



**ESSENDON DISTRICT FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
INCORPORATED**

**Statement of By-Laws**

**(Amended May 2026)**

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## 1 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1.1 In these By-Laws, unless the contrary intention appears:

*"Affiliated Club"* means an Affiliated Club or Associate Club and includes any team or teams of an Affiliated or Associate Club;

*"Board"* means the Board of Management of the Essendon District Football League.

*"AFL Victoria"* means AFL Victoria Ltd.

*"Football Season"* means the period of time determined in accordance with By-Law 5.2.

*"Laws of Australian Football"* means the laws of the game of Australian Football adopted by Australian Football League (ACN 004 155 211).

*"Open Age Competition"* has the same meaning as *"Open Age Football Competition"*

*"Open Age Match"* means a match played in the Open Age Football Competition.

*"Play or Playing in a Match"* means the players being included on the team sheet, being at the ground, available and ready to take the field.

*"Reserves Match"* means a match played in the open age football competition conducted by the League involving the Reserves teams of Affiliated Clubs.

*"Reportable Offence"* means a reportable offence under the laws of Australian Football.

*"Reserve Team"* means the Reserves or Second team fielded in the open age football competition by an Affiliated Club.

*"Rules"* means the Statement of Rules of the League.

*"Senior Match"* means a match played in the open age football competition conducted by the League involving the Senior Teams of Affiliated Clubs.

*"Senior Team"* means the Senior or First team fielded in the open age competition by an Affiliated Club.

*"Team Sheet"* means the document referred to in By-Law 15.1.

*"Third Senior Match"* means a match played in the open age football competition conducted by the League involving the Third Senior teams of Affiliated Clubs.

*"Third Senior Team"* means the Third most or subsequent Senior team fielded in the open age football competition by an Affiliated Club.

*"Under Age Match"* means a match played in the under age football competition conducted by the League.

1.2 Words and expressions contained in these By-Laws will have the same meaning as in the Rules, unless contrary intention appears.

## 1A FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS

- 1A.1 The League, in furtherance of its objective shall, subject to its Rules and these By-Laws, conduct:
- (a) An open age football competition;
  - (b) Underage football competitions for boys age groups of Under 18.5, Under 16, Under 14, Under 12, Under 10 and Under 8; and
  - (c) Such other open age and under age competitions for females and males as the Board determines from time to time.
- 1A.2 The Board shall decide:
- (a) How many divisions will be conducted in the open age competition and in the underage competitions;
  - (b) The number of teams in each Division and the structure for Finals in which those teams shall participate;
  - (c) Whether any open age or under age competitions or the Divisions within the competitions shall comprise Reserves teams; and
  - (d) Whether any Third Senior Teams fielded by Affiliated Clubs shall be entitled to participate in any and what Division in the open age competitions
- 1A.3 It is:
- (a) The expectation of the League; and
  - (b) The obligation of each Affiliated Club (subject to any specific requirement laid down by the Board at the time of affiliation or otherwise) to field one team, "its Senior team" in an open age Division, one team, "its Reserves team" in an open age Division and one team in each of the Under 18.5, Under 16, Under 14, Under 12, Under 10 and under 8 under-age competitions.

### OPEN AGE COMPETITION

- 1A.4 The top level Division in the open age competition shall (for the purposes of these By-Laws) be known as Premier Division and each descending lower level Division will be known as Division 1, Division 2, Division 3 etc.
- 1A.5 The Board is permitted to name each Division in the open age competition as it sees fit notwithstanding that, for the purposes of these Rules, each of the Divisions will be known by the name set out in By-Law 1A.4.

### PROMOTION AND RELEGATION IN THE OPEN AGE COMPETITION

- 1A.6 By-Laws 1A.7 – 1A.9, with respect to promotion and relegation do not apply to the teams playing in Division 3.
- 1A.7 Each Club will be entitled to participate in the same Division in which it participated in the previous Season except that (and subject to By-Law 1A.8):
- (a) The Clubs whose Senior teams finished last in a Division (except for Division 2) shall be relegated to the next lowest Division; and
  - (b) The Clubs whose teams were the Premiers in each Division (save for Premier Division) will be promoted to the next highest Division.
- 1A.8 Notwithstanding By-Law 1A.7 above the Board may:
- (a) Promote, relegate or refuse to promote or relegate any Club in the event that:
    - (i) The Club cannot field the full complement of teams for the forthcoming Season;
    - (ii) Playing facilities at the Club are not of a sufficient standard for the

- (iii) Division for which the team is to compete in the next Season; or
  - (iii) There are other circumstances, which in the opinion of the Board, require or make it desirable for a Club to be promoted, relegated or refused promotion;
  - (b) Relegate up to two teams in a Division to the next lowest Division; and
  - (c) In the event that the Board makes a decision pursuant to By-Law 1A.2 altering the number of Divisions in the open age group, the Board may set in place a system or mechanism to determine, or may itself exclusively determine, the teams of which Clubs shall be relegated or promoted to give effect to the decision.
- 1A.9 Division 3 shall comprise the Third or any subsequent Senior teams of those Clubs fielding three or more Senior teams and which:
- (a) Are approved by the Board to participate in Division 3; and
  - (b) Agree to comply with any specific Rules for Division 3 as adopted or prescribed from time to time and set out in a Policy by the Board for the conduct of Division 3; and
  - (c) Division 3 may be otherwise known and referred to as the “Thirds Competition”.

## UNDER AGE COMPETITIONS / PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 1A.10 The Board, in further of its objectives shall decide;
- (a) Which of an Affiliated Club’s junior teams play in which Division as per the ‘Junior Grading Policy (2024)’. Any alterations must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer in writing.
  - (b) Which Division/s the senior women’s teams of an Affiliated Club shall play in.
- Notwithstanding the above, the first team of an Affiliated Club in the Under 18.5 age group competition shall play in the same division as the Affiliated Club’s Senior and Reserves teams are competing in the open age men’s competition unless the Club requests that the team be regraded to a lower grade and the Board is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to approve the request. In the event that there is a bye or a vacancy in a higher division, where there are reasonable grounds, the Board may approve a request by a Club to have its Under 18.5 team regraded to that higher division.
- 1A.11 Subject to the discretion of the Board as to which Division, and in which age group an Affiliated Club’s team will play, the Board will develop and make known a Policy for the promotion or relegation of the teams from Affiliated Clubs as between the Divisions 1, 2 and 3 and such other Divisions as the Board deems necessary.
- 1A.12 The Board is authorised to implement a policy of regrading team/s of Affiliated Clubs between Divisions on the basis of the respective performances of such team/s over an initial period of rounds at the beginning of a football season which number of rounds shall not, except in exceptional circumstances, exceed 4 rounds.

## 2 REGISTRATION

- 2.1 Before being eligible to play in the League, each player shall complete the authorised online registration form.
- 2.2 No registrations shall be accepted after 31 July in each year without the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.
- 2.3 Once a player registers with an Affiliated Club and the registration is lodged with the League, the player is deemed a playing member of the Affiliated Club.

- 2.4 If required by the League, in under age grades/competitions the Affiliated Club must produce the evidence of date of birth in support of an application for registration. Only the following three documents will be accepted as evidence of date of birth;
- Birth Certificate
  - Extract of Birth
  - Passport
- 2.5 A player's age shall be taken from their last birthday as at the first of January each year save that a player will nonetheless be eligible to play in the Under 18.5 Competition providing that the player does not reach the age of 19 on or before 30 June in the relevant Season.
- 2.6 Any player who makes a mis-representation or mis-statements in or as part of an application for registration or obtains registration in any way contrary to the Rules, By-Laws or directives of the League shall be dealt with by the Board in any manner it deems fit.
- 2.7 Affiliated Clubs shall not register or permit to play any person under a name that is not the person's actual name, except with the prior written permission of the League.
- 2.8 A provisional registration may be granted by the League for no more than 2 rounds of a football season, to a player who has made an application for the registration that has not been finalised where good reason can be shown by the player as to why a provisional registration should be granted. Where a provisional registration is granted the player and/or their Affiliated Club must use their best endeavours to proceed with the application for registration.
- 2.9 (a) Overage permits may only be permitted on medical grounds in accordance with the National Age Dispensation Policy approved from time to time by the board.  
(b) No player may play more than one age group above the players registered age group regardless of whether or not competitions are available in those junior underage divisions.  
(c) This By-Law does not apply to Under 16 players playing in senior men's competitions.
- 2.10 A registrations sub-committee of the Board shall deal with registrations of players and shall have the power to review and/or revoke registrations.
- 2.11 The Registrations Sub-Committee may call for the personal attendance of any player applying for registration to answer questions in relation to the player's application for registration, and the Registrations Sub-Committee shall have the power to refuse any application for registration without giving reasons.
- 2.12 The Registrations Sub-Committee thereof may at any time revoke any registration.

### **3 PLAYER QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **3.1 Qualifications for Finals**

##### **General Qualifications**

- (a) For the purposes of clarification, where a player's name's has been bona fide entered into the team sheet of an Affiliated Club which is involved a game is forfeited, that game shall count for the purposes of this provision. The Chief Executive Officer shall have the discretion to accept a team sheet from an Affiliated Club where the opposing team has forfeited the game and advice of the forfeit has been received by the League and / or that Affiliated Club prior to the scheduled start of the game.

- (b) To be eligible to play in Finals matches with an Affiliated Club in the Open Age Competition or the Under Age Competitions, a player must play for the Affiliated Club in at least four (4) home and away matches played on separate weekends during the Football Season.
- (c) A player who is eligible to play in a Finals matches with an Affiliated Club may play in Finals in any Open Age Competition or Under Age Competitions for which they are eligible by age. However, all players remain subject to the requirements as set out under Rule 3.1 of the By-Laws.

### Open Age Competition

- (d) (i) If an Affiliated Club has a Reserves team and/or one or more Thirds Senior team or teams playing in a Final or Finals in the Open Age Competition, to be eligible to play in a lower division team, that is, the Reserves team or the Third team or teams, a player must have played with the lower level or division team or teams, more times than with the higher division team or teams during the current home and away Season unless the next highest level or division team is also competing in a Finals match on the same weekend. For the sake of clarification, games played in either Thirds team may be added for calculating the games played in higher or lower Divisions. Players eligibility for Finals is subject to By-Law 3.2 (g)
- (d) (ii) If an Affiliated Club has teams in multiple divisions of the Women's Open Age Competition, a player must have played more home and away games with the lower division team than the higher division team during the current season unless the higher division team is also competing in a finals match on the same weekend.
- (d) (iii) Thirds grade home-and away matches are not to be counted for players to qualify for Senior grade finals matches. Thirds matches may instead only be counted for players to qualify for Reserves or Thirds finals matches.

#### Examples:

1. A player plays in 9 home and away games in their Club's Senior team and 9 home and away games in their Club's Reserves team. The Reserve team has qualified to play Finals but the Senior team has not. The player is precluded from playing with the Reserve team in the Finals series.

2. A player has played in 9 Senior games during the home and away series and 9 Reserves games in the home and away games, and both the Senior and Reserve teams are in the Finals on the same weekend. The player is permitted to play in the Reserves team in the Final. However if the Reserves team wins and Senior team loses and is eliminated, the player is not able to play in the Reserves team in the next Final.

- (e) In Finals, an eligible player may only play in one of the Affiliated Club's Finals teams in the Open Age competition over the same weekend unless the player obtains the approval of the Chief Executive Officer of the EDFL or the most Senior EDFL Official officiating at the Finals venue.
- (f) If an Affiliated Club has teams in different Divisions of the Open Age competition playing in both Finals and home and away matches on the same weekend, a player is permitted to play in any of the Affiliated Clubs teams on that weekend, provided that the player proposing to play in the team playing in the Finals meets the requirements of By-Laws 3.1 (a), (b) and (c).

- (g) A player shall not play in the EDFL and in any one of the male or female VFL, Coates League or AFL National Championships competitions on the same weekend during the EDFL finals series except where otherwise approved by the Chief Executive Officer in writing.

#### Under Age Competitions

- (h) If an Affiliated Club has a lower division Under Age team playing in a Finals match, to be eligible to play in the lower division Under Age team, the player must have played with the lower division Under Age team or any other lower division Under Age teams in the same Under Age group more times than with the higher division team or teams in the same Under Age group during the home and away matches in the current Season, unless the next highest division team is also competing in a Finals match on the same weekend.

Examples:

1. A player plays in 7 home and away games in his/her Club's Under 10 Division 1 team and 7 home and away games in their Club's Under 10 Division 4 team. The Under 10 Division 4 team has qualified to play Finals but the Under 10 Division 1 team has not. The player is precluded from playing with the Under 10 Division 4 team in the Finals series.

2. A player has played 7 games in his/her Clubs Under 10 Division 1 team during the home and away series and 7 games in their Club's Under 10 Division 4 team in the home and away series and both the Under 10 Division 1 and the Under 10 Division 4 team are in the Finals on the same weekend. The player is permitted to play in the Under 10 Division 4 team in the Finals. However, if the Under 10 Division 4 team wins and the Under 10 Division 1 team loses and is eliminated, the player is not able to play in the Under 10 Division 4 team in the next Final.

3. A player plays 3 games in his/her Clubs Under 10 Division 1 team, 3 games in his/her Under 10 Division 4 team and 3 games in his/her Under 10 Division 6 team in the home and away Season. The Under 10 Division 6 team is the only team which qualifies to play Finals. The player would be unable to play in the Under 10 Division 6 team Final.

However,

If only the Under 10 Division 4 team made the Finals the player would be able to play in the Under 10 Division 4 team;

If both the Under 10 Division 4 team and the Under 10 Division 6 team made the Finals on the same weekend the player would be able to play in the Under 10 Division 6 team Final. If the Under 10 Division 6 team then won the Final and the Under 10 Division 4 team lost the Final and was eliminated the player is not able to play in the Under 10 Division 6 team in the next Final.

- (i) Where a player has played home-and-away matches in multiple under-age groups during the current season, to qualify for the team in the younger age group, that player must have played more home-and-away matches for the team in the younger age group than the team in the older age group.

Example:

A player plays in 7 home and away games in their Under 14 Division 1 team and 7 home and away games in their Under 12 Division 1 team. The player is precluded from playing with the Under 12 Division 1 team in the Finals series.

- (j) For the purposes of this provision, home and away matches played by a player in a team that has been regraded from one Division to another, whether higher or lower, shall be deemed to be matches played in the Division to which the team has been regraded.
- (k) In Finals an eligible player may only play in one of the Affiliated Club's Finals teams in the same Under Age competition over the same weekend unless the player obtains the approval of the Chief Executive Officer of the EDFL or the most Senior EDFL official officiating at the Finals venue.
- (l) If an Affiliated Club has teams in different Divisions of the same Under Age competition which are playing in both Finals and home and away matches on the same weekend, a player is permitted to play in any of the Affiliated Clubs teams on that weekend, provided that the player proposing to play in the team playing in the Finals meets the requirements of By-Laws 3.1 (a) and (b). For the avoidance of doubt, no player can play in more than one finals game on the same weekend in the same underage competition.
- (m) A player may only play in a Junior Girls under-age finals match if they have played in at least four Junior Girls under-age home-and-away matches over separate weekends during the current season.

### 3.2 Home and Away Matches

- (a) A player is permitted to play matches in more than one under age competition on the one day and/or weekend in any home and away round providing that the player qualifies by age to play in those matches;
- (b) A player is not permitted to play a match in more than one Division in an under age competition on the same weekend;
- (c) A player is permitted to play in an under age competition and in the open age competition (whether in the Senior team, the Reserves team or the Third and subsequent Senior teams) on the same weekend; and
- (d) A player is permitted to play in each of a Third Senior match, a Reserves Grade match or a Senior match on the same weekend and may play in two Thirds matches on the same weekend where the player obtains the approval of the Chief Executive Officer in writing.
- (e) The term 'weekend' shall be construed as applying to all matches held in a particular round whether or not the matches in that round are actually played on the same weekend, unless otherwise approved by the Chief Executive Officer in writing.
- (f) Where a higher ranked team of an Affiliated Club (whether in an Open Age or Under Age Competition) has a bye or a forfeit, no player who has played in that team in the previous round will be permitted to play in a lower ranked team of that Affiliated Club on the same weekend the bye or forfeit occurred unless the player has played more games in the lower ranked team.
- (g) Where any Club has one or more teams in the same Division (whether in an Open Age or Under Age competition), a player will become a permanent

player of one particular team when either they play 3 or more games in that particular team or by calculating which team the player has played the most games in by Round 7, whichever first occurs. If games played in teams are equal at Round 7 the player will be taken to be a permanent member of the team they last played with. Any change of team can only occur with the written consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

- (h) A player shall not play in the EDFL and in any one of the male or female VFL, Coates League or AFL National Championships competitions on the same weekend during the EDFL home-and-away season except where otherwise approved by the Chief Executive Officer in writing.
- (i) A player will become ineligible to play in a Thirds match during the home-and-away season if they have already played a senior team match during the same season, unless otherwise approved by the Chief Executive Officer in writing
- (j) Any player who holds, or has held in the current season, an active Season Permit with a VFL or Talent League club is not permitted to play in a Thirds grade team in a home-and-away or finals match.
- (k) After 10 rounds have been completed during the home-and-away season, no more than two players who have played a minimum of half of their individual matches in a team's higher division under-age team, during the current season, shall be eligible to play any remaining matches for teams located in a lower division within the same age group. An Affiliated Club must apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and seek approval to have more than two players become eligible to play in the lower team if they have played a minimum of half of their individual matches in a team's higher division team by the completion of Round 10.

### 3.3 Women's Home & Away and Finals Matches

- (a) (i) The EDFL Women's Player Points System, as updated by the EDFL from time to time, shall apply to the women's competitions conducted by the League for the senior teams of each Affiliated Club in each of the three divisions, subject to the provisions of By-Law 3.3 (a) (ii).
- (a) (ii) The maximum number of the total player points for the Senior Team in a Women's Open Age Competition shall be capped at 50, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board.
- (b) Any player who holds, or has held in the current season, an active Season Permit with a VFLW team is not permitted to play in an EDFL Women's Reserves team in a home-and-away or finals match unless the Chief Executive Officer has given prior written approval.
- (c) A player who has been on the list of a Club in an AFLW Competition in a year shall not be eligible to play in the EDFL Open Age Women's Competition in that year provided that the Chief Executive Officer may grant a player permission to play on such terms and conditions as the Chief Executive may impose where the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied there are cogent reasons for granting the exemption.

### 3.4 Unqualified Players

Affiliated Clubs shall be held responsible for the eligibility of all players. If an unqualified, ineligible or unregistered player takes part in a match an enquiry shall, as soon as practicable, be held by the Board. The Affiliated Club or player who has

neglected to fulfil the necessary requirements may be dealt with by the Board in the manner it deems fit.

## 4 PLAYER TRANSFERS

### 4A [Movement of Players - AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook Regulations](#)

- 4A.1 The Rules and Guidelines set out in the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook or in any amended version thereof shall apply, with the exception of the 'Local Rules' referred to hereunder, to the transfer of players as between;
- (a) Affiliated Clubs within the League; and
  - (b) An affiliated Club in the League and another Club which is affiliated with a League which has similarly adopted the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook as amended from time to time.
- 4A.2 The Local Rules applying with respect to the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook for players transferring between affiliated Clubs within the EDFL are as follows;
- (i) No more than two players per age group will be permitted to be transferred from an affiliated Club to another affiliated Club unless both affiliated Clubs consent to this number being exceeded;
  - (ii) A player who transfers from an affiliated Club to another affiliated Club to accept a position, at the new affiliated Club, of Senior playing Coach, will not be included in the total of two players allowed to be transferred;
  - (iii) A player who transfers from an affiliated Club to another affiliated Club to accept a position, at the new affiliated Club, as Assistant playing Coach, will be included in the total of two players allowed to be transferred;
  - (iv) Players registered with the League will only be permitted to transfer once per season between affiliated Clubs unless both affiliated Clubs involved in any second or subsequent transfer consent to the player being transferred.
  - (v) Player transfers between Affiliated Clubs will close on the 31 May in each year of the competition, unless both Clubs agree and approve the transfer. The Board will be entitled to refuse the registration/transfer of a player who transfers out of the League during that season, but wishes to be transferred back into the League after the 31 May deadline and prior to the 30 June deadline for players transferring from outside the League.
  - (vi) Player registrations will close on 31 July of each year of competition;
  - (vii) The Board will be entitled to refuse the registration/transfer of a third or subsequent player in the one group or the open age group from or originally from one affiliated club to another affiliated club even if one or the other of the players concerned has transferred from the first mentioned affiliated club to another club (a third club) and then to the second mentioned affiliated club in the one season.
  - (viii) Underage player transfers from one affiliated Club to another affiliated Club, unless both affiliated Clubs consent, are not permitted in the November transfer period.
- 4A.3 A player whose Club refuses:
- (i) to grant them a transfer to another affiliated Club in the League;  
Or
  - (ii) to provide the consent required by By-Law 4A.2 (i) to allow the transfer of the player because at least two other players in that particular age group have been transferred in that season from the affiliated Club at which the

- player is currently registered to the affiliated Club the other players have been transferred to; or
- (iii) to provide the consent required to By-Law 4A.2 (iv) to allow the transfer of the player because the player has previously transferred between affiliated Clubs in that season;

has the right to appeal to the Board or any relevant Sub-Committee appointed by the Board upon payment of a fee of \$550.00 (inclusive of GST) which includes a non-refundable administration fee of \$275.00 (inclusive of GST) and a bond of \$275.00 (inclusive of GST). The Board (or any Sub-Committee thereof) has the power to hear and determine the appeal and its decision as to whether the player shall be entitled to be transferred shall be final and binding. The bond of \$275.00 (inclusive of GST) shall be refunded unless the Board (or any Sub-Committee thereof) considers that the appeal is frivolous.

## **5 MATCHES**

- 5.1 Subject to any inconsistent provisions in the Rules or By-Laws, matches in the football competitions conducted by the League will be played in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football.
- 5.2 The Football Season shall commence and conclude when the Board determines or when a decision is made pursuant to the power granted to the Board pursuant to By-Laws 5.4 below.
- 5.3 The number of interchange players shall be determined by the League. Entry and exit of interchange players onto and from the playing field shall be through a defined area, determined by the League.
- 5.4 The Board shall have the power to make special Rules for the conduct of play in the open age and the under age competitions provided that any special rules are contained in a document which is either published on the League's website or otherwise notified to affiliated Clubs prior to the commencement of the first round of matches in any particular year or if such Rules are made at any later time such Rules must be approved by a majority of at least two thirds of the Delegates from the affiliated Clubs.
- 5.5 Finals system
  - 5.5.1 The League will conduct Finals matches in each Division of each of the open age competitions and the various under age group competitions for the purpose of determining the Premiership team in each Division of the various competitions.
  - 5.5.2 For the purpose of the Finals series, a minimum of four teams will participate in the Finals series with a second Semi-Final to be played between the teams finishing first and second on the ladder at the end of the home and away series, the first Semi-Final to be played between the teams finishing third and fourth, a Preliminary Final between the losing team of the second Semi- Final and the winning team of the first Semi-Final and a Grand Final between the winner of the second Semi-Final and the winner of the Preliminary Final. However, the Board has the power to increase the number of teams participating in the Finals Series having regards to the number of teams participating in any particular Division of one of the League's competitions and shall conduct the finals series, as close as practicable, in one of the recognised Football Finals formats.

## 6 FORFEIT AND NON-COMPLETION OF MATCHES

- 6.1 An Affiliated Club not fielding at least the minimum number of players as specified by the League 20 minutes after the scheduled starting time of the match shall forfeit the match and pay all umpires fees in full. If, during the course of a match a team is reduced to less than the number of players specified by the League the match shall cease and the team that cannot continue will forfeit the match.
- 6.2 In the event of an Affiliated Club commencing a match without eighteen players (sixteen players for U18.5 Women's and Open Age Women's matches), any additional players entitled to play may take the field, after the captain of the relevant Affiliated Club has notified the field umpire of such intention. Once the team sheet has been submitted to the umpires, a player who has not signed either the original team sheet or secondary team sheet (which secondary sheet must be submitted by half time) cannot participate in the match.
- 6.3 (a) An Affiliated Club failing to participate in a match in the League's fixture of matches shall be fined.  
(b) The Chief Executive Officer may, in special circumstances, waive or reduce the fine where the Affiliated Club can satisfy the Chief Executive Officer that it has taken all reasonable steps to field a team in the fixtured match it failed to participate in.
- 6.4 An Affiliated Club commencing a match in the League's fixture of matches and failing to complete the match shall be fined, unless a reason deemed satisfactory by the Board is given.
- 6.5 An Affiliated Club infringing this By-Law shall be required to obtain the consent of the Board to continue to participate in the football competition conducted by the League, under any terms and conditions the Board sees fit to impose.
- 6.6 If an Affiliated Club is in a serious breach of its obligations to field a full compliment of teams, the Board will deal with the matter as it sees fit and may impose penalties including, but not limited to, loss of deduction of premiership points for that Clubs Senior team.
- 6.7 Except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, a Club shall only forfeit a match in the same underage group from the lower/lowest division upwards.
- 6.8 Where there is a forfeit in a senior match during the home and away season, the percentage of the Team who did not forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did forfeit the Match. The percentage of the Team who did forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did not forfeit the Match. If for any reason this method of calculating scores is not possible, the winning team (forfeit for) shall receive the average winning score from all winning teams in that round in that competition, and the losing team (forfeit against) shall receive the average losing score from all losing teams in that round in that competition. If for any reason this method of calculating scores is not possible, the previous round shall be used to calculate scores/percentage. This rule does not apply to any junior competitions (up to and including Under 16s). No percentage adjustment will be made if the winning team loses percentage or the losing team gains percentage using the methods stated above.
- 6.9 In EDFL Women's and Junior Girls matches, a team must consist of a minimum of 12 players in order for a match to commence or continue.

## 7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR MATCHES

- 7.1 Each Affiliated Club shall;
- (a) have a ground/s approved by the Board;
  - (b) use its best endeavours to ensure its ground/s and facilities comply with the standards from time to time required by the League;
  - (c) ensure its teams play at the ground/s in accordance with the fixture issued by the League) including any variations made by the League to that fixture).
- 7.2 Any Affiliated Club, upon whose ground a match is to be played, shall have the boundary marked in the manner prescribed by the League and as set out in the Laws of Australian Football. The Affiliated Club should also provide a suitable sounding device, at least four goal flags and two footballs of a type, brand and style approved by the Chief Executive Officer from time to time – in Senior Matches one of the footballs must be of new quality and the standard size of 720 to 735mm by 545 to 555mm and a dry weight of 450 to 500 grams. The goals posts must be a minimum height of five (5) metres, 6.4 metres apart (for Open Age matches), and set out in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football. The centre circle and centre square shall be as set out in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football.
- 7.3 Each Affiliated Club shall supply the following persons for each match;
- (a) one boundary umpire – except where provided by the League;
  - (b) one goal umpire - except where provided by the League;
  - (c) an umpires escort who must be properly attired in the uniform specified by the League;
  - (d) one timekeeper who shall officiate for the whole game.
  - (e) one matchday manager who must be properly attired in the uniform specified by the League.
- 7.4 In the event of the authorised representatives of each participating Affiliated Club agreeing that a ground is unfit for the playing of a match because of weather conditions, the game shall be declared a draw. If either authorised representative indicates a desire to play the match, the field umpire shall be appealed to and their decision shall be final.
- 7.5 If either captain refuses to play when ordered to do so by the umpire, the match shall be forfeited by their Affiliated Club. This shall apply to home and away games only.
- 7.6 The fitness of grounds for finals matches shall be decided by the office bearer of the League present at the ground when the question arises.
- 7.7 If during a match the field umpire determines that a football is unfit for use, the umpire shall adjourn the match and allow the Affiliated Club up to fifteen minutes in which to produce a suitable football. If at the end of fifteen minutes such a football is not forthcoming, the captain of the visiting team may elect to either play on or to claim the match. In the event of the captain of the visiting team deciding to play on, no subsequent claim to the match shall be entertained by the League. In the event of a match being claimed, it is umpire's duty to submit such a claim to the League.
- 7.8 In the event of a tie in a Finals match, an initial period of extra time will be played comprising of two (2) three (3) minute halves at each end. 'Time on' will only be allowed in matches where 'time on' is normally recorded. In the event of the match still being tied at the end of this initial period of extra time, and if the scores are still tied after the goal umpires have confirmed the scores, a second period of extra time shall commence and continue until a result is obtained by way of a 'golden score'. The team that scored will be deemed the winner and the siren shall immediately be sounded. Coaches may only enter the field of play to address players at the end of the fourth quarter, but must then have returned to the coaches box by the time the

goal umpires are in position for the start of extra time. Coaches will then not be permitted to enter the field of play and address players until a match result is obtained and winner determined.

## **8 STARTING TIME OF MATCHES, TIMEKEEPERS AND BREAKS IN PLAY**

- 8.1 All matches shall commence at the times determined by the Board.
- 8.2 Timekeepers shall keep the correct time and record the starting and finishing of each quarter on cards provided by the League, and ring or sound a device at the conclusion of each quarter.
- 8.3 The duration of a break in play shall be set by the Board, and timekeepers shall record the length of each break on cards provided by the League.
- 8.4 The timekeepers shall record the scores at the conclusion of each quarter on cards provided by the League, and check the same between quarters and at the conclusion of the match. These cards must be signed by both timekeepers at the conclusion of the match.
- 8.5 Timekeepers must remain together during the whole of the match. Time-on must be recorded by the timekeeper provided by the home club with a time clock or watch.

## **9 PREMIERSHIP POINTS**

- 9.1 At the conclusion of each home and away round of matches:
  - (a) Premiership points shall be allocated to each Affiliated Club as follows;
    - i. four points for a win, match won on dispute or a forfeit
    - ii. two points for a tie;
    - iii. zero (nil) points for a bye; and
  - (b) A percentage shall be calculated for each Affiliated Club based on the proportion of points scored for and against each Affiliated Club during the home and away matches
  - (c) Match ratio shall be used in place of premiership points for any competition where the number of fixtured byes for each team is not equal. Match ratio will be calculated by calculating a team's percentage of wins against total matches played.
- 9.2 In the event of a match being abandoned after commencement for whatever reason, the points shall be allocated as the Board sees fit.
- 9.3 Should an Affiliated Club disband during a Football Season, all points scored for and against the Affiliated under By-Law 9.1 (b) shall be cancelled. Premiership points to the time of disbandment shall stand and each team drawn to play the disbanded team shall receive four points for the remaining games.
- 9.4 The Board shall be sole determinant of points scored for and against Affiliated Clubs, and premiership points. Any decision of the Board in this regard will be final and binding.
- 9.5 The League shall maintain a ranking of teams of Affiliated Clubs ("the Premiership Ladder") that determines the position of the teams of the Affiliated Clubs participating in each grade of the League's football competitions. The ranking of each team on the Premiership Ladder at the completion of the home and away matches shall be determined in accordance with the following procedure:
  - (a) the order of the teams shall first be determined by the number of premiership points accumulated by each team, by placing in descending order the teams with the highest accumulated premiership points through to the team with the lowest accumulated premiership points;
  - (b) where two or more teams have accumulated the same total of premiership

- points, the team with the highest percentage as calculated under By-Law 9.1 (b) shall be placed first between them;
- (c) where two or more teams at the completion of the home and away matches have accumulated the same premiership points and have the same percentage, the following procedure shall apply:-
- i. the position of the tied teams shall be adjusted by accumulating the premiership points awarded to the relevant teams as a result of the home and away matches played between them and placing the teams with the highest premiership points, first as between them;
  - ii. where the premiership points accumulated by the relevant teams remain equal, the position of the tied teams shall be adjusted by calculating each such team's percentage based on the proportion of points scored for and against each such team from the home and away matches between them and placing the team with the highest percentage, first as between them;
  - iii. where two or more teams still remain tied, the position of the teams shall be adjusted by lot conducted by the Chief Executive Officer so that any team drawn ahead of any other team shall be placed ahead of such other team or teams.

## **10 EMERGENCY GROUND**

- 10.1 Any Affiliated Club failing to secure the ground originally arranged for a match, shall in lieu thereof, produce another ground ("the emergency ground") and notify the Chief Executive Officer and the opposing Affiliated Club not later than 8PM on the Wednesday immediately preceding the match, as to the situation of the ground.
- 10.2 Should an Affiliated Club fail to give notice under By-Law 10.1 it shall forfeit the match.
- 10.3 The emergency ground must be approved by the Board prior to the Affiliated Club providing notice to the Chief Executive Officer under By-Law 10.1.

## **11 UNIFORM AND NUMBER**

- 11.1 All players shall be attired in the current uniform of their Affiliated Club approved by the Board.
- 11.2 The side strips on the shorts of an Affiliated Club must be the League strip or as otherwise approved by the Board.
- 11.3 Players shall wear black shorts or coloured shorts for home games. White shorts shall be worn by players for away games in male competitions. White shorts shall be optional for players in away games in female competitions.
- 11.4 Each player shall wear a conspicuous one or two figure number (between 1 and 99) either sewn or worked into the back of the jersey, and no two players in the same team shall wear the same number. Any Affiliated Club not having all its players so numbered shall be fined by the League.
- 11.5 Umpires shall notify the Chief Executive Officer, via the Umpires' Report, of every player not correctly attired.
- 11.6 The teams of each club shall wear their registered club coloured jersey, incorporating the EDFL logo as approved by the Board from time to time, at all games.
- 11.7 The teams of each club shall wear shorts that incorporate the EDFL logo as approved by the Board from time to time, at all games.
- 11.8 The teams of each club shall wear their registered club coloured socks, as approved

by the Board from time to time, at all games.

## **12 REGISTERED OFFICIALS, AND LODGING OF DOCUMENTS WITH THE LEAGUE**

- 12.1 Each Affiliated Club shall furnish to the Chief Executive Officer, prior to the first match of each Football Season a list of all of the officials of the club for the Football Season. Any Affiliated Club failing to submit a list of officials before the commencement of the Football Season may be dealt with by the Board as the Board deems fit.
- 12.2 The Affiliated Club shall ensure that all officials agree to comply with the Rules, By-Laws, determinations and decisions of the League.
- 12.3 (a) No official of the Affiliated Club other than the runner, the trainers, first aid attendants and water persons listed on the team sheet for the match being played shall be permitted to enter the playing field during any match being played provided that such officials comply at all times with the requirements of the League as notified from time to time.
- (b) Any Affiliated Club utilizing a runner, trainer, first aid attendant or water person not listed on the team sheet for the match being played shall be dealt with by the Board as the Board deems fit.
- (c) The Board reserves the right to refuse or review the eligibility of any runner, trainer or First Aid attendant, water person, umpires escort or other such person officiating in a game to participate in any official match day function without giving a reason thereof.
- (d) The maximum number of water persons allowed per Affiliated Club in any one match shall be as follows;

<b>COMPETITION</b>	<b>MAXIMUM NUMBER</b>
Under 12s (Boys/Girls) & Under	Nil
All other Open and Under Age Competitions	Two (2)

- (e) In competitions for Under 12s and below, the runner of an Affiliated Club is entitled to provide water to players.
- (f) In all other competitions, water persons shall be positioned at least one metre behind the boundary line where the boundary line intersects the 50 metre arc line and may only enter the playing arena to provide water to players after a goal has been scored.
- 12.4 Each Affiliated Club shall lodge with the League a copy of its annual report and financial statement, as approved at the Annual General Meeting of the Affiliated Club, in respect of the period including the most recent Football Season with the League by 30 November in each year or within 30 days of the date of the Affiliated Club's AGM, whichever is the later.

## **13 COACHES**

- 13.1 All coaches, including assistant coaches, of Affiliated Clubs shall be registered with the League by completing Coach.AFL and accredited in accordance with the current AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook. Any person who purports to coach in any matches authorised or conducted by the League without satisfying the requirements of this By-Law may be dealt with by the Board as it thinks fit. The Club may also be subject to a penalty, which may include a fine, for allowing the Coach to officiate within the minimum accreditation.
- 13.2 Each coach, including assistant coaches, must lodge the prescribed registration form

with the League prior to coach commencing their duties in that Football Season.

## **14 TRAINERS**

- 14.1 All Trainers;
  - (a) for Senior competitions must have a minimum of either Level 1 Sports Trainer Qualification or a Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP);
  - (b) for Junior competitions must have a minimum of a First Aid Certificate or a Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP).
  - (c) may deliver water for all competitions Under 14 and above.
- 14.2 Each Affiliated Club must ensure that an accredited trainer attends and is available during each match in which its football teams participate.

## **15 TEAM SHEET**

- 15.1 Each player participating in a match in the Open Age Competition or the Under Age Competitions (other than in the Under 8, Under 10, or Under 12 competition) shall sign the Team Sheet alongside their printed name and playing number. The original Team Sheet shall be lodged by the Affiliated Club with the field umpire 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the match and a copy of the signed Team Sheet shall be exchanged between the Team Managers of the participating Affiliated Clubs. If an Affiliated Clubs does not comply with this By-Law then it may be fined.
- 15.2 A player may be added after the team sheet has been submitted by submitting a secondary team sheet with the appropriate additions and signatures to the umpires and the opposition team manager at the earliest convenience which shall be no later than during the half time interval.
- 15.3 Team sheets must also list the names of each person performing game day duties including but not necessarily limited to Team Manager, Coach, Sports Trainer, Runner, Water Person (except for age groups U12 and below), Match Day Manager and any Club umpires (Field or Boundary).
- 15.4 Following a match before the time stipulated by the League from time to time, an electronic team sheet must be submitted using the approved online system.
- 15.5 An Affiliated Club that fails to submit electronic team sheets by the stipulated time shall be fined.

## **16 CONTROL AT MATCHES**

- 16.1 Affiliated Clubs shall be held responsible for the maintenance of order prior to, during and after the matches (includes intervals in the match).
- 16.2 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.

## **17 UMPIRES**

- 17.1
  - (a) The League shall appoint the Field Umpire(s) for each home and away finals matches.
  - (b) Where the League is unable to appoint a Field Umpire(s) for a home and away game, the League shall request either one or both competing clubs to provide an umpire to officiate in the game as a Field Umpire(s). Such a person shall be referred to as a Club Umpire.
  - (c) A Club Umpire shall be entitled to exercise the same powers that a Field Umpire

has prescribed under this By Law and By Law 19 Order Off Rule save that if the Club Umpire reports a player/s, the Club Umpire is not empowered to offer a set penalty. (d) Where a Club Umpire reports a player/s, that report shall be referred to the Chief Executive Officer, who shall deal with the report as the Chief Executive Officer deems fit, including but not limited to:

- (i) Offering the reported player a set penalty;
- (ii) Referring the report to the Tribunal;
- (iii) Referring the report to an Investigator; or
- (iv) Where cogent reasons exist, not proceed with the report.

(e) A Club Umpire may report any Melee as defined in By Law 38.1 save that any fine that might arise from any such report may only be imposed by the Chief Executive Officer.

- 17.2 The League may appoint Goal and / or Boundary Umpires for a home and away match.
- 17.3 The League shall appoint the Goal and Boundary Umpires for finals matches.
- 17.4 (a) Field, Goal and Boundary umpire fees shall be set annually  
(b) 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 hours before the scheduled commencement time for the match.
- 17.5 In all home and away matches, the field umpires shall have the power to veto a decision made by a goal or boundary umpire and make an alternative decision, if the field umpire is of the opinion the goal or boundary umpire has made an incorrect decision. The field umpire's decision shall be final.
- 17.6 If the captain of either participating Affiliated Club is of the opinion a goal or boundary umpire (other than a goal or boundary umpire appointed by the League) is unfit, the captain shall be at liberty to ask the field umpire for that umpire to be replaced by a more competent person. This request shall be granted, if considered justified by the field umpire.
- 17.7 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.
- 17.8 Where an umpire appointed by the League reports a person for the Reportable Offence during the course of a Match, the umpire shall inform the person of the report;
  - i. at the time of the incident; or
  - ii. before the commencement of the next quarter: or
  - iii. where the incident occurs in the final quarter, as soon as practicable after the completion of the match
- 17.9 An umpire appointed by the League may inform the captain, acting captain or Team Manager of an Affiliated Club of a report where it is impractical to inform the person who has been reported.
- 17.10 As soon as practicable after the completion of the match, an umpire who has reported a person under By-Law 17.8 shall complete a Notice of Report in a form prescribed by the League from time to time.
- 17.11 Within 15 minutes of the completion of a match, the Team Manager of each Affiliated Club shall attend the Umpire's room, at which time one of the field umpires shall hand a copy of the Umpire's Report and any Notice of Report to each Team Manager. The Team Manager must sign a copy of the Umpire's Report. Receipt by the Team Manager of a Notice of Report under this By-Law shall be deemed to be notice of the report to both the Affiliated Club and the reported person. If the Team Manger of an Affiliated Club fails to attend the Umpire's room as

- required by this By-Law, the Affiliated Club will be fined by the League.
- 17.12 An Affiliated Club and any reported person shall forfeit any entitlement to receive the Notice of Report where the Team Manager of an Affiliated Club fails to attend the Umpire's room in accordance with By-Law 17.11.
- 17.13 Where an umpire completes a Notice of Report under By-Law 17.10, the umpire shall:
- i. Lodge a copy of the Notice with the Secretary of the Tribunal or Chief Executive Officer no later than 7.00pm on the day of the match; and
  - ii. Retain a copy of the Notice for the umpire's attendance at the Tribunal
- 17.14 The Notice of Report must be lodged by delivering that Notice to the Secretary of the Tribunal, or to the Chief Executive Officer personally or at the offices of the League.
- 17.15 Where the Notice of Report is lodged with the Chief Executive Officer under By-Law 17.14, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide the Notice of Report to the Secretary of the Tribunal as soon as practicable. Where a person has been reported under By-Law 17.8 the matter shall be referred to and dealt with by the Tribunal. The umpire, all players and witnesses named in any Notice of Report must appear when required by the Tribunal to give evidence.
- 17.16 Where a person is involved in an incident which may constitute a breach of the Rules or By-Laws (other than a Reportable Offence), or conduct that may adversely and improperly interfere with the umpire's ability to umpire a match, an umpire appointed by the League shall report that person's conduct on a Notice of Report in the same manner prescribed under By-Laws 17.13 and 17.14. The Secretary of the Tribunal is responsible for providing notice of the report to the charged person and the matter will be referred to the Board for hearing and determination.
- 17.17 The Chief Executive Officer must be notified in writing before noon on the following Monday after the round of matches has been completed if an Umpire, Player or Witness is not available to attend the next scheduled Tribunal Hearing stating the reason(s) for their unavailability. If no such notification is received or the explanation provided is considered unacceptable, the Player or Witness will have their Permit to Play withdrawn until they appear before the Tribunal, or the Chief Executive Officer determines otherwise. The Players club will also incur a fine of \$110.00 (which includes GST). In the case of an Umpire failing to appear without such notification, the matter will be referred to the Umpires Appointment Board to deal with as they see fit. The Umpires Appointment Board will advise the Chief Executive Officer what action, if any, is to be taken.
- 17.18 The League shall have set penalties for breaches of the Laws of Australian Football by players as determined from time to time by the Board. Notwithstanding the acceptance by a reported player of the set penalty, the nature of the report and the penalty are provisional until 5.00pm on the Monday following the report. If, within this time, the Chief Executive Officer advises the Club of the Reported Player of the nature of a new charge or that the existing charge is to be heard before the Tribunal pursuant to By-Law 17 then the new charge or the existing charge will proceed in accordance with the provision of By-Law 24.5. Alternatively if the Chief Executive Officer does not contact the Club of the reported player by 5.00pm on the Monday following the report, the charge and the penalty shall stand.
- 17.19 Umpires shall wear the uniforms prescribed by the League. Umpires shall be on the playing field five minutes before the scheduled starting time of each match. The Secretary of an Affiliated Club shall notify the Chief Executive Officer of any infringement of this By-Law.
- 17.20 Umpires shall adhere to the League's prescribed process for submitting the Fairest and Best votes, the Umpire's report, the original Team Lists, and the Goal and Time

cards.

- 17.21 An Affiliated Club may report any umpire for inefficiency or neglect of duty. Any such report must be in writing on Affiliated Club letterhead and forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer, or other nominated League officer, by 5pm on the Monday immediately following the match. A copy of the report shall be forwarded by the Chief Executive Officer to the umpire involved.
- 17.22 No umpire appointed by the League shall travel to or from a match with any person or persons connected with a participating Affiliated Club, except with the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer.
- 17.23 The field umpire shall report any breaches of the Rules or By-Laws by an Affiliated Club or official of an Affiliated Club to the Chief Executive Officer.

## **18 GOAL AND BOUNDARY UMPIRES**

- 18.1 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 that match. A fine shall be imposed by the League if the card supplied by the League is not used. 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 recognised as the official score of the match. Failing which, any disputes shall be referred for hearing and determination by the Board.
- 18.2 Each team shall provide an umpires' escort who shall be a person of age 18 years or older and wear the official uniform prescribed by the League. The umpires' escort shall escort the umpires onto the ground at the start of the game, assist them at each break and escort the umpires from the field on every occasion. An umpire shall report to the Chief Executive Officer, via the Umpires' Report, any occasion an Affiliated Club's umpires' escort is not in attendance.
- 18.3 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 Chief Executive Officer, via the Umpires' Report, any occasion on which an Affiliated Club fails to operate a scoreboard and a fine shall be imposed to the League.

## **19 ORDER OFF RULE**

- 19.1 In all competitions conducted by the League, the following order off procedures shall apply;
  - (a) Where a Field Umpire has reported a player for breach of the laws of Australian Football that player shall, where the reporting umpire considers the player's conduct is of such a serious nature that the player should not participate any further in the game:
    - i. be shown a Red Card; and
    - ii. leave the playing surface immediately; and
    - iii. not be eligible to participate in the match for the remainder of that match
  - (b) Where a Field Umpire has reported a player for breach of the laws of Australian Football, that player shall:
    - i. be shown a Yellow Card
    - ii. leave the playing surface immediately; and

- iii. not be eligible to return to the playing surface until 15 minutes playing time (not including any breaks that might occur) has elapsed from the time the player left the playing surface following the report/yellow card.
    - (c) Where a Field Umpire considers that a player is behaving in an unduly aggressive and unruly manner or in any manner that would bring the game into disrepute, that player shall:
      - i. be shown a Blue Card;
      - ii. leave the playing surface immediately; and
      - iii. not be eligible to return to the playing surface until 15 minutes playing time (not including any breaks that might occur) has elapsed from the time the player left the playing surface following the Blue Card.

In each of the above circumstances, the player shown the Red, Yellow or Blue Card, as the case may be, may be replaced immediately.
- 19.2 Where a Field Umpire proposed to issue a Red, Yellow or Blue Card to a player the Umpire shall:
- (a) Show the player Red, Yellow or Blue Card as applicable by holding the Card above the umpire's head for a period of five (5) seconds;
  - (b) Inform the player that the player is to leave the field immediately;
  - (c) Hold the applicable Card aloft above the umpire's head for a further period of five (5) seconds in the direction/s of both the interchange bench of the team of the player who has been shown the card and in the direction of the timekeepers.
- 19.3 The timekeepers of the match shall determine when the 15 minute time period has elapsed.
- 19.4 A player who has been shown a Yellow Card on two separate occasions in the same match by the Field Umpire/Umpires must be ordered to leave the playing surface and shall remain off for the remainder of the game but such player can be replaced by the player's club with another player immediately.
- 19.5
- (a) Where a player has received three (3) blue cards in a season, the player shall be automatically suspended from playing for one (1) match. The player shall receive a further suspension of one (1) playing match for every other one (1) blue card received thereafter for the remainder of the current season.
  - (b) The Affiliated Club of a player who receives a blue card may request a review of the imposition of a blue card by lodging a written request with the League by 5pm on the Monday immediately after the match in which the player received the blue card. The Chief Executive Officer in conducting the review may undertake such inquiries as they consider appropriate. The suspensions under paragraph (a) above shall take place on the date/s, as advised by the League, in writing to the Secretary of the Affiliated Club the player is registered with.
- 19.6 In all competitions conducted by the League, where a Field Umpire has reported an official of a Club, that official shall leave the Playing Surface immediately and shall remain off for the remainder of the game (except in the case of a trainer or other recognised medical official) but such official can be replaced by the official's Club with another official after 15 minutes playing time (not including any breaks that may occur) has elapsed after the reported official was ordered off.
- In all competitions conducted by the League, where a Field Umpire has reported an official of a Club, that official shall leave the Playing Surface immediately and shall remain off for the remainder of the game (except in the case of a trainer or other recognised medical official) but such official can be replaced by the official's Club

with another official after 15 minutes playing time (not including any breaks that may occur) has elapsed after the reported official was ordered off.

- 19.7 Any reported player or official who incurs a yellow or red card, or is otherwise reported for a reportable offence after a match, shall not participate in any further matches for the remainder of the weekend until the incident or incidents for which they have been reported are heard by the EDFL tribunal or league management.

Examples:

1. A 16-year-old player is reported by an umpire for a reportable offence after an Under 18.5 match on Saturday. That player shall not then participate as a player or official in an Under 16 match the following day.

2. A player is reported by an umpire for a reportable offence after a Thirds match on Friday night. That player shall not then participate in a Reserves match as a player or official the following day.

3. A player is reported by an umpire for a reportable offence immediately after a Reserves match. That player shall not then participate as a player or official in the following Senior match.

4. An Under 19 coach who is also a senior player is reported for an incident in the Under 19 match. That person shall not then afterward participate as a player or official in any other match.

## 20 CLUB REPORT

- 20.1 Where an Affiliated Club is of the opinion that an official, Affiliated Club or player has been involved in an incident in any match that constitutes a Reportable Offence, and/or breach of the Rules or By-Laws and that incident was not reported by an officiating umpire, the first mentioned Affiliated Club may report the matter to the League.
- 20.2 Any report under By-Law 20.1 must be authorised by 3 (three) senior members of the Affiliated Club's committee, in writing on letterhead of the Affiliated Club and lodged with the Chief Executive Officer by 6pm on the Monday following the match, together with a deposit of \$1100 (which amount includes GST).
- 20.3 The Chief Executive Officer shall advise the President of the details of all reports made to the League under By-Law 20.1 and unless the President, with the consent of both the Affiliated Club making the report and the other Affiliated Club/s involved, instructs the Chief Executive Officer to refer the report to the Board, the report shall be referred to the Investigations Officer for investigation. Such investigation shall be completed within 7 days of the matter being referred to the Investigations Officer unless an extension of time is granted by the Board at the request of the Investigations Officer.
- 20.4 Any report under By-Law 20.1 that is not referred to the Investigation Officer, shall be referred to the Board, which in its absolute discretion, may deal with the report as it sees fit (including without limiting its powers) referring the report or any matter arising from it to the Tribunal.
- 20.5 The deposit made by an Affiliated Club under By-Law 20.2 shall be dealt with as follows:

- (a) if the Board considers a report made by an Affiliated Club under By-Law 20 to be frivolous, then the Board may determine that the Affiliated Club forfeit part or all of the deposit.
- (b) if a matter directly arising from a report is referred to the Tribunal, the deposit shall be refunded in full;
- (c) in all cases, the deposit may, at the reasonable discretion of the Board be refunded in whole or part. In the event of any refund, to the extent that any GST paid under By-Law 20.2 for GST is no longer applicable, that amount shall also be refunded.

## **21 BOARD MEMBER REPORT**

- 21.1 Where a Board Member is of the opinion that an official, Affiliated Club or player has been involved in an incident during, before or after any match that constitutes a Reportable Offence, and/or breach of the Rules or By-Laws and that an incident is not reported by an officiating umpire, a Board Member may report the matter to the League.
- 21.2
  - (i) A report made under By-Law 21.1 is to be in writing and lodged with the Chief Executive Officer prior to 5.00pm on the Monday following the match.
  - (ii) Where an Umpire Advisor is of the opinion that an official, Affiliated Club or player has been involved in an incident during, before or after any match that constitutes a Reportable Offence, and/or breach of the Rules or By-Laws and that incident is not reported by an officiating umpire, an Umpires Advisor may report the matter to the League.
- 21.3 The Chief Executive Officer will refer any report made by a Board Member or Umpire's Advisor immediately to the Independent Tribunal or to the Investigations Officer for investigation. Such investigation shall be completed within 7 days of the matter being referred to the Investigations Officer unless an extension of time is granted by the Board (excluding the Board Member who laid the charge under By-Law 21.1) at the request of the Investigations Officer.

## **22 INVESTIGATIONS OFFICER**

- 22.1 The Board shall appoint an Investigations Officer prior to the commencement of the Football Season for a period of time and with such honorarium as the Board considers appropriate. The Investigations Officer shall not be a member of the Board.
- 22.2 The Board has the power to appoint a second or third Investigations Officer if the need arises.
- 22.3 Affiliated Clubs will be advised of the appointment of any Investigations Officer.
- 22.4 When a matter is referred by the Chief Executive Officer to the Investigations Officer, the Chief Executive shall supply all relevant and available details regarding the incident. The Investigations Officer shall view any available video evidence. The Investigations shall, so far as is practicable, interview all available witnesses (including players, umpires, officials or spectators) pertaining to the matter. The Investigations Officer shall conduct an investigation and with as much expedition as necessary to obtain so far as is practicable the relevant facts relating to the incident that the Investigations Officer has been appointed to investigate. The Investigations Officer shall conduct the interviews of witnesses in a manner conducive to and consistent with the obligation to obtain the relevant facts relating to the incident.
- 22.5 The Investigations Officer should investigate with an open mind and any doubt regarding the events being considered must go in favour of the investigated player,

- official or club.
- 22.6 Affiliated Clubs are required to make personnel (including players) available to the Investigations Officer on request. Such request is to be made by giving 48 hours' notice unless otherwise agreed.
- 22.7 Any Affiliated Club, official or player must make available any information or person/s upon request of the Investigations Officer, and must co-operate fully with any reasonable request of the Investigations Officer. Any Affiliated Club, official or player who does not comply with any reasonable request of the Investigations Officer or does not make information available upon request may be dealt with by the Board at its discretion.
- 22.8 After investigating any allegation, the Investigations Officer shall lodge with the Chief Executive Officer all relevant documents and a notice in writing setting out the results of the investigation, including the Investigations Officer's opinion as to whether the player, official or Affiliated Club under investigation has prima facie breached the Laws of Australian Rules Football, the Rules or the By-Laws and whether the matter should be dealt with by the Board, the Tribunal or by way of set penalty as prescribed in By-Law 17.18.
- 22.9 Upon receipt of the Investigations Officer's Report, the Chief Executive Officer may:
- (a) Refer the matter to the Board for hearing and determination (subject to 22.11);
  - or
  - (b) Lay a charge/s against the player and/or official of an Affiliated Club which shall be referred to the Tribunal unless the Chief Executive Officer considers that a set penalty shall be offered to the player and the player accepts that set penalty.
- 22.10 In any matter referred to the Tribunal, the Chief Executive Officer may appoint the Investigations Officer or other appropriate person to act as a prosecutor before the Tribunal.
- 22.11 Where a Board Member makes a report under By-Law 22.1 that is investigated by the Investigations Officer, that Board Member shall not take part in any consideration, hearing or determination of the matter by the Board of Management.
- 22.12 After a Club has been provided the Investigation Officer's Report and statement of charges, the Club may respond to any charge by calling for further or new evidence and in doing so, must advise the League prior to any consideration, hearing or determination of the matter by the Tribunal or Board of Management.
- 22.13 A notice period of at least 72 hours will be provided to clubs to consider the Investigation Officer's Report and statement of charges prior to any hearing on the matter.
- 22.14 Where the League has provided a Club any relevant video evidence prior to a hearing, the Club may not further distribute or re-produce such evidence and may only present such evidence to persons directly involved in any upcoming hearing on the matter.
- 22.15 Where multiple clubs have been charged and a Board hearing proceeds, each Club will be heard separately, unless the Board sees fit to have both Clubs heard together.

## **23 VIDEO REPORT**

- 23.1 In the event that any incident is brought to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer by an Affiliated Club, Umpire (including an Umpire's Adviser) or a member of the Board of Management has been captured on video (and the video is made available to the Chief Executive Officer), the Chief Executive Officer may refer the video evidence to a match review panel comprising the Director of Umpiring (or

- delegate), the Football Operations Manager (or delegate) and a person with relevant industry experience. The match review panel will respond to the Chief Executive Officer with their recommendations.
- 23.2 The Panel upon viewing the video and considering any other relevant information shall advise the Chief Executive Officer whether, in the opinion of the members of the Panel, any player or official of an Affiliated Club has breached the Laws of Australian Football, the Rules or By-Laws of the EDFL and whether it would be appropriate in the circumstances to offer any player a set penalty.
- 23.3 The Chief Executive Officer/s shall consider the recommendation/s of the members of the Panel and may lay a charge a player and/or official involved in the incident refer the matter to the Tribunal unless the Chief Executive Officer considers a set penalty should be offered and such penalty is accepted by the player.
- 23.4 Clubs shall be notified of any charges laid as a result of a match review panel recommendation by no later than Tuesday 5pm following the incident.

## **24 INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL**

- 24.1 The Board of Management shall appoint not less than six persons to a disciplinary tribunal, to be known as the Tribunal, prior to each Annual General Meeting, provided that the Board may, in emergent circumstances, appoint another person or persons to the Tribunal. A person cannot be appointed to the Tribunal if they are a member of an Affiliated Club, nor can they be appointed if they been an office holder or member of the Committee of Management of an Affiliated Club in the previous three years.
- 24.2 For the purpose of hearing and determining any matter coming before the Tribunal, the Tribunal shall be constituted by three members.
- 24.3 The Board shall appoint the Chairperson of the Tribunal and shall also appoint the Deputy Chairperson in consultation with the Chairperson. In the event the Chairperson is unavailable at a hearing, the Deputy Chairperson shall act as Chairperson. In the event these persons are unavailable at a Tribunal hearing and the Chairperson has not appointed an acting Chairperson for that Tribunal hearing, the Tribunal members present must appoint a Chairperson before commencement of any hearing/s.
- 24.4 The Board of Management shall appoint a Tribunal Secretary who shall:
- (a) perform any function prescribed in these By-Laws;
  - (b) assist the Tribunal in the efficient and proper running of matters coming before it; and
  - (c) perform other functions as directed from time to time by the Tribunal.
- 24.5 The Tribunal may hear and determine:
- (a) a report made by an umpire that a person has committed a Reportable Offence; and
  - (b) any matter referred to the Tribunal by the Board of Management
  - (c) any matter referred to the Tribunal by the Leagues Complaints' Officer pursuant to its Racial and Religions and Tolerance Policy.
  - (d) Any matter referred to the Tribunal pursuant to By-Law 17.19 (amended March 2013)
- 24.6 The Tribunal shall have the power to call witnesses. Players charged shall have the power to call witnesses, provided such witnesses are nominated in the League authorised online format and lodged with the Tribunal Secretary by 12noon on the Monday before the hearing.
- 24.7 No person not directly involved in a matter before the Tribunal shall be entitled to be present during a hearing by the Tribunal.

- 24.8 If a videotape of an incident is available it may be screened as evidence, provided;
- (a) advice is given to the Tribunal Secretary by 5pm on the day before the hearing on Affiliated Club letterhead; and
  - (b) any person wishing to screen the video provides all equipment necessary to screen the video at the time fixed for the Tribunal hearing.
  - (c) notification is given to the reported player's Club by 5pm on the day before the hearing that video evidence will be led;
  - (d) gives reasonable opportunity to the reported player's Club so that the reported player and their advocate can view the video prior to the Tribunal;
  - (e) provided that an assurance is given by the person or Club wishing to screen the video that the whole of the video relating to the whole of the incident will be made available to the Tribunal and to the Club of the reported player.
- 24.9 The Tribunal shall apply the procedures set out in Appendix A.
- 24.10 Subject to the procedures set out in Appendix A and the By-Laws, the Tribunal may regulate any proceeding brought before it in such manner as it thinks fit
- 24.11 The procedure for the conduct of a Tribunal hearing must be outlined by the Chairperson of the Tribunal, to all parties prior to the hearing of the matter.
- 24.12 A player may have their case heard in their absence if that player makes a request to have the case heard in their absence. Such a request must be made in writing, signed by the player and an official of the Affiliated Club and forwarded to the Tribunal Secretary prior to the scheduled hearing.
- 24.13 A player who is suspended must serve their suspension in the division of the open age or under age competition in which they were reported/suspended (subject to any contrary ruling made by the Tribunal).  
The suspended player will not be eligible to play in any other division of open age or under age competitions until the following Round after the completion of their suspension.
- 24.14 Where a player considers that the player will suffer undue hardship by reason of the operation of By-Law 24.13, the Affiliated Club the player is registered with may apply in writing to the League and request a review. The Board or its delegate shall conduct a review and may make such variations (if any) to the order as they consider appropriate.
- 24.15 A Player or Official suspended by a Controlling body is, for the period of the suspension or while the suspension remains unserved, prohibited from playing or participating in a Match conducted by the controlling body imposing the suspension and any match conducted by any other controlling body. For the purposes of clarification, such a player or official shall not be able to carry out any game day official functions or enter the playing surface of a ground on which a game is held in a competition conducted by the League during the period of the suspension.
- 24.16 Where a player fails to provide notice of non-attendance for a hearing, the player will remain suspended until they appear to have their case heard by the Tribunal. If the player is then found guilty of the charge being heard, one additional match shall be added to their sanction, unless the player can establish to the Tribunal a reasonable circumstance to explain their non-attendance for the original hearing.

## **25 APPEAL FROM DECISION OF TRIBUNAL**

- 25.1 This By-Law prescribes the procedure for an appeal by a person in respect of the decisions referred to in By-Law 25.9.
- 25.2 The Board of Management shall from time to time appoint persons to a body to be known as the Appeal Board.
- 25.3 Subject to 25.4, the Appeal Board shall consist of at least 6 person who in the

- opinion of the Board possess a knowledge of Australian Football.
- 25.4 A person cannot be appointed to the Appeal Board if they are connected with any Affiliated Club.
- 25.5 The Board shall appoint a Secretary of the Appeal Board.
- 25.6 The Secretary of the Appeal Board shall;
- (a) perform any functions prescribed by these By-Laws;
  - (b) assist the Appeal Board in the efficient and proper running of matters coming before it; and
  - (c) perform other functions as directed from time to time by the Appeal Board.
- 25.7 For the purpose of hearing and determining any matter coming before the Appeal Board, the Appeal Board shall be constituted by three members who shall appoint a Chairperson from their number.
- 25.8 The Chairperson of the Appeal Board shall be a person who is or has been a qualified barrister or solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria with five or more years of experience.
- 25.9 The Appeal Board may hear and determine any appeal in respect of:
- (a) a decision of the Tribunal; or
  - (b) a decision of the Board in respect of a matter referred to it by the Investigations Officer.
- 25.10 An aggrieved person may appeal to the Appeal Board in respect of any decision identified in By-Law 25.9, provided the appeal is brought no later than 12.00pm on the day after which the decision of the Tribunal or Board of Management was made.
- 25.11 An appeal under By-Law 25 shall be brought by lodging with the Chief Executive Officer of the League a completed Notice of Appeal in the form attached as Appendix B and shall be accompanied by an appeal fee of \$2200 (which amount includes GST), with 50 per cent of that fee to be forfeited regardless of outcome.
- 25.12 Upon receipt of the Notice of Appeal, the Secretary of the Tribunal shall:
- (a) as soon as practicable, affix a date, time and place for the hearing of the appeal;
  - (b) advise all parties interested in the appeal in writing of those particulars;
  - (c) the Secretary of the Appeal Board may vary the date, time and place specified under By-Law 25.12 (a) and upon doing so, shall immediately provide all parties interested in the appeal notice of any such variation.
- 25.13 Subject to By-Laws 25.14 and 25.15, the Appeal Board shall deal with the appeal as a new hearing.
- 25.14 The Appeal Board shall have regard to any record of the hearing by the Tribunal.
- 25.15 Subject to the appellant demonstrating that no Tribunal acting reasonably could have come to the decision it made in the original Tribunal hearing, or demonstrating that the decisions of the Tribunal as to verdict and/or penalty be manifestly unjust, inadequate or excessive, the Appeal Board may confirm, reverse or modify any decision the subject of the appeal and may make such orders and give such directions as it thinks fit.
- 25.16 Subject to the provisions contained in this By-Law 25, in hearing and determining the appeal, the procedures set out in Appendix A shall apply to an appeal.
- 25.17 (a) Where the Appeal Board upholds an appeal and reverses the decision of the Tribunal the payment under By-Law 25.11 shall be refunded.
- (b) Where the Appeal Board dismissed an appeal but increases the sanction imposed by the Tribunal, the payment under By-Law 25.11 shall not be refunded.
- (c) Where the Appeal Board:
- (i) dismisses an appeal (but does not increase the sanction); or
  - (ii) decreases the sanction imposed by the Tribunal, the Appeal Board shall have the discretion to determine the proportion of the

payment under By-Law 25.11 that shall be refunded, unless the Appeal Board determines that the payment should not be refunded because the appeal was frivolous, vexatious and/or without sufficient merit.

(d) In the event of refund of any payment under By-Law 25.11 to the extent that any GST was paid to the League and is no longer applicable, that amount shall also be refunded.

25.18 A person shall exercise their right of appeal under this By-Law 25 and must have any appeal heard and determined by the Appeal Board before commencing any proceedings or becoming a party to any proceedings in a court of law.

25.19 Any player suspended from playing in a match shall remain suspended for all competition matches, subject to By-Law 24.13, prior to any Appeal Hearing on the matter.

## **26 ADVERSE CONDITIONS**

25.1 The Board shall make any determinations in relation to circumstances where adverse or extreme weather conditions make it unsuitable or impracticable for any fixtured match to be completed as per the 'EDFL Extreme Weather Policy (2023)'.

## **27 SUB-COMMITTEES**

27.1 The Board shall from time to time set up any such sub-committees as it considers necessary for the effective administration of the League's activities.

27.2 The Board shall determine the duties and composition of such sub-committees in accordance with the following requirements:

(a) At least one member of each sub-committee shall be a Board Member and a Board Member shall be responsible for reporting on the sub-committee's progress to the Board.

(b) The Board may determine the number of the members of such sub-committee, and appoint such persons.

(c) The Board may seek applications for any such sub-committee and select successful applicants.

(d) The Board may require that any number of members of such sub-committee be elected from the Club Delegates present at a meeting of the League.

## **28 PRIZES AND TROPHIES**

28.1 A sum of money to be seasonally decided by the Board, may be allocated to the Premiership team in each grade.

## **29 FAIREST AND BEST PLAYER**

29.1 The field umpire officiating at each match during the home and away season shall lodge with the Umpire's Report, a written list of votes for the three fairest and best players in the match. The votes shall be numbered 1, 2, 3.

29.2 The player thought by the umpire to be the fairest and best player in the match shall receive shall receive 3 votes, the second fairest and best player shall receive 2 votes and the third fairest and best player in the match shall receive 1 vote.

29.3 At the end of the home and away season the votes shall be counted and the player receiving the most votes shall receive the award.

- 29.4 In the case of an equal total number of votes being received by two or more players, each player shall be awarded a trophy as an equal winner.
- 29.5 A player who has been suspended from at least one match in a particular competition during a Football Season shall be ineligible for the award in that particular competition.
- 29.6 Any player who:
- (a) transfers from the League; or
  - (b) plays for an Affiliated Club that disbands or is expelled during the currency of the season and who does not transfer to another club within the League;
- shall be ineligible for the award that particular Football Season.
- 29.7 Where a player has received votes whilst playing for a team which has subsequently been regraded, such votes shall count together with any votes the player may receive whilst playing for the team after it has been regraded.

### **30 GENERAL RULES OF ADMINISTRATION**

- 30.1 (a) An Affiliated Club must pay all debts in excess of \$1,500 (or such other sum as determined by the Board from time to time) due to the League for 30 days or more.
- (b) In the case of a club failing to make such payments, unless acceptable alternative arrangements are made with the Board, and until the club is deemed to be financial by the CEO, no team of that club shall be eligible for match points until those outstanding payment(s) is remitted in full.
- (c) Percentages for any match played while a team is ineligible for match points will be calculated on final scores submitted for each game and awarded as per By-Law 9.1 (b).
- (d) Where a match is played involving a team who is ineligible for match points, the opposition team must win the match in order to receive the match points. If the team that is ineligible for match points wins the match, neither team shall receive the match points.
- 30.2 Any Affiliated Club expelled, retiring or disqualified during the currency of a season shall not be entitled to any claim whatsoever upon money, property, credits or other assets of the League, and upon such expulsion, retirement or disqualification the interests of the Affiliated Club in respect of the League shall automatically cease.
- 30.3 All Affiliated Clubs' accounts must be finalised by 31 October in each year.
- 30.4 Any Affiliated Club that has not paid all debts due to the League by;
- (a) October 31 will, not be permitted to register new players until all debts have been paid or where the Board determines otherwise;
  - (b) February 15 will, at the discretion of the Board, have four premiership points deducted from each team of the Affiliated Club entered in the competitions conducted by the League in the football season following the season the debts were incurred in.
  - (c) October 31 will, at the discretion of the Board, be subject to a review of their Total Player Payments cap for the next upcoming season.
- 30.5 The EDFL Board shall have the right to approve an agreed payment plan for unfinancial clubs. If a club breaches the agreed payment plan, they will, unless there are exceptional circumstances as deemed by the Board, forfeit the right to another payment plan and will become ineligible for match points until they are deemed to be financial by the CEO.

### **31 IRREGULARITIES**

- 31.1 Any Board Member may attend any match played under the auspices of the League, and obtain signatures of participating players. It shall be the duty of any Board Member who attends any match and takes signatures, to report the findings to the Board at the next meeting following the relevant match.
- 31.2 When any Board Member reports to the Board that the Board Member suspects that the signature provided in respect of any player is not that of the player, the Affiliated Club and the player will be called upon to respond to the allegation. The Board of Management will hear and determine the matter and there will be no right of appeal. If the Board determines that a signature is not that of the player then the Affiliated Club shall automatically forfeit the relevant match.

### **32 DISPUTES**

- 32.1 Where an Affiliated Club is of the view that, for any reason, a Match has not been conducted in accordance with the Rules or By-Laws of the League, the Affiliated Club may refer the dispute to the League.
- 32.2 An Affiliated Club referring a dispute to the League shall lodge a written notice of the dispute to the Chief Executive Officer on or before 6PM on the Monday immediately following the relevant match.
- 32.3 Any dispute referred to the League shall be heard and determined by the Board and the Board may take any action it deems necessary.
- 32.4 A dispute may only be withdrawn with the approval of the Board. It shall be the duty of the Chief Executive Officer to notify any Affiliated Club or other interested parties of a dispute that relates to it.

### **33 CONDUCT UNBECOMING, PREJUDICIAL OR LIKELY TO BRING GAME INTO DISREPUTE**

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 any such manner as the Board in their absolute discretion thinks fit and without limiting their power, they may;

- ..1 appoint any person to enquire into any matter;
- ..2 conduct their own enquiry into any matter;
- ..3 refer any matter to the Tribunal;
- ..4 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.

### **34 INTOXICATING LIQUOR**

- 34.1 Subject to the terms and conditions of any applicable liquor licence, intoxicating liquor is permitted to be sold by or on behalf of an Affiliated Club at its home club matches.
- 34.2 Liquor is not permitted on the playing field or on-field transport used by players and/or officials of participating Affiliated Clubs.
- 34.3 At finals series matches the host football club is responsible for the sale of intoxicating liquor, subject to the terms and conditions of any applicable liquor licence.

## **35 AFL VICTORIA POLICIES**

### **35A Player Points System**

- 35A.1 The AFL Victoria Player Points System, as updated by AFL Victoria from time to time, shall apply to the men's competitions conducted by the League for the senior teams of each Affiliated Club in each of the three divisions subject to the provisions of By-Law 35A.2.
- 35A.2 The maximum number of the total player points for the Senior Team in a Men's Open Age Competition shall be capped at 46, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board.

### **35B Player Payment Rule**

- 35B.1 The EDFL Player Payments Rules and Guidelines shall apply to the competitions conducted by the League in Premier Division, Division 1 and Division 2 subject to the provisions of 35B.2.
- 35B.2 The following local arrangements shall apply:
- (a) Affiliated Clubs competing in the Senior Open Age Competitions shall not exceed the following Allowable Player Payments for Season 2026:
- Men's Premier Division: \$135,000
  - Men's Division 1: \$115,000
  - Men's Division 2: \$95,000
  - Women's Premier Division: \$15,000
  - Women's Division 1: \$7,500
  - Women's Division 2: \$5,000
- (b) There shall be no variation in the maximum Allowable Player Payments for any Affiliated Club in Season 2026.
- 35B.3 Any variation by AFL Victoria to the Player Payments Guidelines shall not apply unless expressly adopted by these By-Laws.
- 35C.1 The League shall in consultation with Affiliated Clubs develop so far as is practicable policies to be adopted by Affiliated Clubs that are complementary to the policies from time to time adopted by the AFL or AFL Victoria including but not limited to:
- (a) Codes of Conduct
- (b) Concussion Guidelines
- (c) Risk Management
- (d) Player Registrations, Deregistrations & Transfers
- (e) Underage Compassionate & Student Permits
- (f) Anti-Doping
- (g) Gender Diversity
- (h) Gambling & Match Fixing
- (i) Injury Management
- (j) Pregnant Players
- (k) Respect & Responsibility

## **36 MISCELLANEOUS**

- 36.1 Untruthful Evidence
- Any person who provides any false or misleading information to the League, any of its committees, the Tribunal, the Investigations Officer or any officer of the League

shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the League and shall be dealt with by the Board of Management in a manner the Board of Management deems fit.

36.2 Failure to Attend

- (a) When a charge has been made against any Affiliated Club for playing a man illegally, such club shall be responsible for the appearance of such player before the Board of Management. Failure to produce such a player shall be taken as prima-facie evidence of the truth of the charge and the Affiliated Club may be dealt with by the Board of Management as the Board of Management deems fit.
- (b) Any player, umpire or official who fails to attend any meeting of the Board of Management to which they are summoned by not less than forty eight hours notice under the hand of the Chief Executive Officer, shall be dealt with by the Board of Management as the Board of Management deems fit.

36.3 Club Playing Outside League

Affiliated Clubs shall not participate in a match involving any football club that is not affiliated with the League outside the fixture arranged by the League during the Football Season. Affiliated Clubs desiring to participate in matches involving a football club that is not affiliated with the League at times outside the Football Season shall first notify the Chief Executive Officer of their intention.

36.4 Change of Ground

An Affiliated Club shall not alter or change its ground without the consent of the Board of Management.

36.5 Change of Officials

The secretary of an Affiliated Club shall immediately notify the Chief Executive Officer in writing of any change of address of Club Delegates, Secretary or other officials of an Affiliated Club.

36.6 Communication to the League

All letters and written communications to the League shall be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

**37 ALTERATION TO BY-LAWS**

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

**38 MELEE RULE (Applies only to open-aged competitions and Under 14, 16 and 18.5 under-aged competitions)**

- 38.1 A melee is an incident which occurs prior to, during (including the quarter time, half time and three quarter time intervals) or following the completion of an EDFL match, and;

- (a) is an incident of a character which in the opinion of the umpires and/or an EDFL Board Member and/or the Chief Executive Officer is likely to;
  - (i) prejudice the interests or reputation of the EDFL; or
  - (ii) prejudice the interests or reputation of the EDFL competition; or
  - (iii) brings the game of football into disrepute
- (b) involves eight or more players and/or officials of the opposing teams who;
- (c) are aggressively or forcefully engaging in grappling, pushing, shoving, tripping, wrestling or other like acts which would potentially constitute a Reportable Offence in relation to that player or official of the opposing team; and it occurs over sustained period of time where such incident has

the effect of preventing or hindering the start or continuation of the game;  
and

- (d) this By Law is to be applied only in Senior, Reserves, Thirds and Under 18.5 Boys Competitions, the Women's and Under 18 Girls Competitions and the Under 14 and Under 16 Competitions.

38.2 Umpires are to report any melee (as defined above) that occurs on the ground on the official Match Report Sheet and Clubs will be fined \$110.00 (incl. GST) for the first offence in a game, \$220.00 (incl. GST) for a second offence in that game and \$330.00 (incl. GST) for each additional offence in that game. Depending on the circumstances of the incident(s) it is up to the Umpires discretion whether to impose a fine on either or both Clubs as per the above definition.

In using this discretion, the Umpires shall have regard to the following factors;

- (a) The team whose player/s and/or officials instigated, provoked and/or prolonged the incident
- (b) That led to the melee: and
- (c) Whether the number of player/s and officials from one team in the melee were
- (d) Significantly greater than the number of players and/or officials from the opposing team.

38.3 An EDFL Board Member who considers that an incident witnessed by them at a match constitutes a melee within the above definition shall provide details to the Chief Executive Officer who can also impose a fine at the levels set out above.

38.4 Nothing in this Rule precludes an Umpire from reporting a player for a reportable offence committed during a melee.

38.5 This Rule may be reviewed and altered at the end of each season as necessary.

## **39 ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

39.1 The League is empowered to publish in a manual routine  
- administrative/operational arrangements of a non-contentious nature to apply each Season and such manual must be provided to all Affiliated Clubs by no later than (April 1) in the applicable year.

39.2 The League may provide the manual by electronic means to Affiliated Clubs.

39.3 For the purposes of these By-Laws, non-contentious shall mean any subject or matter not contrary to the spirit or letter of the Rules and By-Laws of the League.

## **APPENDIX A - TRIBUNAL AND APPEAL BOARD PROCEDURE**

### **1. Purpose**

This document prescribes the procedures for a matter coming before the Tribunal and Appeal Board under the By-Laws.

### **2. Conduct of Matter**

The matter before the Tribunal or Appeal Board shall be –

- (a) inquisitorial in nature; and
- (b) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as a proper consideration of the matter permits.

### **3. Procedural Obligations**

At any hearing before the Tribunal or Appeal Board, the Tribunal or Appeal Board shall:-

- (a) provide any person whose interests may be directly or adversely affected by its decision an opportunity to be heard;
- (b) hear and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner; and
- (c) make a decision that a reasonable body could honestly arrive at.

### **4. Rules of Evidence**

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

### **5. Onus of Proof**

Subject to the By-Laws, no person appearing before the Tribunal or Appeal Board shall bear an onus of establishing that a person has or has not engaged in the alleged conduct.

### **6. Standard of Proof**

The Tribunal and Appeal Board shall decide on the balance of probabilities whether a person has or has not engaged in the alleged conduct.

### **7. Decisions**

- (a) At the conclusion of its hearing, the Tribunal or Appeal Board may make such determinations, impose such penalties, make such orders and give such directions in each case as it in its absolute discretion thinks fit.
- (b) The question before the Tribunal or Appeal Board must be decided according to the opinion of a majority of members constituting the Tribunal or Appeal Board.

### **8. Penalty**

The Tribunal or Appeal Board may have regard to any matters which it considers relevant to the question of penalty and without limitation may consider:-

- (a) the seriousness of the reportable offence or matter sustained against the person;
- (b) the injury sustained and effect upon the person against whom the reportable offence has been committed; and
- (c) the prior record of reportable offences or conduct committed by the person.

However, where the tribunal finds a party guilty of an offence, and;

- (a) the reported party did not take an early guilty plea and accept an offered set penalty for the offence prior to the tribunal hearing, and
- (b) did not enter a guilty plea at the beginning of the tribunal hearing,

then the minimum length of suspension the tribunal can impose must not be less than the original base sanction that was offered to the reported party prior to the matter being sent to the tribunal. For example, if a player is offered a base sanction of three matches reduced down to two matches with an early guilty plea after the match, and then they are found guilty of the original charge at the tribunal after refusing to accept the original set penalty offer or entering a guilty plea at the tribunal, then the suspension imposed by the tribunal must be a minimum of three matches.

## **9. Hearing on Penalty**

Where a matter is sustained against the person and before imposing a penalty, the Tribunal or Appeal Board shall provide a person a reasonable opportunity to be heard on the question of penalty.

## **10. No Reasons**

The Tribunal or Appeal Board is not obliged to give reasons for a decision made by it.

## **11. Questions of Law and Fact**

In the hearing and determination of a matter, the Tribunal or Appeal Board shall decide all questions of law and fact without limitation shall determine;

- (a) the meaning of any words relevant to a reportable offence under the Laws of Australian Football; and
- (b) the meaning of any words contained in the Rules and By-Laws.

## **12. Determination of Appeal Board – Final and Binding**

Any determination made by the Appeal Board shall be final and binding and a person shall not be entitled to appeal any determination of the Appeal Board.

## **13. Representation**

- (a) At any hearing before the Tribunal or Appeal Board, a Player, Witness or Umpire may:-
  - (i) represent themselves; or
  - (ii) be represented by a registered official of the person's Affiliated Club/EDFL Umpires Association provided that person is not a legal practitioner.
- (b) For the purposes of this clause, a legal practitioner means a person duly qualified to be admitted to practice as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria or a person with equivalent qualifications in any other State or Territory of Australia.

#### **14. Validity of Hearing**

- (a) Where there is any procedural irregularity in the manner in which a matter has been brought before the Tribunal or Appeal Board, the Tribunal or Appeal Board may still hear and determine the matter unless it is of the opinion that the irregularity has caused or may cause injustice if the matter was heard.
- (b) Subject to Regulations 3 and 9 of this Annexure, any procedure or requirement regulating the function of the Tribunal or Appeal Board is directory in nature and a decision of the Tribunal or Appeal Board is not invalid by reason of that procedure or requirement not being fulfilled.

**APPENDIX B**  
**NOTICE OF APPEAL**

To: The Secretary  
Essendon District Football League Incorporated

I, \* .....

Of .....

(\*player to complete)

OR

I, \* .....

Of .....

Being a registered official of.....Football Club

(\*club to complete)

OR

I, \* .....

Of .....

Chief Executive Officer – Essendon District Football League

(\*Chief Executive Officer – Essendon District Football League to complete)

give notice that I wish to appeal to the Appeal Board in respect of the decision made by the Tribunal / Board of Management (delete if inapplicable) under By-Law 25.9 of the By-Laws. I wish to appeal the decision in relation to:

- (i) liability and sanction; or
- (ii) sanction only.

The Tribunal / Board of Management (delete where inapplicable) on (specified date) / / 2026 decided that (provide details of decision and the club must provide specific reason/s for appealing):

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Enclosed with this Notice of Appeal is the sum of \$2,200 as required under  
By-Law 25.11

I agree to be bound by the decision of the Appeal Board.

.....  
Signed

.....  
Dated

This form must be lodged in the case of an appeal of a decision referred to in By-Law 25.9, no later than 12.00pm on the day after which the decision of the Tribunal or Board of Management was made.

Prior to the Appeal proceeding the Notice of Appeal must be signed by either The Appellant or the Club President of the Club Secretary on their behalf.

## NOTICE OF AMENDMENTS TO EDFL BY LAWS - 20 February 2026

**\*An additional amendment has been added to this document as at Thursday 7 May 2026. This amendment has been listed as Item 21 at the bottom of this document.**

The EDFL Board has approved the amendments to the EDFL By Laws set out below, which will take effect 21 days after the date of this notice unless the requisite notice under Rule 15.3 of the EDFL Rules has been received by the Chief Executive Officer within that 21-day notice period.

### 1. New By-law 3.1 (d) (iii)

Thirds grade home-and away matches are not to be counted for players to qualify for Senior grade finals matches. Thirds matches may instead only be counted for players to qualify for Reserves or Thirds finals matches.

*Explanation: Listing players on a Thirds team sheet will not qualify them to play Senior Finals. Thirds games will only qualify a player to play finals for Thirds or Reserves. Senior finals need to be qualified by playing four games in the Reserves and Seniors only.*

### 2. New By-law 3.2 (j)

Any player who holds, or has held in the current season, an active Season Permit with a VFL or Talent League club is not permitted to play in a Thirds grade team in a home-and-away or finals match.

*Explanation: VFL or Talent League listed players will no longer be eligible to be entered on a Thirds team sheet.*

### 3. New By-law 3.2 (k)

After 10 rounds have been completed during the home-and-away season, no more than two players who have played a minimum of half of their individual matches in a team's higher division under-age team, during the current season, shall be eligible to play any remaining matches for teams located in a lower division within the same age group. An Affiliated Club must apply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and seek approval to have more than two players become eligible to play in the lower team if they have played a minimum of half of their individual matches in a team's higher division team by the completion of Round 10.

*Explanation: A new by-law to discourage players to change within age group teams late in the season. As an example, an U16 Division 4 team will be restricted in its ability to be able to field players dropping down from their club's first Division 1 team when the higher team has no chance of finals and the lower team is still in contention.*

### 4. Replacement of By-law 3.3 (a)

- (i) The EDFL Women's Player Points System, as updated by the EDFL from time to time, shall apply to the women's competitions conducted by the League for the senior teams of each Affiliated Club in each of the three divisions, subject to the provisions of By-Law 3.3 (a) (ii)
- (ii) The maximum number of the total player points for the Senior Team in a Women's Open Age Competition shall be capped at 50, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board.

*Explanation: This by-law was adjusted for the 2025 season in lieu of an enforced women's player points system. Given the points system will now be enforced in women's football in 2026, it is no longer necessary to further restrict VFLW players playing in the EDFL.*

**5. Amendment to By-law 4A.2 (v)**

Player transfers between Affiliated Clubs will close on the 31 May in each year of the competition, unless both Clubs agree and approve the transfer. The Board will be entitled to refuse the registration/transfer of a player who transfers out of the League during that season, but wishes to be transferred back into the League after the 31 May deadline and prior to the 30 June deadline for players transferring from outside the League.

*Explanation: Formalises the already established principle applied by the EDFL office where these transfers will be approved if both clubs agree to do so.*

**6. Amendment to By-law 6.7**

Except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, a Club shall only forfeit a match in the same age group from the lowest division or grade upwards.

*Explanation: The previous by-law only included under-age teams, creating a loophole where clubs could forfeit a Reserves match and still play their Thirds match on the same weekend. This amendment will close that loophole.*

**7. Amendment to By-law 6.8**

Where there is a forfeit in a senior match during the home and away season, the percentage of the Team who did not forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did forfeit the Match. The percentage of the Team who did forfeit the Match shall be adjusted by crediting and debiting that Team with the average number of points for the Home and Away Matches that were scored for and against the Team who did not forfeit the Match. If for any reason this method of calculating scores is not possible, the winning team (forfeit for) shall receive the average winning score from all winning teams in that round in that competition, and the losing team (forfeit against) shall receive the average losing score from all losing teams in that round in that competition. If for any reason this method of calculating scores is not possible, the previous round shall be used to calculate scores/percentage. This rule does not apply to any junior competitions (up to and including Under 16s). No percentage adjustment will be made if the winning team loses percentage or the losing team gains percentage using the methods stated above.

*Explanation: Percentages won't be adjusted if the forfeiting team gains percentage or the team forfeited against loses percentage as a result of the calculations made by EDFL Operations.*

**8. Amendment to By-law 14.1**

All Trainers;

- (a) for Senior competitions must have a minimum of either Level 1 Sports Trainer Qualification or a Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP);

- (b) for Junior competitions must have a minimum of a First Aid Certificate or a Qualified Medical Practitioner (QMP).
- (c) may deliver water for all competitions Under 14 and above.

*Explanation: By-law 14.1 had outdated trainer requirements and stated that accreditation of Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) is sufficient. ERC is no longer recognised by the AFL and the by-law should be brought in line with our operations manual.*

**9. Amendment to By-law 19.5 (a)**

Where a player has received three (3) blue cards in a season, the player shall be automatically suspended from playing for one (1) match. The player shall receive a further suspension of one (1) playing match for every other one (1) blue card received thereafter for the remainder of the current season.

*Explanation: After serving the first suspension for three blue cards in the season, the player will now incur another suspension for any other blue card incurred for the remainder of the season. The previous by-law stated that the next suspension will only be imposed after the player incurs three more blue cards for the season.*

**10. New By-law 19.7**

Any reported player or official who incurs a yellow or red card, or is otherwise reported for a reportable offence after a match, shall not participate in any further matches for the remainder of the weekend until the incident or incidents for which they have been reported are heard by the EDFL tribunal or league management.

*Explanation: Stops reported players from playing in other matches on the same weekend after they've been reported.*

**11. Amendment to By-law 24.1**

The Board of Management shall appoint not less than six persons to a disciplinary tribunal, to be known as the Tribunal, prior to each Annual General Meeting, provided that the Board may, in emergent circumstances, appoint another person or persons to the Tribunal. A person cannot be appointed to the Tribunal if they are a member of an Affiliated Club, nor can they be appointed if they been an office holder or member of the Committee of Management of an Affiliated Club in the previous three years.

*Explanation: An expansion of the existing by-law to further elaborate how tribunal appointments can be made.*

**12. Amendment to By-law 25.8**

The Chairperson of the Appeal Board shall be a person who is or has been a qualified barrister or solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria with five or more years of experience.

*Explanation: Allows for those who have previously been a qualified barrister to sit on the Appeal Board.*

**13. Amendment to By-law 25.15**

Subject to the appellant demonstrating that no Tribunal acting reasonably could have come to the decision it made in the original Tribunal hearing, or demonstrating that the decisions of the Tribunal as to verdict and/or penalty be manifestly unjust, inadequate or excessive, the Appeal Board may confirm, reverse or modify any decision the subject of the appeal and may make such orders and give such directions as it thinks fit.

*Explanation: An easing of the wording where the appellant has to demonstrate only one of the two criteria in order to successfully appeal a tribunal outcome.*

**14. Amendment to By-law 30.1**

- (a) An Affiliated Club must pay all debts in excess of \$1,500 (or such other sum as determined by the Board from time to time) due to the League for 30 days or more.
- (b) In the case of a club failing to make such payments, unless acceptable alternative arrangements are made with the Board, and until the club is deemed to be financial by the CEO, no team of that club shall be eligible for match points until those outstanding payment(s) is remitted in full.
- (c) Percentages for any match played while a team is ineligible for match points will be calculated on final scores submitted for each game and awarded as per By-Law 9.1 (b).
- (d) Where a match is played involving a team who is ineligible for match points, the opposition team must win the match in order to receive the match points. If the team that is ineligible for match points wins the match, neither team shall receive the match points.

*Explanation: Additional wording where the CEO can determine when the club is deemed to be financial and no longer subject to match points and percentage sanctions. Newly added Part D stipulates that an opposition team will only be awarded match points against an unfinancial team if that opposition team actually wins the match.*

**15. New By-law 30.4 (c)**

Any Affiliated Club that has not paid all debts due to the League by;

- (c) October 31 will, at the discretion of the Board, be subject to a review of their Total Player Payments cap for the next upcoming season.

*Explanation: Senior football clubs who are unfinancial with the EDFL at the close of business on 31 October each year may be subject to a salary cap alteration for the next upcoming season.*

**16. New By-law 30.5**

The EDFL Board shall have the right to approve an agreed payment plan for unfinancial clubs. If a club breaches the agreed payment plan, they will, unless there are exceptional circumstances as deemed by the Board, forfeit the right to another payment plan and will become ineligible for match points until they are deemed to be financial by the CEO.

*Explanation: Introduces parameters involving agreed-upon payment plans.*

### **17. Amendment to By-laws 35A.1 & 35A.2**

- 35A.1 The AFL Victoria Player Points System, as updated by AFL Victoria from time to time, shall apply to the men's competitions conducted by the League for the senior teams of each Affiliated Club in each of the three divisions subject to the provisions of By-Law 35A.2.
- 35A.2 The maximum number of the total player points for the Senior Team in a Men's Open Age Competition shall be capped at 46, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by the Board.

*Explanation: Removes any specific reference to a season/year.*

### **18. Amendment to By-laws 35B.1 & 35B.2**

**\*Please find an additional amendment to by-law 35B.2 (a) under Item 21 at the bottom of this document.**

- 35B.1 The EDFL Player Payments Rules and Guidelines shall apply to the competitions conducted by the League in Premier Division, Division 1 and Division 2 subject to the provisions of 35B.2.
- 35B.2 The following local arrangements shall apply:
- (a) Affiliated Clubs competing in the Senior Open Age Competitions shall not exceed the following Allowable Player Payments for Season 2026:
- Men's Premier Division: \$135,000
  - Men's Division 1: \$115,000
  - Men's Division 2: \$95,000
  - Women's Premier Division: \$15,000
  - Women's Division 1: \$7,000
  - Women's Division 2: \$5,000
- (b) There shall be no variation in the maximum Allowable Player Payments for any Affiliated Club in Season 2026.

*Explanation: Updated figures for the 2026 season.*

### **19. Addition to Appendix A - Rule 8**

The Tribunal or Appeal Board may have regard to any matters which it considers relevant to the question of penalty and without limitation may consider:-

- (a) the seriousness of the reportable offence or matter sustained against the person;
- (b) the injury sustained and effect upon the person against whom the reportable offence has been committed; and
- (c) the prior record of reportable offences or conduct committed by the person.

However, where the tribunal finds a party guilty of an offence, and;

- (a) the reported party did not take an early guilty plea and accept an offered set penalty for the offence prior to the tribunal hearing, and
- (b) did not enter a guilty plea at the beginning of the tribunal hearing,

then the minimum length of suspension the tribunal can impose must not be less than the original base sanction that was offered to the reported party prior to the matter

being sent to the tribunal. For example, if a player is offered a base sanction of three matches reduced down to two matches with an early guilty plea after the match, and then they are found guilty of the original charge at the tribunal after refusing to accept the original set penalty offer or entering a guilty plea at the tribunal, then the suspension imposed by the tribunal must be a minimum of three matches.

*Explanation: This will prevent situations where a party found guilty of an offence does not end up with a suspension that is less or equal to the original discounted set penalty offer where an early guilty plea was available to them. This amendment may see less cases go the tribunal and more appropriate sanctions imposed for offences.*

## **20. General global amendments**

*Explanation: Minor grammar and spelling alterations as needed.*

## **21. Amendment to By-laws 35B.2 (a)**

**\*This amendment has been initiated on 7 May 2026.**

35B.2 The following local arrangements shall apply:

(a) Affiliated Clubs competing in the Senior Open Age Competitions shall not exceed the following Allowable Player Payments for Season 2026:

- Men's Premier Division: \$135,000
- Men's Division 1: \$115,000
- Men's Division 2: \$95,000
- Women's Premier Division: \$15,000
- Women's Division 1: \$7,500
- Women's Division 2: \$5,000

*Explanation: The previous version of the 2026 by-laws incorrectly stated the Women's Division One allowable player payment limit as \$7,000. The correct figure should have been listed as \$7,500, which this new version of the 2026 by-laws now correctly states.*