

- (c) be considerate of the varying maturity and levels of ability of Players when designing practice schedules and practice activities;
- (d) if coaching Junior Players, use best endeavours to ensure that Players gain equal playing time in Matches;
- (e) always monitor and ensure the health and safety of Players;
- (f) seek and follow the advice of appropriately qualified health specialists in relation to the participation of injured or ill Players provided that, where such advice is that a Player is fit to play but that advice is inconsistent with any restrictions in this Policy Handbook on the participation of injured or ill Players, the restrictions in this Policy Handbook must be complied with;
- (g) keep up to date with the principles of coaching including skill development and requirements of Accreditation;
- (h) display and foster appropriate sporting behaviour, including using best endeavours to procure that Players comply with their obligations under this Policy Handbook;
- (i) display and foster respect for Football Officials, opponents, parents and spectators; and
- (j) ensure that Players are involved in a positive environment where skill learning and development are priorities.

10. Vilification and discrimination

10.1 Prohibited conduct

No Person shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person or group of persons on any basis, including but not limited to, a person's race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

10.2 AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel

(a) Appointment by AFL

The AFL may, from time to time, appoint persons to the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel.

(b) Qualifications of panel members

The AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel will consist of a panel of persons who:

- (i) meet the Tribunal qualification requirements specified in Section 25.2(c); and
- (ii) in the opinion of the AFL:
 - (A) have demonstrated knowledge and skills in the resolution of vilification and discrimination matters;
 - (B) possess sufficient knowledge of Australian Football; and

- (C) are sufficiently qualified to competently perform the role of AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel member.

(c) **Function**

The function of the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel is to provide expert assistance to the AFL and other Controlling Bodies in respect of the conciliation process under Section 10.

(d) **Levy of fee**

A Controlling Body may levy a fee for the administration of a conciliation under Section 10 including the involvement of the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel (with the fee amount to be determined by the Controlling Body).

10.3 Preliminary conciliation process

- (a) Where Section [23.2\(a\)\(i\)](#) or [23.2\(c\)\(i\)](#) applies in relation to an alleged breach of Section [10.1](#), the AFL or Controlling Body (as applicable) must as soon as practicable:
 - (i) inform the person alleged to have breached Section [10.1](#) (**Contravening Person**) of the alleged breach and provide that person with an opportunity to respond to the complaint;
 - (ii) use reasonable measures to establish the facts of the alleged Policy Breach.
- (b) If, following completion of the steps in Section [10.3\(a\)](#), the AFL or Controlling Body (as applicable) is reasonably satisfied that a breach of Section [10.1](#) may have occurred, it will arrange for the complaint to be conciliated and take all steps necessary for the complaint to be conciliated.
- (c) The AFL or Controlling Body will determine the arrangements for the conciliation, including appointment of a conciliator and the date, time and place/forum (e.g. in person or virtually).
- (d) Where a Controlling Body (other than the AFL) arranges to hold a conciliation, it must inform the AFL prior to the conciliation and, in consultation with the AFL, appoint a conciliator. The relevant Controlling Body may, by written notice, request the assistance of an AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel member to conduct the conciliation and the AFL may, subject to the availability of the AFL Vilification and Discrimination Panel, arrange for that requested assistance.
- (e) Persons entitled to attend a conciliation are as follows:
 - (i) person(s) vilified;
 - (ii) the Contravening Person;
 - (iii) other person(s) directly involved in the complaint whom in the reasonable opinion of the AFL or Controlling Body ought to attend the conciliation;
 - (iv) where the alleged breach of Section [10.1](#) was not about or did not directly impact a specific person or persons (e.g. the prohibited conduct vilified a group of persons generally without specifying any individual), a representative of that group may attend the conciliation at the invitation of

the AFL or Controlling Body for the purpose of providing a victim impact statement and more generally to provide the perspectives of that group of vilified persons in the conduct of the conciliation;

- (v) conciliator; and
- (vi) where a Person involved in a conciliation is under the age of eighteen (18) years:
 - (A) the Person must always be represented by a Club Officer (and such representative must not be a parent or guardian of the Person); and
 - (B) a parent or guardian of the Person may attend a conciliation in place or in support of the Person.
- (f) All conciliation participants are permitted and encouraged to have a support person present at the conciliation. Support persons will not be advocates or actively participate in the conciliation.
- (g) All conciliation participants are discouraged from having a legal practitioner as their support person or in any other capacity in conciliation.

10.4 Agreed outcomes at conciliation

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Policy Handbook, the conciliation participants will be at liberty to consider and agree to any outcome or sanction including but not limited to any of the following (or a combination of them):
 - (i) suspension of a Contravening Person from playing and/or officiating in Matches at any level;
 - (ii) if reasonably practicable, attendance at or participation in a community service program by the Contravening Person;
 - (iii) the provision of a public apology or apologies by a Contravening Person.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt:
 - (i) the person(s) vilified, the Contravening Person and the AFL or Controlling Body must all agree to any outcome or sanction;
 - (ii) the conciliation participants may not agree to any outcome that binds or sanctions any Person that is not a conciliation participant;
 - (iii) the effect of any suspension agreed under Section [10.4\(a\)\(i\)](#) will be the same as a suspension under Part E (Disciplinary).
- (c) In their consideration of agreed outcomes and sanctions, the conciliation participants should have regard to the following:
 - (i) the nature of the Policy Breach and all the circumstances in which it was undertaken including the setting (e.g. during the course of a Match, during the course of an official or unofficial Club activity, in a public place, in a private setting);

- (ii) the extent to which the Policy Breach caused offence or hurt to the vilified person or others (e.g. was it undertaken in an aggressive or threatening way, did it offend or hurt a large number of people);
- (iii) whether there have been previous instances of Policy Breaches by the Contravening Person;
- (iv) whether the Contravening Person has received any relevant training and education.

10.5 Confidentiality and public statement

- (a) Subject to Section [10.5\(b\)](#):
 - (i) the particulars of a complaint and the conciliation shall at all times remain confidential; and
 - (ii) a person shall not publicly comment on or disseminate to any person information concerning a complaint or conciliation at any time prior to, during or after the conciliation.
- (b) Where a complaint is resolved by conciliation, any public statement (including any apology) made concerning the complaint and its resolution shall be agreed upon by the parties.

10.6 Unsuccessful conciliation

Where the AFL or Controlling Body (as applicable) is of the opinion that the matter has not been resolved by conciliation, the AFL or Controlling Body must:

- (a) complete a Notice of Breach and issue it to the Contravening Person and the Contravening Person's Club;
- (b) provide the person(s) vilified and that person's Club (if applicable) with a copy of the Notice of Breach; and
- (c) proceed to deal with the matter under Section [23.5](#) (Early Guilty Plea – Policy Breach).

11. Safeguarding Children and Young People

11.1 AFL commitment to safeguarding Children and Young People

All Children and Young People, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from Child Abuse. The AFL is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Young People.

11.2 Controlling Body commitment to safeguarding Children and Young People

- (a) To support the AFL's commitment under Section [11.1](#), each Controlling Body will commit to the following:
 - (i) the Controlling Body will have zero tolerance for Child Abuse;