



WAFC JUNIOR FOOTBALL COMPETITION POLICIES, RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR 2023

Please find attached the WA Football Commission's Junior Football Competition Policies, Rules and Regulations for the 2023 season.

The amendments made to the policies, rules and regulations continue to build on the improvements made in previous seasons. The WAFC Competitions Team have reviewed the document to ensure alignment with the AFL's National Community Football Policy Handbook.

You will notice changes to the order of policies, rules and regulations as well as removal of some sections to present a much more organised and clearer Competition handbook. Also included are several new or amended rules for the 2023 season, based on changes to National policies and our Metro Junior Competition teams proposals resulting from feedback received from Junior Clubs and officials. A summary of changes is included below. Thank you to all clubs and officials who provided feedback, it is much appreciated and helped shape rule changes for this season.

The handbook aims to:

- make it easier for clubs, volunteers and other stakeholders to administer Australian Football;
- provide a framework for key organisational requirements in relation to Australian Football;
- address appropriate standards of behaviour and the prevention of discrimination and harassment; and
- ensure that the game of Australian Football is played in a fair manner and a spirit of true sportsmanship.

All stakeholders are strongly recommended to read, review, and become familiar with the 2023 WAFC Junior Football Competition Policies, Rules and Regulations, which are available on the WAFC Kia Club hub website (www.clubhub.wafc.com.au) for your use.

Should you have any queries please contact your relevant Competitions Team Leader.

All the very best for an enjoyable 2023 season.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO RULES SINCE 2022

RULES & REGULATIONS	
1. Spirit of Junior Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of Point 1.10
2. Interpretations & Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of Point 2.2
* Competitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed.
4. Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Moved from 'Section 3: Season Administration' into 'Section B: Competition Governance'. ➤ Addition of point 4.3 which previously appeared in 'Competitions Policy: Awards'
5. Scratch Matches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment to points 5.2 ➤ Amendment to points 5.3 ➤ Amendment to points 5.4
7. Year Groups, Physical Development criteria and Disability – physical and intellectual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Removed and replaced with standalone policy 'WAFC COMPRULES – Eligibility & Finals Qualification'.
8. Gender Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Removed from Policy section and reference added to AFL's Gender Diversity Policy added.
* Club Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed however reference to Working with Children requirements added as separate section.
9. Working with Children – Club Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Removed from 2022 'Club Officials' section and new 'Working with Children – Club Officials' section created.
15. Direct to Tribunal Offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment to point 15.2 'Standard Range of Penalties'

Provides greater clarity that any person attending or participating in a match, event or training session is bound by the Spirit of Junior Football principals.

Provides definition as to how any dispute or objection relating to the Competition Rules may be resolved.

Reformatting for greater clarity.

Provides greater clarity on which players are covered for scratch matches under the AFL National Risk Protection Program.

Revised format to amalgamate all eligibility rules and policies into one section.

Policy removed from document as all participants are bound by AFL Gender Diversity Policy.

Each Club is responsible to elect their own administrators and officials as per their individual Club Constitution and Bylaws.

Provide clarity on Working with Children requirements.

Table updated to remove 'Second Offence' column. The WAFC Community Football Tribunal will no longer automatically double the penalty to any player found guilty of committing a second offence within 12 months.

16. Melees	➤ Addition of section	Revised format to amalgamate all melee information into one section.
18. Tribunal Appeal Hearing	➤ Appeal fee changed	Fee increased to \$500
19. Rules & Regulations, Policies and Codes of Conduct	➤ Addition of point 19.2	Expansion on section to provide greater clarity on process.
	➤ Addition of point 19.3	
	➤ Addition of point 19.4	
20. Dispute & Appeals – Competition Policies, Rules and Regulations	➤ Appeal fee changed from \$250 to \$500	Fee increased to \$500
	➤ Amendments to section 20.4 'Appeal hearing'	Expansion on section to provide greater clarity on process. Addition also made that Club will receive 50% of appeal fee refunded if appeal is ultimately successful or penalty reduced.
21. Suspensions	➤ Addition of point 21.2	As per National Community Football Policy Handbook, any suspension incurred by either a tribunal or prescribed penalty may be carried across to other competitions (including all senior competitions) at the discretion of the other competition.
	➤ Addition of point 21.6	Moved from 'Competition Policy: Awards'

POLICIES

* Member Protection Policy	➤ Policy removed	Removed as all participants are bound by the AFL Member Protection Policy which can be found at www.afl.com.au/policies
* Pregnancy Policy	➤ Policy removed	By way of affiliation the AFL member Protection Policy applies to all club.
* Privacy Policy	➤ Policy removed	Removed as all participants are bound by the AFL National Female Community Football Guidelines. Removed as all participants are bound by National AFL Privacy Policy.
* Competitions Policy: Awards	➤ Policy removed	By way of affiliation, this policy applies to all clubs. Reference to payment of players moved to Section B: Competition Governance.
		Policy removed as Competition Fairest and Best process is non Club related and is managed by WAFC Umpiring.

* Umpire Policy: Match Day Paperwork	➤ Policy Removed	Policy removed as Match Day Paperwork is non Club related and is managed by WAFC Umpiring.
* Match Operations Policy: Blood Rule	➤ Policy Removed	Policy removed as all participants are bound by the AFL Laws of the Game.
* Infectious Diseases Policy	➤ Policy Removed	Removed as all participants are bound by the AFL Laws of the Game.
* Risk management Policy	➤ Policy Removed	Removed as all participants are bound by Australian Football National Risk Protection Program.
* Rotating Player permit Policy	➤ Policy Removed	Policy removed as step by step instructions were a guide for clubs but decision is ultimately up to individual clubs. Considerations of how to permit players can be obtained from the relevant Competitions Team.
* Gender Diversity Policy	➤ Policy Removed	Removed as all participants are bound by AFL Gender Diversity Policy.
1. Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of section 2 'Statement on Social Media'. ➤ Addition of 'Breaches & Penalties' point 4a. 	With the rise in Social Media breaches, the policy was expanded to include statement on Social Media as well as add penalties to assist Club volunteers in reinforcing to their stakeholders the importance of safe and responsible use of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT).
2. Sponsorship Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment to wording in section 1 ➤ Additional points in section 2 ➤ Addition of WAFC Commercial team contact information 	Provide support to stakeholders with greater clarity on WAFC values and expand on inappropriate sponsors.
3. Equal Opportunity & Fair Play Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of 'Female Participation' point 1b ➤ Addition of 'Female Participation' point 1c ➤ Addition of 'Player Rotation' point 2d ➤ Addition of 'Maximise participation opportunities' point 3b 	Formalises the expectation that Clubs will provide equal access to facilities and equitable scheduling of fixtures regardless of gender. Provides transparency on penalties that may occur for breaches of the policy. Provides transparency on penalties that may occur for breaches of the policy.
4. Drugs & Alcohol Policy	➤ Addition of point 2g	Provides transparency on penalties that may occur for breaches of the policy.
5. Weather Policy	➤ Addition of 'Lightning' guidelines as specified in the AFL Extreme Weather Policy	Allows stakeholders to have direct access to lightning procedures in extreme weather situations rather than referring to an additional document.
6. Protective Equipment Policy	➤ Amendment to Protective Headgear requirements	Due to the increasing awareness of concussion, removed protective headgear requiring a permit to reduce club volunteer workload. Additional guidelines on material and inspections added to ensure player wellbeing and safety.
8. Concussion Policy	➤ Addition of new 'Multiple Concussions in a season' section	Implemented key recommendations from WA Concussion working group to ensure safety and wellbeing of players incurring multiple concussions in a season.

<p>10A. Competitions Policy: Team Selection & Nominations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed: 'Who should split players between two or more teams' ➤ Section removed: 'How should players be split between two or more teams' 	<p>Previous step by step instructions were a guide for clubs however decision on how to split teams is ultimately up to individual clubs. Information on considerations of how to split teams is still included and should clubs require extra assistance on splitting their teams, the relevant Competitions Team can provide guidance.</p>
<p>10B. Competitions Policy: Colours & Team Uniform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of 1b ➤ Addition of 1d 	<p>Addition to add requirements to have an Indigenous jumper design approved. This ensures authentic representation and culturally appropriate use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designs.</p> <p>Addition based on feedback from club stakeholders that allows players not wearing correct, approved uniform to be removed from playing surface.</p>
<p>10C. Competitions Policy: Fixtures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed: 'Framework' ➤ Amendments to section 'Amendments and cancelled fixtures' ➤ Section removed: 'Finals' 	<p>Relevant Competitions Team will determine the most efficient makeup of a competition and fixture allocation based upon the individual circumstances to ensure the competition is as competitive as possible.</p>
<p>10D. Competitions Policy: Transfers & Permits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of new section: 'Transfer Refusal' 	<p>Provides club volunteers with clear information on when a transfer can be refused rather than having to refer to additional document 'AFL National Player Transfer Regulations'.</p>
<p>10E. Competitions Policy: Results, Premiership Points & E-points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of 2h 	<p>Addition based on feedback from club stakeholders that allows E-points awarded for positive game day behaviour to be carried forward after re-grading.</p>
<p>10F. Competitions Policy: Match Forfeits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of 1a ➤ Amendment of 1e ➤ Addition of 1h 	<p>Addition and amendments based on feedback from club stakeholders that provides greater clarity on when a game is deemed a forfeit and how many premiership points and E-points will be awarded.</p>
<p>11. Umpire Fees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Updated to reflect 2023 rates of payment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Year 11/12 Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Field Umpire increase of \$10 ○ Boundary Umpire fees added ○ Goal Umpire fees added ➤ Year 10 Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Field Umpire (2 umpires) increase of \$5 ➤ Year 9 Competitions

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Field Umpire (1 umpire) increase of \$5 ➤ Year 8 Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Field Umpire(1 umpire) reduction of \$5 ➤ Year 7 Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Field Umpire (2 umpires) increase of \$5 <p>Section removed however the stipulation that a handshake can be substituted for a fist bump or elbow bump has been added to existing policy.</p> <p>Links to print and online versions of Match Day Checklist added to assist club stakeholders</p> <p>Removal of requirement for ground to have access to ice, telephone and emergency numbers for ambulance, doctor and police.</p> <p>Alignment of Male and Female Competition rules has resulted in ground changes for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Year 7/8 Female Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o increased to 110-140m length and 70-110m width ➤ Year 9/10 Female Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o increased to 120-150m length & 90-120m width ➤ Year 11/12 Female Competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o increased to 135-185m length & 110-155m width <p>Addition based on feedback from club stakeholders to provide greater clarity on when late arriving players are eligible to play and the process required before entering the field of play.</p> <p>Removed as due to ground and volunteer ability, time on / extra time is not utilised during regular season competitions.</p> <p>Greater clarity on process to follow in the event of a tie during finals matches which allows for additional playing time.</p> <p>Following it's successful trial in previous seasons, formalisation of policy that allows Competition discretion to adhere to Even up policy during finals.</p> <p>Amendment based on feedback from club stakeholders to remove confusion over process of Yellow card being issued during an even up situation.</p>
12. Umpire Policy: Umpire Handshake Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed: 'COVID-19 Amendment' 	
13A. Match Operations Policy: Ground Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment of 3a ➤ Amendment of section 4 'Safety requirements' ➤ Amendment of section 6 'Ground size summary' 	
13B. Match Operations Policy: Team Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of 1e 	
13C. Match Operations Policy: Match Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section removed: 'Time on/Extra time' ➤ Amendment to section 3: 'Finals' 	
13D. Match Operations Policy: Game Day Even Up & Field Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of new section: 2 'Finals application' ➤ Amendment of 4b 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New section added: 5. Field Positions 	Addition based on feedback from club stakeholders that outlines Field positions during an even up situation to remove confusion on game day.
13E. Match Operations Policy: Send Off Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Removal of requirement to record any Officials receiving a red card on Red Flag system. ➤ Section removed: 'Swearing' 	Removed as WAFC Competitions staff manage record keeping rather than club volunteers. Removed as all participants are bound by relevant Code of Conducts and penalties stipulated in AFL Laws of the game.
13F. Match Operations Policy: Removal of Players from the Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment 	Amendment to provide greater clarity on when a game will be determined to be abandoned and the possible penalties should ground encroachment occur.
13G. Match Operations Policy: Ground Encroachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment to section 2 	Amendment to provide greater clarity on possible penalties should ground encroachment occur.
13H. Match Operations Policy: Match Balls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment 	Addition of table outlining various ball sizes and materials required for each age group. Table allows all information to be in one location rather than split across multiple age group rules.
13J. Match Operations Policy: Mercy Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of new Policy 	Formalisation of policy that has been in place in previous seasons and outlines coaching responsibilities to ensure a more competitive game.
17. Primary Registration Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment 	At the request of club stakeholders, formalises a trial whereby changes to the Primary registration of WAFL / WAFLW players will be trialed in season 2023.

COMPETITION RULES

All age groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Removal of standalone Female Competition rules ➤ Removed section: 'Competition Roles' ➤ Removed section: 'Match Day Roles' ➤ Removed section: 'Finals eligibility' ➤ Addition of 3b ii 	Male and Female Competitions amalgamated to ensure equity regardless of gender. Moved to standalone Rule 'Match Day Roles' Moved to standalone Rule 'Eligibility & Finals Qualification'
Year 3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition to provide clarity that players are not able to 'fend off' opposition players. 	Addition to provide clarity that players are not able to 'fend off' opposition players.
Year 7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amalgamation of Male and Female rules 	Due to amalgamation, female competitions see an increase to ground size and kicking off ground (soccering) now permitted.

<p>Year 9-10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amalgamation of Male and Female Rules ➤ Removal of section: 'Finals eligibility for Rogers Cup and WAFLW players' 	<p>Due to amalgamation, female competitions see an increase to ground size and kicking off ground (soccering) now permitted.</p> <p>Finals eligibility criteria specific to Female players removed and aligned to male competition rules which are now located under standalone Rule 'Eligibility & Finals Qualification'</p>
<p>Year 11 -12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amalgamation of Male and Female Rules ➤ MALE COMPETITION – Removal of section: 'Team Nominations' ➤ FEMALE COMPETITION - Removal of section: 'Finals eligibility for Rogers Cup and WAFLW players' 	<p>Due to amalgamation, female competitions see an increase to ground size and kicking off ground (soccering) now permitted.</p> <p>Each team now treated as a separate entity therefore players are not permitted to move between teams. Finals Eligibility is now located under standalone Rule 'Eligibility & Finals Qualification'</p> <p>Finals eligibility criteria specific to Female players removed and aligned to male competition rules which are now located under standalone Rule 'Eligibility & Finals Qualification'</p>
<p>Match Day Roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addition of New rule 	<p>Sections removed from individual Year group Rules to remove duplication and create one standalone Rule guide</p>
<p>Eligibility & Finals Qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional New rule ➤ Amendment to 1d ix 	<p>Sections removed from individual Year group Rules to remove duplication and create one standalone Rule guide</p> <p>As per changes to the National Community Football Policy, applications to play down on the basis of disability may include a recommendation from a medical specialist for dispensation covering two years. Previously the granting of such an age dispensation could only be applied for one season in all circumstances.</p>