

## PART B – ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION

### What is the purpose of Part B?

- This Part sets out how someone can get involved in Australian Football as a Player, Coach or Umpire.
- Section [3](#) governs the registration and transfer of Players within Australian Football and aims to ensure the movement of Players is fair, transparent and consistent.
- Section [4](#) provides for the dispensation of a Player to participate in a Competition below their applicable age group where a disability and/or physical size considerations exist. A Player who wishes to apply for dispensation may make an application in accordance with Section [4](#).
- The national framework for the accreditation of Coaches and Umpires of Australian Football is set out in Sections [5](#) and [6](#). The framework is focused on improving Coach and Umpire education and Player safety at all levels of Australian Football and forms part of the AFL's commitment to creating a fun and safe environment for every Person to participate in Australian Football.
- The AFL is committed to providing a physiologically and psychologically safe environment for all participants and Section [7](#), which deals with the deregistration of Players and Football Officials, provides a risk management framework and policy basis for the AFL and community football stakeholders to support that objective.

The points above are for background only and are not operative terms of this Policy Handbook.

## 3. Player registration and transfers

### 3.1 Player eligibility

#### (a) Ineligibility

A Player who is:

- (i) unregistered; or
- (ii) registered based on false or misleading information,

will be ineligible to play for a Club and/or participate in a Competition.

#### (b) Age group eligibility

- (i) The age eligibility requirements for a Player participating in a Competition are specified in the Australian Football Match Policy.
- (ii) A Player's Competition age group shall be based on that Player's age as at 31 December in the year prior to the applicable playing year.
- (iii) Upon request by a Controlling Body from time to time, a Player must provide evidence or confirmation of a Player's age from time to time.

*[Guidance note: For example, if a Player is 11 years of age as at 31 December 2021 then that Player's Competition age group for the 2022 calendar year will be Under 12s (assuming single age groups).]*

(c) **Playing in multiple Competitions**

Unless otherwise specified in this Policy Handbook, a Player who is 14 years of age or older as at 31 December in the year prior to their applicable playing year will not be eligible to participate in both a boys Competition (or Competitions) and a girls Competition (or Competitions) at the same time or interchangeably.

*[Guidance note: This Section prevents a Player who has reached 14 years of age from participating in a boys Competition and a girls Competition at the same time or switching back and forth.]*

## 3.2 Registration and transfer process

(a) **Registration**

- (i) A Player must be registered via the Competition Management Platform to play Australian Football for a Club and/or participate in a Competition.
- (ii) A Player may only register under one name and must not submit multiple concurrent registrations. Clubs must monitor compliance with this Section [3.2\(a\)\(ii\) and where a Club becomes aware of an issue under this Section 3.2\(a\)\(ii\) they must immediately notify the relevant Controlling Body.](#)
- (iii) Each Player registration must be submitted electronically via the Competition Management Platform by the Player or, where the Player is an Underage Player, by that Player's parent or legal guardian.
- (iv) For a Player registration to be active, the Club must accept the Player registration via the Competition Management Platform.
- (v) Unless otherwise specified in this Policy Handbook, the Player registration period in respect of each season commences on 1 November.

(b) **Transfer**

- (i) Subject to Section [3.2\(b\)\(ii\)](#), a Transfer may be initiated by:
  - (A) a Player; or
  - (B) where a Player is an Underage Player, that Player's parent or legal guardian; or
  - (C) a Destination Club with the Player's consent,  
submitting a Transfer Request electronically via the Competition Management Platform.
- (ii) A Transfer must not be initiated in respect of a Player who is subject to a Permit.
- (iii) Once a Transfer Request is submitted under Section [3.2\(b\)\(i\)](#), notification of the Transfer Request will be automatically sent via the Competition Management Platform to the Source Club.

- (iv) Subject to Sections [3.2\(b\)\(v\)](#) and [3.2\(b\)\(vi\)](#), a Transfer Request must be submitted between:
  - (A) 12:01am (AEDT) on 1 November and 11:59pm (AEDT) on 30 November during the calendar year preceding the relevant season; or
  - (B) 12:01am (AEDT) on 1 February and 11:59pm (AEST) on 30 June during the calendar year of the relevant season,
 (the **Transfer Periods**).
- (v) A State Football Body may permit an intrastate Transfer Request, or the relevant State Football Bodies may jointly permit an interstate Transfer Request, outside of the Transfer Periods where:
  - (A) exceptional and compelling circumstances apply to the Transfer Request; or
  - (B) the '24-month rule' set out in Section [3.4\(c\)](#) applies to the Transfer Request.
- (vi) The Transfer Periods are not applicable to the following Competitions conducted by AFL NT (and any other Competitions notified by AFLNT from time to time):
  - (A) Northern Territory Football League;
  - (B) Tiwi Islands Football League;
  - (C) Lajamanu Football League;
  - (D) Maningrida Football League.

(c) **Source Club to approve or refuse Transfer Request**

A Source Club may, within six (6) calendar days from notification of a Transfer Request under Section [3.2\(b\)\(ii\)](#), either approve or refuse the Transfer Request.

### 3.3 Transfer approval

(a) **How Transfer is finalised**

- (i) If a Source Club fails to either approve or refuse a Transfer Request in accordance with Section [3.2\(c\)](#), the Transfer will be approved automatically in the Competition Management Platform following the expiry of the prescribed period of six (6) calendar days.
- (ii) Subject to Sections [3.4\(d\)](#), if a Transfer Request is approved under Section [3.2\(c\)](#) or [3.3\(a\)\(i\)](#):
  - (A) notification of such approval will be automatically sent via the Competition Management Platform to the Source Controlling Body; and

- (B) if applicable, notification of such approval together with the playing history of the Player (including their Disciplinary History) will be automatically sent via the Competition Management Platform to the Destination Controlling Body; and
  - (C) notification of such approval will be automatically sent via the Competition Management Platform to the Destination Club and the Destination Club must either approve or refuse the Transfer Request.
- (iii) If a Transfer Request is approved under Section [3.3\(a\)\(ii\)\(C\)](#), the Player will be “pending” in the Competition Management Platform and ineligible to be entered on a team sheet and play for the Destination Club until the Player or, where the Player is an Underage Player, that Player’s parent or legal guardian completes the Player’s registration to the Destination Club via the Competition Management Platform after which the Player will be “active” in the Competition Management Platform and eligible to be entered on a team sheet and play for the Destination Club.

**(b) Transfer Request completed incorrectly**

If a Transfer Request is submitted and/or approved incorrectly, the relevant Controlling Body may deal with the Transfer Request in any manner it reasonably determines.

**(c) False or misleading information**

- (i) If a Player submits false or misleading information or intentionally fails to disclose information during the registration process under Section [3.2\(a\)](#) or in relation to any Transfer Request under Section [3.2\(b\)](#), that Player:
  - (A) will be deemed to have also breached Section [9.2\(a\)](#) of this Policy Handbook; and
  - (B) notwithstanding any other provision of this Policy Handbook, may be dealt with in such manner as the Controlling Body determines including a retrospective determination that the Player was ineligible for Matches in which they participated.
- (ii) In addition to any sanction imposed or determination made by the Controlling Body in respect of a Player under Section [3.3\(c\)\(i\)](#), the Controlling Body may impose a sanction on that Player’s Club, except where the Club satisfies the Controlling Body that the Player engaged in the relevant conduct without the knowledge of the Club.

### **3.4 Transfer refusal**

**(a) How Transfer is refused**

If a Source Club refuses a Transfer Request under Section [3.2\(c\)](#), the Transfer will be refused in the Competition Management Platform.

**(b) Grounds for refusal**

- (i) Subject to Sections [3.4\(b\)\(ii\)](#) and [3.4\(c\)](#), a Source Club may refuse a Transfer Request where it can substantiate that the Player:

- (A) is a Declared Player whose current player arrangement requires the Player to continue to play for the Source Club (as substantiated in accordance with Section [3.4\(b\)\(iii\)](#)); or
- (B) is financially indebted to the Source Club as evidenced by proper financial records; or
- (C) is in possession of Source Club property (for example, Source Club jumper or Source Club equipment) that must be returned; or
- (D) wishes to withdraw their Transfer Request in accordance with Section [3.4\(d\)](#).

For the avoidance of doubt a Source Club may only refuse a Transfer Request on grounds set out in Section [3.4\(b\)\(i\)](#).

- (ii) Where a Source Club refuses a Transfer Request on grounds specified in Section [3.4\(b\)\(i\)\(B\)](#) or [3.4\(b\)\(i\)\(C\)](#) in respect of a Player, those grounds will not be valid grounds for that Source Club to refuse a Transfer Request for that Player once 24 months has elapsed since the date of the initial refusal of Transfer Request. *[Guidance note: This Section is distinct from the '24-month rule' set out in Section [3.4\(c\)](#).]*
- (iii) Upon request by its affiliate Controlling Body, a Source Club refusing to Transfer a Player must provide evidence (for example, written documentation acknowledged by both parties) in order to substantiate the refusal within four (4) calendar days of such request. Failure to provide such evidence may result in the Controlling Body approving the Transfer Request upon resubmission of the Transfer Request by the Player or, where the Player is an Underage Player, that Player's parent or guardian.
- (iv) A Destination Club may refuse a Transfer Request initiated under Section [3.2\(b\)\(i\)\(A\)](#) or [3.2\(b\)\(i\)\(B\)](#).

(c) **24-month rule**

A Player who has not played a Match for a period of 24 months or greater may submit a Transfer Request in accordance with 3.2(b) at any time and that Player's Source Club may not refuse the Transfer Request under any circumstances.

(d) **Transfer withdrawal**

- (i) A Player wishing to withdraw their Transfer Request must do so in writing to the Source Controlling Body within six (6) calendar days from notification of the Transfer Request under Section [3.2\(b\)\(iii\)](#).
- (ii) For the avoidance of doubt, if a Transfer Request is approved by the Source Club before the Player lodges a transfer withdrawal under Section [3.4\(d\)\(i\)](#), the Player is not eligible for a transfer withdrawal.

(e) **Suspended Players**

- (i) A suspended Player may Transfer to a Destination Club (**First Transfer**) but must not play a Match with that Destination Club until the Player has served their suspension and may not subsequently Transfer (i.e. a second

consecutive transfer) to a further Destination Club until at least twenty eight (28) days after completion of the First Transfer.

- (ii) A suspended Player seeking a Transfer from a winter Competition to a summer Competition and vice versa will be subject to Law 22.4.4 of the Laws of the Game.

### **3.5 Appealing a Transfer refusal**

- (a) Where a Player disputes a Transfer refusal, that Player and/or their Destination Club must use best endeavours to resolve the dispute with the Source Club.
- (b) Where a dispute cannot be resolved under Section [3.5\(a\)](#), a Player and their Destination Club may appeal the Transfer refusal by the Source Club provided that:
  - (i) an appeal involving Clubs affiliated with the same Controlling Body will be heard by that Controlling Body's Appeal Board in accordance with Section [26](#);
  - (ii) an appeal involving Clubs from two different Controlling Bodies located within the same State will be heard by the relevant State Football Body's Appeal Board in accordance with Section [26](#); and
  - (iii) an appeal involving Clubs from two different Controlling Bodies not located within the same State will be referred to the Permit Committee for resolution in accordance with Section [3.11](#).

### **3.6 Transfer fee**

Without limiting any applicable player payment or transfer rules enacted by a Controlling Body in respect of a Competition, no Club or Controlling Body may directly or indirectly receive or pay any transfer fee or any other consideration in respect of a Transfer.

### **3.7 Player interchange and Permits**

#### **(a) Interchange Agreement**

- (i) A Controlling Body may enter into an Interchange Agreement with another Controlling Body in respect of the movement of Players between:
  - (A) Tier 2 Competitions with the approval of the relevant State Football Body;
  - (B) a Tier 1 Competition and Tier 2 Competition;
  - (C) Tier 1 Competitions;
  - (D) a Tier 1 Competition and AFL/AFLW Competition,provided that any Interchange Agreement must be in place by 30 June in the applicable playing year.
- (ii) A copy of an Interchange Agreement entered into under Section [3.7\(a\)\(i\)\(A\)](#) must be lodged with the relevant State Football Body within ten (10)

calendar days of its execution for approval by the relevant State Football Body.

- (iii) An Interchange Agreement will be for an indefinite term unless otherwise specified in the Interchange Agreement and may be terminated:
  - (A) by a party to the Interchange Agreement giving notice to the other party to the Interchange Agreement at any time: or
  - (B) in respect of an Interchange Agreement entered into under Section [3.7\(a\)\(i\)\(A\)](#), by the relevant State Football Body giving notice to each party to the Interchange Agreement at any time.

**(b) Permits**

- (i) A Game Permit is a Permit which:
  - (A) allows a Player to play a single Match for a Club (other than their Source Club); and
  - (B) does not require Source Club approval via the Competition Management Platform.
- (ii) A Season Permit is a Permit which:
  - (A) allows a Player to play more than a single Match for a Club (other than their Source Club); and
  - (B) requires Source Club approval via the Competition Management Platform.
- (iii) Permits are to be applied and managed in accordance with the respective State Football Body rules, regulations or by-laws and it is the responsibility of the relevant Controlling Body to monitor the application and management of Permits.
- (iv) Other than pursuant to Section [3.7\(c\)](#), a Permit may not be granted unless there is an Interchange Agreement in place between the relevant Controlling Bodies.
- (v) Any Player granted a Season Permit will remain registered with their Source Club for the term of the Season Permit.

**(c) Seasons Permits (and Northern Territory Football League)**

- (i) A Player may Transfer to or from the Northern Territory Football League under a Season Permit using the Competition Management Platform.
- (ii) Season Permits are valid for one (1) season only. Players wishing to continue on a Season Permit basis will be required to complete a new Competition Management Platform application for each subsequent season.
- (iii) Where a Tier 1 Club recruits a Player on a Season Permit, the Tier 1 Competition shall be responsible for ensuring that the Player participates with the Club for one (1) season only.

- (iv) Where a Player has played under a Season Permit and has not played or made themselves available for selection for their Source Club for more than five (5) home and away Matches for a period of twenty-four (24) months, the Player must lodge a Transfer Request through the Competition Management Platform for any subsequent Transfer.
- (v) Where a Player is drafted as an AFL/AFLW Listed Player during the period of the Season Permit, they shall be regarded as having been recruited from the Source Club of the Controlling Body granting the Season Permit.

### **3.8 Player declaration**

- (a) Where a Club and Player wish to, or are required to, enter into an arrangement in relation to the Player's participation at the Club, the parties must use a Standard Player Declaration.
- (b) A Club must provide a copy of each Player's current Standard Player Declaration upon request by a State Football Body.
- (c) Each Club and Player must ensure all player payments required to be made pursuant to any Standard Playing Declaration are made in accordance with:
  - (i) any applicable player payment rules; and
  - (ii) all applicable State and Commonwealth laws.
- (d) In respect of a Standard Player Declaration, the following provisions apply:
  - (i) a Player must be at least 18 years old to sign a Standard Player Declaration (where a Player is an Underage Player, the Standard Player Declaration must be signed by a parent or guardian);
  - (ii) for a Standard Player Declaration to be valid both the Club and Player (or where the Player is an Underage Player, that Player's parent or guardian) must sign the Standard Player Declaration;
  - (iii) subject to Section [3.8\(d\)\(iv\)](#), a Standard Player Declaration will expire on 31 October each year;
  - (iv) a Standard Player Declaration that is:
    - (A) expressed to be valid for more than one year will expire on 31 October in the final year of the Standard Player Declaration; and
    - (B) executed between a Club in the Northern Territory Football League Competition and Player will expire on 31 March in the final year of the Standard Player Declaration; and
  - (v) a Standard Player Declaration will remain effective until the expiration or earlier termination of the Standard Player Declaration. For the avoidance of doubt, a Club and Player may agree to an early release of the Player from a Standard Player Declaration.
- (e) A Tier 1 Club or AFL/AFLW Competition Standard Player Declaration will take precedence over a Tier 2 Club Standard Player Declaration should the relevant Player wish to participate in a Tier 1 Competition or AFL/AFLW Competition,



provided that where a Tier 1 Club or AFL/AFLW Competition Standard Player Declaration expires or is validly terminated within the term of the Tier 2 Club Standard Player Declaration the relevant Player will be bound by the Tier 2 Club Standard Player Declaration until expiration or earlier termination.

- (f) If there is any dispute concerning this Section [3.8](#), including between a Player and Tier 1 Club or Tier 1 Competition as to whether that Player is a Declared Player, that dispute may be referred to the Permit Committee for determination.
- (g) A Tier 1 Club Declared Player must not play with a Tier 2 Club in a Match unless:
  - (i) that Player's Standard Player Declaration is validly terminated; or
  - (ii) that Player does so pursuant to the rules of the relevant Tier 1 Competition; or
  - (iii) that Player does so under a Permit or Interchange Agreement.

If a Player breaches Section [3.8\(g\)](#), that Player and the relevant Tier 2 Club may be dealt with in such manner as the relevant Controlling Body determines

### **3.9 Underage Players**

- (a) An Underage Player who resides and is registered in one State may not be registered with a Club in a Tier 1 Competition in another State without the prior approval of the Permit Committee.
- (b) In granting any approval under Section [3.9\(a\)](#), the Permit Committee may consider the following factors (without limitation):
  - (i) whether the Underage Player has transferred interstate with their family;
  - (ii) whether the Underage Player has undergone a bona fide transfer of employment to another State;
  - (iii) whether the Underage Player has enrolled in a tertiary education course in another State;
  - (iv) whether the AFL's Head of Talent Pathways and National Diversity Talent Manager (or equivalent) support the move in the interests of developing the Underage Player's football career.

### **3.10 General provisions**

#### **(a) Power of AFL and State Football Body**

The AFL or a State Football Body may override any rule or other mechanism of a Club or other Controlling Body relating to the registration or transfer of Players where the AFL or State Football Body (as applicable) determines (acting reasonably) that the relevant rule or other mechanism is inconsistent with this Policy Handbook.

#### **(b) Practice matches**

- (i) A Declared Player must not play in a practice or trial match with an interstate Club without the written consent of the Player's Source Club.

- (ii) Any alleged breach of Section [3.10\(b\)\(i\)](#) may be dealt with by the Permit Committee in accordance with Section [3.11](#).

(c) **State Football Body responsible**

Where a Tier 1 Competition is separately constituted the Controlling Body to which the Tier 1 Competition is affiliated will be responsible for ensuring that the Tier 1 Competition observes and complies with this Section [3](#).

(d) **Team in another Tier 1 Competition**

Where a Club or team located in one State (**State A**) competes in a Tier 1 Competition based and administered in another State, the Players of the Club or team located in State A will be considered Players from State A.

(e) **State affiliation – Tier 2 Competitions**

A Controlling Body administering a Tier 2 Competition with two thirds or more of its Clubs domiciled in a State shall be required to affiliate with the State Football Body recognised by the AFL as responsible for the State concerned.

(f) **Transfer of Player to an AFL Competition**

- (i) A Player will be automatically registered to an AFL Club upon becoming an AFL/AFLW Listed Player.
- (ii) Should a Player be listed as an AFL/AFLW Listed Player by an AFL Club located in a State different to that Player's Tier 1 Club, the Player may play with a Tier 1 Club in that State (i.e. the new State).
- (iii) A Player delisted by an AFL Club who returns to play for a Club in the Tier 1 Competition from which the Player was drafted will be bound by any applicable transfer and registration rules of that Tier 1 Competition.
- (iv) Where a Player is delisted as an AFL/AFLW Listed Player and becomes an AFL/AFLW Listed Player of another AFL Club for the following AFL/AFLW Competition season that Player shall be regarded as having continuous AFL/AFLW Competition registration.

(g) **Non-use of Competition Management Platform**

Where a Controlling Body does not use the Competition Management Platform, this Section 3 will not apply.

### **3.11 Permit Committee**

- (a) The AFL may, from time to time, appoint a Permit Committee comprising at least three (3) members who in the opinion of the AFL possess sufficient knowledge of Australian Football and are sufficiently qualified to competently perform the role of Permit Committee member.
- (b) The Permit Committee may, upon receipt of a bond amount of \$550.00 (including GST) (or such other amount determined by the Permit Committee) from each Club, consider and determine an appeal involving Clubs from two different States referred to the Permit Committee in accordance with Section [3.5\(b\)\(iii\)](#) and the following provisions will apply:

- (i) the parties will be required to provide brief written submissions to the Permit Committee in respect of matter; and
  - (ii) 50% of the bond amount will be refunded to each Club (or such other amount determined by the Permit Committee) unless the Permit Committee considers that the appellant Club's appeal or the defendant Club's defence (as applicable) is vexatious or frivolous in which case the whole bond amount paid by the Club whose appeal or defence is considered vexatious or frivolous may be forfeited.
- (c) The Permit Committee may:
- (i) mediate disputes that arise between State Football Bodies in respect of the application and interpretation of this Section [3](#) and provide final judgment as appropriate;
  - (ii) consider and determine interstate Transfer Requests in relation to Underage Players under Section [3.9](#);
  - (iii) consider and determine matters raised under Sections [3.8](#), [3.9](#) and [3.10](#); or
  - (iv) deal with any other matters as determined by the AFL.
- (d) To refer a matter to the Permit Committee under Sections [3.11\(b\)](#) and [3.11\(c\)](#), the relevant party must provide written notice to the AFL (via the AFL Community Football Operations Manager).
- (e) The Permit Committee may:
- (i) exercise its powers under Section [3.11\(b\)](#) in any manner it reasonably determines; and
  - (ii) levy a fee for the administration of matters under Section [3.11\(b\)](#) (with the fee amount to be determined by the Permit Committee).

## 4. Age dispensation

### 4.1 Application process

- (a) A Player may apply for dispensation to play in a Competition age group below their applicable age group on the basis of a Disability or for Physical Size Considerations by submitting an application, via the Player's Club, to the relevant Controlling Body for assessment. Where the Player is an Underage Player, that Player's parent or guardian must consent to such application.
- (b) An application for dispensation under Section [4.1\(a\)](#) must be:
  - (i) in the form of the AFL National Dispensation Application Form or such other form prescribed by the relevant Controlling Body; and
  - (ii) supported by a Certificate from a Medical Specialist appropriately qualified in an area of practice directly related to the dispensation being sought. Such Certificate must state the reasons for supporting the application for dispensation which directly relate to the dispensation being sought and have regard to all relevant matters pertaining to the Player including: