be reduced so that both teams field the same number of players. If players are offered, but not accepted, then the team with the greater number of players is not required to reduce playing numbers.
- 11.9.6. Where an imbalance is caused during a match due to injury, playing numbers shall be evened-up for the remainder of the game. A player should join the game from the interchange bench, if available. If not, a player from the team with the greater number of players must be removed from the field.
- 11.9.7. Late Arrivals: Should a player arrive late, that player may take the field at any time provided the following procedure is adhered to:
 - I. The Team Manager shall inform the officials of the other team.
 - II. The addition to the playing numbers on the field can only be made providing the numbers on the field remain equal for both teams.
- 11.9.8. Where a head count is conducted and uneven playing numbers are evident, the scores at the time of the head count shall be noted and the matter referred to the League for determination of the result of the match.
- 11.9.9. Loaning of players: When players are loaned, the Team Manager of both teams shall note on the Team Sheet the number of players loaned. Players may be loaned on a quarter by quarter rotating basis or for the whole match as appropriate.
- 11.9.10. Any dispute regarding By-Law 14 will be referred to the NFL who will determine penalties, if any, to be applied. Penalties may include loss of premiership points and/or score by the offending team and/or the Club of the offending team shall be penalised in accordance with Schedule 20.

11.9.11. The Evening-Up Rule shall not be applied in finals.

11.9.12. Where a player is ordered off the field by the field umpire and there is no replacement available (as per schedule 21) there is no requirement to even-up the playing numbers on the field.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

11.10. Non-Completion of Matches

11.10.1. If any match which has been started and cannot be completed for reasons beyond the control of the affiliated Senior or affiliated Junior Club or Clubs, or where a match has been cancelled at the direction of the officiating umpire, the following procedures shall apply:

- I. If a game is concluded prior to half time and the match cannot proceed within the scheduled time, the teams shall depart the arena and the match will be declared a draw. Each team will be awarded two (2) premiership points and the scores of the teams at the time the match was interrupted would be used to calculate the percentages.
- II. If a game has progressed beyond half time and is unable to proceed with the scheduled time for the match, the teams will depart the arena and the scores of the clubs at the time the match was interrupted shall be deemed to be final scores of the match and shall be used to calculate percentages. The team with the highest score will be declared the winner and awarded four premiership points

11.10.2. If a match has been started and cannot be completed within the time scheduled for reasons within the control of any club, such club will be dealt with by the Board at its absolute discretion in any way it sees fit.

11.11. Match Cancellation – Adverse Weather Conditions

11.11.1. If the air temperature, as broadcast on ABC radio, is below 5 degrees Celsius or in excess of 35 degrees Celsius on a training night, an umpire training session shall be cancelled.

11.11.2. If the air temperature, as broadcast on ABC radio, is below 0 degrees Celsius, or in excess of 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official Northern Football League match at any grade the match shall be cancelled.

11.11.3. In the event that any game is cancelled in accordance with these By-Laws (“Match Cancellation”) a match ratio shall be applied to the ladder for that division in that grade.

11.11.4. In the event that a senior, reserves or under-19 game has commenced, and in the opinion of both club captains the weather conditions have become too hazardous, the game will be abandoned and the provisions of By-Law 15 shall be applied.

11.11.5. In the event that any junior grade (under-9 to under-18) game has commenced, and in the opinion of both club coaches the weather conditions have become too hazardous, the game will be abandoned and the provisions of By-Law 15 shall be applied.

11.11.6. If two or more games are cancelled or abandoned due to adverse weather in the same grade and division, the round will be declared void and no premiership points, percentages or best and fairest votes will be awarded or applied for that round

11.11.7. If the Board, or its representative, during the review of a match, is not convinced that match should have been cancelled or abandoned or the reason for the cancellation or abandonment was not in good faith, it reserves the right to award points or any penalty as it sees fit.

11.12. Match Suspension

- 11.12.1. In the event of severe inclement weather immediately prior to commencement or during a game, such as lightning, very heavy rain, hailstorm or fog, the game can be suspended:
- I. In all senior grade games, upon the agreement of the competing captains in consultation with the field umpire(s); and
 - II. In all junior grade games upon agreement of the competing coaches.
- 11.12.2. A match may be suspended for such time as the competing captains/coaches consider appropriate, but not for a time exceeding 20 minutes.
- 11.12.3. Special Arrangements: Once it becomes apparent that a match will not finish prior to the scheduled start time of a following match, the length of the breaks and/or quarters may be reduced at the discretion of the League. The breaks/and or quarters must be shortened into equivalent time periods and be consistent throughout the remainder of the match. See Schedule 15 'Match Delay Policy' for procedure.

11.13. Ground Inspections

- 11.13.1. All 'home' clubs are required to complete a ground inspection sheet on each Tuesday night prior to a home game. As a result of this inspection, should any risk issues including, but not limited to, the items listed in the ground inspection sheet, be identified, the club must notify the CEO of these issues prior to 10:00 am on the following Wednesday immediately prior to the scheduled match.
- 11.13.2. In the event that an away club has a concern in regards to a ground, they are to make notification to the NFL by 12:00 pm on the Wednesday prior to the scheduled round.
- 11.13.3. The league retains the right to take whatever action it deems necessary to address any issue arising from the ground inspection report, or concerns raised, including but not limited to; moving the game to another venue, cancelling the game or re-scheduling the game to another day or time.
- 11.13.4. On the day of any official match arranged by the League, all players and officials must make a full inspection of the ground on which the match will be played prior to the match commencing. A representative from each club shall complete the official Match Day Checklist via the JLT document (Schedule 7) or mobile app and a representative of each club shall sign the checklist which is to be retained by the home club for seven years.
- 11.13.5. Prior to any player or official signing the team sheet for a match, the home club must make all players aware of the following waiver:

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

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

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

He/she will release the Northern Football League Inc, its servants or agents and voluntary workers, his/her club, its servants or agents and voluntary workers from all liability for any injury, loss or

damage suffered by the player as a result of the use by the player of the venue, its facilities and fixtures.”

11.13.6. Immediately prior to signing the team sheet, an official of the club is required to notify the player or official of the presence of the above waiver on the team sheet.

11.13.7. If any player or official is of the opinion that the venue is unsafe for play for whatever reason, he/she should not sign the team sheet.

11.13.8. Any player or official, who does not sign the official team sheet, is ineligible to take part in the match for which the team sheet is required.

11.13.9. If on the day of any junior grade (under-9 to under-18) match, the umpire and both team coaches deem that the playing surface is unsafe for play to commence or continue, the game may be called off and the result shall be determined by the League.

11.13.10. In the event that a game has commenced, the provisions of By-Law 15 shall be applied.

11.14. Conduct of Behaviour at Matches

11.14.1. Affiliated Clubs shall be held responsible for the conduct of acceptable social behavior prior to, during and after the matches (includes intervals in the match).

11.14.2. A registered official of an Affiliated Club disputing a decision of an umpire or using abusive language or threatening or insulting language before, during or after a match shall be dealt with as the Board deems fit.

12. FINALS

12.1. Senior, Reserve and Under-19 Finals Eligibility

12.1.1. Seniors: Players must play at least three (3) matches (Senior, Reserve, Under-19 and/or Junior competition) with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Senior finals series.

12.1.2. Reserves: *Players must play at least three (3) Reserve matches with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Reserves finals series.*

12.1.3. Under-19: *Players must play at least three (3) Under-19 matches with their Affiliated Club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the Under-19 finals series.*

12.1.4. *Where a club fields multiple teams (Senior/Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, a player must have played a combination of at least three (3) games for the competing teams to be eligible.*

12.1.5. *Any Under-17 player wanting to play in Under-19 finals must play three (3) games in the Under-19s with the Affiliated Club or three (3) games with the Affiliated Junior Club, to be eligible to play Under-19 finals.*

12.1.6. Any player playing more than 50% of a Club's Senior home and away matches is ineligible to play with that Club's Reserves or Under-19 teams in the finals series, with exception where a Club fields multiple teams (Senior/Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, as per By-Law 6.1.4.

12.1.7. Any player playing more than 50% of a Club's Reserve home and away matches is ineligible to play with that Club's Under-19 team in the finals series, with exception where a Club fields multiple teams (Reserve/Under-19) in a finals series on the same day or weekend, as per By-Law 6.1.4.

12.1.8. Any player drafted by an AFL club, placed on an AFL supplementary or rookie list or included on an official VFL list can, provided he has qualified under the rules, return to play with the League in the finals in the Senior and Reserve grade only.

12.1.9. Any player that plays 12 or more games in the TAC Cup Under-18 competitions may, provided he has qualified under the rules, return to play with the League in the finals of the Senior or Reserve grades only.

12.1.10. Where a club has two Under-19 teams in separate divisions and a player has played for both teams during the home and away season, the player is not permitted to play finals in the lower division once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches in the higher division.

12.1.11. Where a Club has two Under-19 teams in the same division, each team must be registered separately and they will take part in the competition on the same terms and conditions as if they were entered as separate clubs. Movement of players between teams in these circumstances can only be made after League approval is obtained. A list of players of teams concerned must be forwarded to the League office before the first round of the home and away season. Players must play six (6) games for the team playing in the finals and can be rotated between teams no more than three (3) times during the home and away season.

12.1.12. Where a player plays in more than one grade on the same day or the same weekend during the home and away season, the higher grade match shall be counted towards the finals eligibility only.

12.1.13. The hierarchical order for grades is Senior, Reserve, Under-19 and Junior.

12.1.14. If a player plays an NFL match and a TAC or VFL match on the same weekend, the NFL match does not count towards finals eligibility.

12.2. Junior Finals Eligibility

12.2.1. Players may only play finals for one (1) junior team per season. The team a player plays their first final match with will remain their 'finals team' for the remainder of the current season. Exemptions may be granted where a team has a genuine shortage (By-Law 6.2.7).

12.2.2. Players must play at least three (3) matches with their Affiliated Junior Club in the age group and division in which he/she competes in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the finals series.

12.2.3. A player who qualifies for finals in multiple divisions is not permitted to play finals in the lower division once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches in the higher division.

12.2.4. The hierarchical order for junior grades is blue, red, green and silver.

12.2.5. A player who qualifies for finals in multiple age groups is not permitted to play finals in the younger age group once they have played five (5) or more home and away matches in the higher age group.

- 12.2.6. In junior finals a number of players greater than 24 may be utilised, provided that each player is eligible to compete in a finals series in accordance with By-Laws 6.2. Clubs must submit an application to the CEO fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the junior finals for approval to apply this rule.
- 12.2.7. Where a team has a genuine shortage of eligible players for finals games, the club may seek approval from the League for the utilisation of players from other teams for each finals match played.
- 12.2.8. For the purpose of By-Law 6.2.7, a team has a “genuine shortage” for finals games when they have less than 20 players.
- 12.2.9. An application under By-Law 6.2.7 must include at least six (6) players. League approval will only be given for players from a team in a lower division. If the club does not have a team in a lower division, it may nominate players from a lower age group. In exceptional circumstances variations to this rule may apply upon application to the League.
- 12.2.10. Players approved under By-Law 6.2.7 are eligible to play finals with the team who sought approval. Finals teams utilising players approved under By-Law 6.2.7 may play a finals game with eligible and approved players on the Team Sheet to a maximum on the Team Sheet of 20 players.
- 12.2.11. Where a player has played twelve (12) or more matches in the TAC Cup Under-18 competitions in a season they are not eligible to play Junior finals in the NFL in that season.

12.3. Team Participation

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

12.4. Finals Uniforms/Change Rooms

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

12.5. Timekeepers

12.5.1. Senior Finals

12.5.1.1. Clubs are to supply timekeepers for all finals except Grand Finals. The NFL will supply independent timekeepers for all senior Grand Finals.

12.5.2. Junior Finals

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

12.6. Drawn Matches in Finals

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

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

12.7. The Board

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

12.8. Entrance Fees

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

13. UNIFORMS

13.1. General

13.1.1. The colors of the League shall be a combination of blue, yellow, white, and silver. Each club must register its colours and uniforms (guernsey, shorts and socks) at the beginning of the season and they shall not be changed without the approval of the Board.

- 13.1.2. All club uniforms (guernseys, shorts and socks) worn in NFL matches must be supplied by NFL licensed suppliers and ordered through the NFL.
- 13.1.3. The teams of each club shall wear their registered club guernseys as approved by the Board.
- 13.1.4. If two clubs compete in the same division and those clubs' colors are the same or similar and are drawn to compete against one another, the away club must change its jumper, upon instruction from the CEO.
- 13.1.5. In the event of teams whose colors are the same or similar meeting in finals, the club finishing higher on the ladder at the completion of the season will retain its jumper.
- 13.1.6. All teams shall wear their registered club colored shorts, at all home games. All teams visiting as the away team are required to wear white shorts. All shorts shall be supplied by manufacturers as approved by the Board from time to time.
- 13.1.7. Approval of jumper designs will not be given over the phone; a sample of the jumper must be provided to the Northern Football League before approval is given.
- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

13.2. Compression Garments

- 13.2.1. For competitive age groups (under-11 to open age) compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body must not extend beyond a player's football jumper and/or shorts.
- 13.2.2. For uncompetitive age groups (under-9 and under-10) compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body may be full length and extend beyond a player's jumper and/or shorts.
- 13.2.3. For all age groups compression garments worn by players beneath the uniform on the upper and/or lower body must be completely beige or black in colour.
- 13.2.4. All other garment types are not permitted to be worn in addition to a player's uniform unless prior approval is granted by the League.
- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

13.3. Player Boots, Jewellery and Protective Equipment

- 13.3.1. Interpretation: For the purpose of By-Law 20.3, protective equipment includes but is not limited to:
- 13.3.1.1. Hard shell helmets;
 - 13.3.1.2. Knee braces;
 - 13.3.1.3. Shoulder pads;
 - 13.3.1.4. Back supports;
 - 13.3.1.5. Arm guards; and
 - 13.3.1.6. Any other item designated as such by the NFL.
- 13.3.2. A Player shall not wear during a match:

- I. Any form of jewellery; the taping of piercings is prohibited unless prior approval is given by the league;
 - II. Boot studs, plates/cleats or any protective equipment (other than protective equipment approved by the NFL) unless the field umpire is satisfied that the item does not constitute a danger or increase the risk of injury to other players competing in the match;
 - III. Protective equipment which has been approved by the NFL, if the field umpire is satisfied that such equipment has, during the match, become dangerous or increased the risk of injury to other players;
 - IV. *Gloves: players are not permitted to wear gloves unless they are first been granted to wear the gloves by the league (medical reasons) and the league has also inspected the gloves. The umpire will sight written approval from the league and also inspect the gloves prior to the commencement of the game.***
- 13.3.3. At any time before or during a match, a field umpire may inspect a players boots or hands or any protective equipment that a player intends to wear or use during a match.

13.4. Logos

- 13.4.1. The teams of each club shall wear their registered club colored guernseys, bearing the League logo, at all games.
- 13.4.2. Clubs may apply to the CEO for approval to incorporate sponsors' logos on their uniforms as per Schedule 22.
- 13.4.3. No logos will be approved for addition to the back of playing shorts.
- 13.4.4. The teams of each club shall wear their registered club colored shorts, bearing the League logo, at all games.
- 13.4.5. Application may be made by clubs for logos, outside of the above listed dimensions, which may be approved at the absolute discretion of the CEO.
- 13.4.6. The teams of each club shall wear their registered club colored socks, bearing the League logo, at all games.
- 13.4.7. No player will be permitted to compete in any official League match without a number on the back of the playing guernsey. No two players in the one team shall have the same number. Each number shall be a whole number between one (1) and ninety-nine (99).
- 13.4.8. Except with the prior permission of the League, clubs fielding senior and reserves teams are to have one set of guernseys for both teams numbered in whole numbers greater than zero (0) with a maximum of two digits.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

14. TEAM LISTS

14.1. General

- 14.1.1. For all competitions a Team Sheet shall:
- 14.1.2. List the full names and jumper numbers of the Players in the team;
- 14.1.3. Identify the interchange players;

- 14.1.4. Identify the captain;
- 14.1.5. List the names of the coach, runner and any other official participating in the match.
- 14.1.6. Teamsheet provided to umpires must replicate the online teamsheet.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

14.2. Records

- 14.2.1. All clubs fielding teams in any grade of the finals series, must lodge with the league a list as accurate as possible showing the number, name, age, and height of all permitted players likely to participate in the finals match for inclusion in the record at least 10 days prior to the playing of the first finals series game.
- 14.2.2. All senior Affiliated Clubs shall forward to the League at least 14 days prior to the commencement of the first competition match in each season, one list for senior and reserve grades and one list for under-19 accurately stating all the club registered players' given names, surnames and jumper numbers for inclusion in the record for the first game.
- 14.2.3. All senior Affiliated Clubs shall forward to the League by no later than 5:00 pm on the Monday immediately before a scheduled game the club notes for publishing in the record.
- 14.2.4. Records shall be allocated to home clubs for distribution at all Home and Away matches on the following basis:

Division 1	100
Division 2	75
Division 3	50

- 14.2.5. All records shall be collected by home club from the NFL office prior to 5:00 pm on the Friday prior to each match. Quantity of records may be altered on request to the NFL.
- 14.2.6. All senior Affiliated Clubs shall forward to the League by no later than 5:00 pm on the Monday immediately before a scheduled game any changes to the playing list including jumper numbers.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15. UMPIRES

15.1. General

- 15.1.1. At the completion of the match the team managers will lodge with the field umpire(s) the goal umpires' score cards (where club appointed goal umpires have officiated), the timekeeper's card and any Player Send off Sheet.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.
- 15.1.2. All clubs must lodge at the League offices a "Report on Field Umpire" form as supplied by the League for all official matches played by senior and junior grades of that club by no later than 5:00pm on the Tuesday following the weekend in which the match was played.
 - Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.
- 15.1.3. The League shall appoint the Field Umpire(s) for each home and away and finals match.
- 15.1.4. The League may appoint Goal and/or Boundary Umpires for a home and away match. Where no Goal and/or Boundary Umpires are appointed each club shall supply such umpires. Where

only one Goal and/or Boundary Umpire is appointed, the home club shall supply such additional umpire(s) as required.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.1.5. The League shall appoint the Goal and Boundary Umpires and an Emergency Umpire for finals matches.

15.1.6. Field, Goal and Boundary umpire fees shall be set annually based on the Northern Football League's recommendation.

15.1.7. In the event of a match not taking place, other than where the Adverse Weather Committee has cancelled a match or round or in the case of a forfeit, umpires shall receive half of their usual fees.

15.1.8. In the event of a match not taking place because of a forfeit, the Affiliated Club giving the forfeit must pay all of the umpire fees unless the umpires receive notice that the match will not take place at least twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled commencement time for the match.

15.1.9. Where a person is involved in an incident which may constitute a Reportable Offence an umpire appointed by the League shall report that person and the matter will be referred to the Tribunal for hearing and determination. The reporting umpire is to be prepared to attend the subsequent Tribunal hearing.

15.1.10. Umpires shall wear the uniforms prescribed by the League. Umpires shall be on the playing field five (5) minutes before the scheduled starting time of each match. The Secretary of an Affiliated Club shall notify the CEO of any infringement of this By-Law.

15.1.11. The field umpire shall report to the NFL any incident involving players, officials, or spectators outside of the playing time that they consider requires further investigation by the NFL.

15.1.12. Umpires shall be required to attend meetings when notified by the Umpires' Appointment Board. Any umpire not present at roll call may be dealt with by the Umpires' Appointment Board as it deems fit.

15.2. Goal and Boundary Umpires

15.2.1. The goal umpires shall record the scores on the cards provided by the League and check the scores on the cards between quarters and at the conclusion of the match. Any discrepancy between the scores shall be rectified as soon as possible in consultation with the field umpire. The cards shall be properly completed and signed by the goal umpires. If the goal umpires disagree on the score, but the timekeeper's score is the same as one of the goal umpires' scores, this score shall be recognized as the official score of the match. Failing which, any disputes shall be referred for hearing and determination by the Board.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.2.2. Club goal umpires shall be attired in white goal umpire bibs, and have a minimum of 2 goal flags. Club boundary umpires shall as a minimum be attired in a white top and, as far as practicable, in white clothing.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.2.3. In all matches the home club shall be responsible for a scoreboard which shall be in operation throughout the whole game. The scoreboard must be clearly visible to the goal umpires who shall check its accuracy at the conclusion of each quarter. Umpires shall report to the CEO, via the Umpires' Report, any occasion on which an Affiliated Club fails to operate a scoreboard.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

15.2.4. The League appointed field umpire(s) have the power to veto a decision made by a club goal or boundary umpire and make an alternative decision if the field umpire(s) is of the opinion the club umpire has made an incorrect decision. The League appointed field umpire's decision shall be final.

15.2.5. Club boundary umpires are not permitted to pay a free kick for a breach of Australian Rules Football Law 11.3.4 (b): "No player (other than the 4 initial players) or team official shall enter the centre square from the time the field umpire commences his or her approach to the centre circle to bounce the football until the football touches the ground, in the act of bouncing, or leaves the field umpire's hand in the act of being thrown up.

15.2.6. Where a player and/or official is involved in an incident which may constitute a reportable offence, only the umpires appointed by the League shall report that person and the matter will be referred to the Tribunal for hearing and determination.

15.3. Official Powers

15.3.1. All umpires appointed by the Umpires Board shall have the power to report players, clubs and officials in accordance with the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" adopted by the League from time to time and for any breach of these By-Laws.

15.3.2. Where a League appointed umpire is verbally abused by officials, interchange players or supporters in the proximity of the coaches' box the following shall apply:

- I. In the first such instance of abuse one of the field umpires shall warn the officials located within the coaches' box area;
- II. If the abuse occurs again, the field umpire(s) shall stop the match and award a free kick to the opposing team.

15.4. Penalty for Assault

15.4.1. In the event of a player or club official of any Affiliated Club being found guilty on a charge of assaulting any umpire appointed to officiate by the Umpires Board, or NFL/Club official, the club to which he/they belong, or offending party, may be dealt with by the Board by way of:

- I. A Fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
- II. Disqualification from the competition; and/or
- III. Loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in whom the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams.

15.4.2. In the event of a player or official's family member being found guilty on a charge of assaulting any umpire appointed to officiate by the Umpires Board, or NFL/Club official, the club to which they are affiliated with may be dealt with by the Board by way of:

- I. Fine for breach not exceeding \$1000; and/or
- II. Disqualification of Club from the competition; and/or
- III. Loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams; and/or
- IV. Deregistration of participating family member from all competition.

16. REPORTABLE OFFENCES

16.1. Order-off Laws – Seniors and Juniors

- 16.1.1. The NFL adopts the AFL Laws of Australian Football in relation to the order off rules. Schedule 21 details the circumstances and application of the Order off Laws.
- 16.1.2. Players may be replaced if sent off the field.
- 16.1.3. If a player receives a red card whilst playing in a lower grade, they are then ineligible to play in a higher grade on the same day or same weekend.
- 16.1.4. If a junior player is playing a senior, reserves or under-19 match on a Saturday and receives a red card, this makes him ineligible to play in his/her age group on Sunday.

16.2. Report Procedure

- 16.2.1. At the time of making any such report of any player or club official, the League appointed field umpire (including emergency umpire) and/or goal and boundary umpires shall take down the numbers of the player(s) reported and the victim (if any) of the incident.
- 16.2.2. The reporting umpire shall ensure all details of the incident are contained in the authorised report sheet. It is the responsibility of the reporting umpire to forward the report sheet to the CEO.
- 16.2.3. Both club delegates shall attend the umpire's rooms, **five (5) minutes** after the conclusion of the game to obtain the "all clear". At this time the umpire(s) will advise the club delegates of any report(s) that have been laid during the match. The field umpire(s) will then provide both delegates a copy of the report(s). Failure by a club official to obtain all clear will result in a Fine for breach in accordance with Schedule 20.
- 16.2.4. If the player/official has been reported for one of the following offences under the Australian Football League's "Laws of Australian Football" the case will automatically be heard by the Independent Tribunal:
 - I. Intentionally making contact with, or striking, an umpire;
 - II. Attempting to make contact with, or strike, an umpire;
 - III. Intentionally or carelessly kicking another person;
 - IV. Intentionally or carelessly kneeling another person;
 - V. Intentionally or carelessly stomping on another person;
 - VI. Attempting to kick another person;
 - VII. Spitting at or on an umpire;
 - VIII. Spitting at or on another person.
- 16.2.5. For all other offences, if offered by the officiating umpire, the player has the choice of accepting the prescribed set-penalties specified on the Player/Official Report Sheet.
- 16.2.6. Where the player has the option of choosing to accept the prescribed penalty, the club delegates, after receiving a copy of the report will then have fifteen (15) minutes to consult with the reported member in which to decide whether the player/club will accept the prescribed penalty or wish the report to be heard by the Tribunal. At the end of the fifteen (15) minutes, both delegates will again attend the umpire's room. If the player/club accepts the prescribed penalty and the reporting umpire concurs, the delegates representing the reported player and the

reporting umpire(s) will then sign the report form where indicated. If the player/club can't decide within the 15 minutes allocated after the match, the club then has until 10:00am on the Monday following the game to advise the NFL office of their decision. It is the responsibility of the club to notify the league by 10:00am Monday. Failure to do so and the set penalty shall apply.

- 16.2.7. Should any party not apply for the prescribed penalty, the umpire will note the dissenting party on the report sheet.
- 16.2.8. The CEO or his appointee may refer any report to the Independent Tribunal.
- 16.2.9. Where a player does not accept a prescribed penalty the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal. The Tribunal has the unfettered discretion to impose a penalty in excess of the prescribed penalty.
- 16.2.10. The CEO or his appointee may refer any report to the Independent Tribunal.
- 16.2.11. Where a player/club is offered and accepts a prescribed penalty the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that grade in which the club plays, unless notification is received by the club that the prescribed penalty has not been accepted and the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal.
- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.
- 16.2.12. Where a player/club is reported and subsequently suspended by the Independent Tribunal, the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that grade in which the player was reported and the club competes. Any guilty verdict delivered at tribunal will incur a fine.
- 16.2.13. Clubs which play clubs from other competitions who supply umpires must, in the event of their player or official being reported by those umpires, appear before that reporting umpire's League Independent Investigation Tribunal for investigation.

16.3. Tribunal Hearings

- 16.3.1. All Tribunal hearings shall proceed in accordance with the Independent Tribunal Procedure (Schedule 2) to these By-Laws.
- 16.3.2. In the event of a breach of protocol in Tribunal proceedings, any stakeholder may lodge an appeal with the CEO in writing detailing the protocol failure. If such protocol is proven to have been breached the Board may review the findings of the Tribunal and make determination on whether or not the original findings are upheld or dismissed.

17. MELEE RULE

17.1. Definition

- 17.1.1. An incident involving six (6) or more players and/or officials who are pushing, grappling, wrestling or otherwise struggling with one another and which, in the opinion of the umpire(s) is likely to bring the game of Australian Football into disrepute or prejudice the interests or reputation of the NFL or the competitions conducted by the NFL.

17.2. Incident and Penalty Procedure

- 17.2.1. In the event of a melee taking place and following three (3) continued instructions from the umpire(s) to break up the melee, if the melee continues, the umpire(s) shall report the incident to the league. The field umpire(s) appointed by the NFL shall record on the umpires match report at

the conclusion of the game and incident where the melee has taken place. This will include the quarter and the position on the field where the melee took place.

17.2.2. Such form shall be signed by the umpire(s) and a copy of the umpire match report containing notification of the incident handed to each club as per normal match day procedure.

17.2.3. Fines shall be charged to the clubs account.

17.2.4. All melees occurring during NFL finals games will be referred directly to the board for consideration with regard to penalty.

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

18. MATCH REVIEW PANEL

18.1. A nominated representative of an NFL club (e.g. President, Secretary, Senior Coach or Football Manager, or any other person so delegated with the authority by the club) or NFL CEO, Football Operations Manager or Umpire/s can request that the NFL Match Review Panel look into a specific incident/s that did not result in an official report by the officiating Umpire(s).

18.2. Requests to look at specific incidents need to pinpoint exactly when and where the incident occurred.

18.3. The NFL will then approach our match footage provider (with information provided) and ask them to see if any footage of the alleged incident is available. If there is footage of the incident, a grab shall be sent to the Operations Manager of the league via email.

18.4. The footage will then be forwarded on to the Match Review Panel who shall have a set amount of time to review the footage and determine whether or not the player shall be referred to the tribunal to answer a charge. NFL rules shall be used when referring the incident to the tribunal and a specific charge shall be nominated when the club is informed about the report.

18.5. It is important to note that the Match Review Panel shall take no part in deciding the outcome of the case. This decision is a determination of the Independent Tribunal.

18.6. Match Review Panel requests must be received by 10:00am on the Tuesday following the round of matches. The following deadlines will apply following the determination of the Match Review Panel:

- I. Clubs will have 24 hours should they wish to request an investigation should the Match Review Panel determine there is no case to answer;
- II. Match Review Panel requests referred to the Tribunal will be heard by the Tribunal in the same week, on either Tuesday or Wednesday night as prescribed in the NFL By-Laws;
- III. Only footage captured through the official NFL match filming program is eligible for submission to the Match Review Panel. Incidents captured through other sources can only be tendered through the NFL Investigation Procedure.

19. INVESTIGATIONS

19.1. Any issue may be referred to an Investigation Officer who shall investigate any matter which has been deemed relevant by the CEO to whether or not a person may have committed a reportable incident.

19.2. Requests for investigation must be received by 4:00pm on the Tuesday following the incident.

19.3. In the case of a club registered player or club official lodging an investigation request a bond of \$300.00 is to be paid to the office of the CEO at the time of lodgment.

19.3.1. The bond, minus a 20% administration fee, may be returned upon resolution of the investigation in accordance with the Rules and By-Laws except in the case where it is determined that the investigation was frivolous or vexatious in which case the CEO at his/her absolute discretion may retain whole or part of the bond.

19.4. For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this By-Law, upon request by the Investigation Officer, any person shall:

- I. Fully cooperate with the Investigation Officer;
- II. Truthfully answer any questions asked by the Investigation Officer;
- III. Provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the Investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Investigation Officer.

19.5. A person who fails to observe and comply with By-Law 19.4 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Board in its absolute discretion. The Investigation Officer must promptly notify the CEO of the failure of any person to observe and comply with By-Law 19.4 above.

19.6. The Investigation Officer shall, as soon as practicable but in any event no later than ten (10) working days after the Investigation commenced, compile a report of the Investigation, including transcripts of all interviews, and submit the report to the CEO. The CEO shall then determine the appropriate action based on the evidence provided.

19.7. For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this By-Law, upon request by the Grievance Committee, any person shall:

- I. Fully cooperate with the Grievance Committee;
- II. Truthfully answer any questions asked by the Grievance Committee;
- III. Provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Grievance Committee.

19.8. A person who fails to observe and comply with By-Law 19.7 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Board in its absolute discretion. The Grievance Committee must promptly notify the CEO of the failure of any person to observe and comply with By-Law 19.7 above.

20. GRIEVANCE AND PROTESTS

20.1. General

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

20.2. Lodgment of Grievance and Protests

20.2.1. The grievance must be lodged with the office of the NFL by no later than 5:00 pm on Monday following the date when the incident or grievance is alleged to have occurred. A lodgment of

Grievance should include all relevant documents and/or a detailed description of the event and circumstances within the knowledge of the person lodging the grievance that gives rise to the grievance.

20.2.2. If the grievance is against the CEO of the NFL, the grievance may be lodged directly to the Board (or board member) of the NFL.

20.3. Grievance Procedures

20.3.1. The CEO is to review the grievance and may deal with it immediately, if requested, or conduct a preliminary investigation and within five (5) working days determine that the grievance is to be dismissed or referred to either of:

- I. An Investigation Officer;
- II. A Tribunal of the NFL;
- III. A Grievance Committee;
- IV. A Conciliation Officer;
- V. The Board.

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

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

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

20.4. Bond

20.4.1. In the case of a club registered player or club official lodging a grievance, a bond of \$250.00 is to be paid to the office of the CEO at the time of lodgment. In the case of a grievance being lodged by a League registered umpire or member of the Umpires Board, the lodgment of a bond is not required. The bond may be returned upon resolution of the grievance in accordance with the Rules and By-Laws except in the case where it is determined that the grievance was frivolous or vexatious in which case the CEO at his/her absolute discretion may retain whole or part of the bond.

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

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

20.5. Grievance Committee

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

- 20.5.2. The CEO shall take all reasonable steps to bring the grievance to the attention of the player, club and/or official, the subject of the grievance ("the Respondent") within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the grievance.
- 20.5.3. No later than ten (10) working days after referral from the CEO, the Grievance Committee shall convene a hearing into the grievance. The CEO will take all reasonable steps to notify the parties involved of the time, date and location of the meeting of the Grievance Committee.
- 20.5.4. The operation of the Grievance Committee shall be in accordance with the Grievance Committee Procedures (Schedule 3).
- 20.5.5. After the consideration of the evidence put before it, the Grievance Committee shall give a decision to resolve the grievance.
- 20.5.6. The Grievance Committee may:
- I. Impose a Fine for breach on the Respondent up to a maximum of \$1000 for each matter complained of;
 - II. Suspend the Respondent from participating in any match or event organised by the League;
 - III. Recommend to the Board that match points awarded to the Respondent in a relevant match, if a club, be deducted;
 - IV. Recommend to the Board that the Respondent be suspended or expelled by the Board from the League in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

20.6. Conciliation

- 20.6.1. The CEO may refer any Grievance made pursuant to By-Law 20.5 for conciliation to be dealt with in accordance with this By-Law.
- 20.6.2. Where a dispute has arisen between a Club and one of its members, and the Club has resolved to refer the matter to the League for resolution, the parties may agree upon a mediator to mediate the dispute, or otherwise permit the League to appoint a mediator to assist the parties in resolving the dispute.
- 20.6.3. If the dispute is between any member club, registered player or official and another member club, registered player or official or between any member club, registered player or official and the League, the parties may nominate a preferred mediator or permit the League in its absolute and unfettered discretion to appoint a mediator.
- 20.6.4. In the event of any reportable offence taking place during the progress of any official match or on the day of the match, the field umpire(s) in all sections and all official League goal and boundary and emergency umpires shall have the power to report players or officials in respect of the offence to the Northern Football League Tribunal, including:
- I. Any alleged breach of these By-Laws relating to the conduct of matches in the League; or
 - II. Any alleged breach of the Policies and Codes of Conduct published in the Schedule to the By-Laws by the Board from time to time.
- 20.6.5. The disputing parties and the appointed mediator shall read carefully the League's Conciliation Agreement (a copy is annexed to these By-Laws – Schedule 4) and sign the Conciliation Agreement. The conduct of the conciliation shall proceed in accordance with the Conciliation Agreement.

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

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

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

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

➤ Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

22. INTERLEAGUE MATCHES

22.1. The Board may select any players registered with the League from time to time to participate in interleague matches to represent the League.

22.2. Any player selected to participate in interleague matches must play for the League and any failure to do so shall be dealt with by the Board as it sees fit.

22.3. If any person selected to play in interleague matches fails to take the field in the match for which he was so selected the matter shall be referred to the Tribunal which may disqualify him from playing in premiership matches for such period as may be determined.

22.4. In all cases under By-Law 21.3 of this Rule shall be sufficient to answer:

- I. That the CEO received from the player not less than two clear days before the date of the match a written explanation of his/her inability to play satisfactory to the Board;
- II. That the CEO received within two days after the date of the match a medical certificate that the player was unfit owing to illness or injury to play.

22.5. In the case of a registered playing coach of any Affiliated Club it shall not be sufficient explanation under 21.4 that business affairs prevented him from playing.

22.6. The Board may continue with Home and Away Matches notwithstanding any representative fixture on the same day. No player selected for a representative team shall take part in a Home and Away match on the same day.

22.7. No person shall be qualified to play in any interleague team unless he is qualified to play for a league Affiliated Club in matches played under the auspices of the league.

23. NFL LIFE MEMBERSHIP AND RECOGNITION OF SERVICES AWARD

23.1. Life Membership

23.1.1. An individual may be nominated for NFL Life Membership if they have:

- I. Given years continuous service to the NFL/DVFL in a volunteer or honorarium position (generally these would most likely be positions with the NFL media, board, tribunal, development etc.); or
- II. Played 300 Senior games within the NFL/DVFL (player/umpire).

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

23.2. Meritorious Service Award

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

23.3. 300 Club

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

24. BEST AND FAIREST VOTES

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

24.2. Any player who has been found guilty of a reportable offence and suspended in a Home and Away match will be ineligible to win a best and fairest award.

24.3. Best and Fairest vote tallies in an age group or division where there may have been games forfeited by teams will be counted on equal amount of games played by all teams.

25. PRESENTATION NIGHT TICKETS

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

25.1.1. All Senior Clubs shall be allotted ten (10) tickets for the League Senior Presentation Night and all junior clubs shall pay a levy determined by the league for junior presentation night.

25.1.2. Tickets shall be billed at the prices prevailing from time to time.

25.1.3. Clubs may purchase additional tickets to presentation nights directly from the NFL.

25.1.4. Board discretion on ticket allocation for Clubs who only have under-12s and below.

26. ALCOHOL

26.1. No alcohol is to be consumed or sold at any venue (including within licensed clubrooms) where junior matches are being staged until at least 30 minutes after the conclusion of the final match of the day.

26.2. Clubs shall be responsible for the conduct of its members, supporters and followers.

26.3. Any beverage (alcohol or otherwise) that is sold in a glass receptacle cannot be consumed outside of a club's social rooms during all NFL matches.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

27. UNAUTHORISED MEDIA STATEMENTS

27.1. No club shall permit any of its officers or members to make any statement to the media (including radio, television and all newspapers) in connection with any policies or acts of the Board without the prior approval of the Board.

27.2. Without the prior approval of the NFL, a club shall be liable to:

- I. A Fine for breach at the discretion of the League; and/or
- II. Suspension from the League; and/or
- III. Expulsion from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.

28. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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

29. FINE FOR BREACHES

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

30. FINE FOR BREACHES – APPEALS

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

31. POLICIES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

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

32. AFL VICTORIA POLICIES

32.1. The League and AFL Victoria are required to adopt complementary rules and regulations, in football competitions under their respective control and jurisdiction.

32.2. The League has adopted the following AFL Victoria policies as policies of the League:

- I. Infectious Diseases Policy;
- II. No Smoking and Alcohol Management Policy;
- III. Vilification and Discrimination Policy;
- IV. Anti-Doping Policy;
- V. Codes of Conduct – Players, Coaches and Parents;
- VI. Gender Policy;
- VII. De-Registration Policy;
- VIII. Privacy Policy; and
- IX. Working With Children Policy.

33. CLUB ANNUAL REPORTS

33.1. All Affiliated Clubs (Senior and Junior) must forward to the CEO, no later than December 15 each year, one copy of their Annual Report.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

33.2. All Affiliated Clubs shall forward to the CEO, no later than December 15, a copy of the Affiliated Club's Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet, as supplied to the Incorporations Board, and a list of all club office bearers for the coming season.

33.3. Any change of office bearer is to be notified to the NFL within 21 days of that change.

33.4. The Finance committee of the NFL shall review all Affiliated Club Account information to determine Club viability to meet their NFL financial obligations. Any Club that the Finance committee believes may not meet their obligations shall be requested to meet with the NFL Board to address their situation.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

34. MEETINGS

34.1. Compulsory

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

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

34.2. Representatives

34.2.1. Two representatives of clubs must attend all Annual and Special Meetings of the League. Such representatives shall be the President and/or Secretary and/or one other member of the club.

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

34.2.2. Any club calling a meeting of other clubs other than in accordance with the Rules of the League without the prior authority of the Board shall be liable to:

- I. A fine in accordance with Schedule 20; and/or
- II. Suspension from the League; and/or
- III. Be expelled from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.

35. CLUB OFFICE BEARERS

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

- Fine for breach: In accordance with Schedule 20.

36. MISCELLANEOUS

36.1. Club Playing Outside League

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

36.2. Communication to the League

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

36.3. AFL Kids First Co-ordinator

36.3.1. All junior clubs are required to appoint an AFL Kids First Co-ordinator, as per the Kids First Operational Manual (accessible via www.afl.com.au).

37. WOMEN'S COMPETITION

37.1. All clubs competing in the NFL Women's Competition's are bound by these By-Laws

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

38.1. Female Junior Rules Matrix

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

38.2. Permitted Numbers at Centre Bounces

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

38.3. Match Rules

38.3.1. No full possession in the ruck – players must tap the ball.

38.3.2. Female teams are to wear home shorts for all games.

38.4. Team Numbers on Match Day

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

38.4.2. The evening up rule (By-Law 11.9) applies to all female competitions.

38.5. Mercy Rule

38.5.1. When a team is 60 points or more in front of the opposing team, the mercy rule will come into play. This means that the trailing team will take a kick from the centre after every score (instead of a ball up or a kick in after a behind). If the margin drops to under 60 points at any stage the mercy rule will no longer apply and normal playing rules will take effect.

38.5.2. All players (both teams) must remain in their positions and on-ballers must stay in the centre square, behind the player kicking the ball until that player has kicked the football.

38.5.3. The mercy rule will apply for both home and away and finals matches.

38.5.4. The beginning of all quarters shall commence via a ball up regardless of whether the mercy rule is in effect.

39. SPECIAL RULES FOR UNDER-9/UNDER-10 COMPETITIONS

39.1. Junior Rules Matrix

39.1.1. For overview of all Junior rules please see Schedule 32

39.2. General

39.2.1. NFL under-9 to under-12 competitions are to be played under the rules of the AFL Junior Football Match Guide. In addition to the AFL Junior Football Match Guide, the following shall apply:

39.3. Umpires

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

39.4. Coaches

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

39.5. Adverse Weather

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

40. ALTERATION TO BY-LAWS

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

41. FINES FOR BY-LAW NON-COMPLIANCE

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

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

42. AMENDMENTS TABLE

Date of Issue	Amendment / Version	Remarks
April 2007	Initial Issue	
December 2010	Version 2	Complete review. Some amendments to initial issue not recorded.
December 2011	Version 3	As Presented to NFL clubs at AGM December 2011.
December 2012	Version 4	As presented to clubs at AGM December 2012.
February 2014	Version 5	As provided to clubs February 2014.
December 2014	Version 6	Complete review, approved by NFL Board December 2014.
November 2015	Version 7	Complete review, approved by NFL Board October 2015.
December 2016	Version 8	Complete review, approved by NFL Board October 2016.