

WESTERN FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE INCORPORATED (A0004486S)

WFNL BY-LAWS

Issue Date – February 2026

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APPENDICES

The League has adopted the following policies and guidelines as scheduled to these By-Laws:

- A** WFNL Code of Conduct (Issue date February 2026)
- B** AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program – Player Points Policy
- C** AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program – Player Payment Rule
- D** WFNL Independent Tribunal and IHC Procedure Guidelines (Issue date March 2025)
- E** WFNL Appeals Board Procedure Guidelines (Issue date 23 May 2018)
- F** WFNL On-Field and On-Court Apparel Style Guide (Issue date 27 March 2019)
- G** WFNL Senior Football Competition Regulations (February 2026)
- H** Under 18's Over-Age Policy
- I** WFNL Junior Football Competition Regulations (February 2026)
- J** WFNL Junior Player Points System (Issue date 31 October 2025)
- K** WFNL Junior Developmental Player Policy
- L** WFNL Junior Grading Policy & Guidelines
- M** National Community Football Policy Handbook

1. INTERPRETATION

These By-laws, including appendices, shall be read in conjunction with the Statement of Purposes and Statement of Rules of the Western Football Netball League Inc. Where any conflict may arise between provisions of these By-laws and the Statement of Rules, then the Statement of Rules shall prevail.

Some of the appendices to these by-laws are published and amended from time-to-time by AFL Victoria / AFL. Where any conflict may arise between provisions in the main body of these by-laws and those of any appendix, then the provisions documented in the main body of these by-laws will apply pending any ruling by the Board.

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

“Affiliated Club” means a football club affiliated with the League whose application for Membership has been approved in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Appeals Board” means the Appeals Board appointed in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Board” means the Board of the League appointed in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Board Member” means a Member of the Board, elected in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“CEO” means the **Chief Executive Officer** of the League appointed in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Club Official” includes any person acting on behalf of an Affiliated Club in relation to any match approved or controlled by the League or any elected office bearer of an Affiliated Club.

“Director of Umpiring” means the person appointed by the Board to manage all aspects of umpire recruitment, education, training, discipline and allocation of umpires to officiate in matches controlled by the League.

“Financial Year” means the year ending 31st October.

“Independent Hearing Committee” or **“IHC”** means the Independent Hearing Committee appointed in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Junior Football Advisory Group” means a sub-committee selected by the League and ratified by the Board to provide strategic advice on Junior Football’s purpose, values, objectives, direction and conduct of the competition.

“Junior Club” means any club admitted to the League with only teams in an underage competition of the League, but no team in an open age competition of the League.

“Junior Official Competition” means competition involving under-age teams (boys and/or girls) up to and including Under 16, normally (but not necessarily) scheduled for Sundays and overseen by the Manager – Junior Football

“League” means the Western Football Netball League Incorporated.

“League Official” means any person appointed by the League to act in any official capacity and includes the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”), Executive member, member of the Junior Football Advisory Group and any umpire appointed by the League.

“Member” when used in isolation refers to an Affiliated Club of the League.

“Open age” refers to competitions, teams or players for which no maximum age limit is specified in these By-Laws or the Rules.

“Penalty unit”: Monetary fines, penalties, deposits and bonds defined under these By-Laws may be expressed as a number or “Penalty Units”. The value of a penalty unit may be varied from time to time by the Board. The current value of a penalty unit is: \$ **10.00** (GST excl.)

“Registered Player” means a person registered by the League to play in the competitions conducted by it.

“Reserve Grade Game” means a game contested between Reserve Grade Teams of opposing clubs.

“Reserve Grade Team” means an open-age team selected by a member club from eligible, registered players as its “second 18” (plus interchange players).

“Senior Club” means any club admitted to the League with a team playing in an open-age competition of the League.

“Senior Grade Game” means a game contested between Senior Grade Teams of opposing clubs.

“Senior Grade Team” means an open-age team selected by a member club from eligible, registered players as its “first 18” (plus interchange players).

“Senior Official Competition” means competition involving open age teams and Under 18 and older teams, normally (but not necessarily) scheduled for Saturdays.

“Tribunal” means the Independent Tribunal appointed in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

“Under age” refers to competitions, teams or players for which a maximum age limit is specified in these By- Laws or the Rules.

2. COMPETITION STRUCTURES

2.1 DIVISIONS

- 2.1.1** Where practical, senior official competitions shall be organised into divisions of ten (10) teams each. Where this is not practical, the allocation of senior teams into appropriate divisions shall be determined by the Board.
- 2.1.2** Junior teams shall be organised into age-based competition grades at the discretion of the Board, taking account of the number of team applications received, advice and recommendations from the Juniors Board.
- 2.1.3** All clubs competing in Division 1 and Division 2 Senior Official Competition levels shall be required to field Senior and Reserve teams.
- 2.1.4** All clubs competing at Division 1 Senior Official Competition level shall be required to field an Under 18 team, unless otherwise permitted by the Board
- 2.1.5** Subject to by-laws 2.1.3, and 2.1.4, a club shall be entitled to participate in the division in which it participated in the previous season provided that:
- a) those clubs whose first 18 teams were premiers in the previous season shall be promoted to the next higher division.
 - b) those clubs whose first 18 teams finished in last place on their respective ladders in the previous season shall be relegated to the next lower division.
- 2.1.6** The Board may otherwise promote, relegate or refuse to promote any club in the event that:
- a) the club cannot field a full complement of teams for the forthcoming season;
 - b) the playing facilities of the club are not of a sufficient standard for the division in which the team is to compete in the next season;

- c) the club is in default of any financial obligation to the League;
- d) there are any other circumstances which, in the opinion of the Board, require a club to be promoted, relegated or refused promotion.

2.2 LEAGUE COMPOSITION

Unless otherwise directed by the Board, competitions conducted by the League shall comprise the following:

- Division 1 Men's: Senior grade (first 18), Reserve grade (second 18), Under 18
- Division 2 Men's: Senior grade (first 18), Reserve grade (second 18), Under 18
- Senior Women's
- Under 18 Women's
- Thirds
- Juniors (as per team nominations):
 - Girls: Under 8, Under 10, Under 12, Under 14 ,Under 16
 - Boys: Under 16
 - Mixed: Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 12, Under 14

3. PLAYING RULES & CONDITIONS

3.1 LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws (including appendices), the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" (as amended from time to time) shall apply in all games. Where discretion is available under the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" for controlling bodies to nominate rule variations, any such variations approved by the League will be reflected in these by-laws.

3.2 DEFAULTING CLUBS OR MATCHES NOT COMPLETED

- 3.2.1** If a Match is unable to commence or proceed, the League will have sole discretion to decide the result of the Match or whether the game will be rescheduled or not based on the following guiding principles;
- a) Any match not commenced or completed the League shall

- have the ability to refer the matters to the below;
- forward charges direct to the IHC or
 - refer the matter to the Investigation Officer;
 - or Having absolute discretion, determine and give effect to an appropriate course of action, having regard to all relevant matters.

3.3 DEFAULTING CLUBS (FORFEITS)

3.3.1 Any Member Club failing to field the minimum number of players for that respective grade within twenty (20) minutes of the scheduled starting time of the match shall automatically forfeit the match at that point in time. If, during the course of a match a Member Club's team is reduced to less than the minimum number of players the match shall be forfeited as a consequence and the team sheets shall immediately be signed on the ground by the two Team Managers in the presence of the Field Umpire(s), who shall endorse the team sheets with their signatures, date and time. The Field Umpire(s) shall forward the team sheets to the League office in the usual manner.

3.3.2 Any team forfeiting a match must, as soon as possible, notify the opposing team that they are forfeiting the game. The forfeiting team shall pay all costs involved with umpires forfeited on match-day. League no later than 24 hours prior to the the game.

3.3.3 The team receiving the forfeit shall be awarded the four (4) match points for that game. This team will be credited with the "for" and "against" score recorded by the team that recorded the greatest winning margin in a game in that division of that round. The offending team will receive the "for" and "against" for the team defeated by the greatest margin in a game in that division of that round.

3.3.4 Where a Member Club receives a forfeit, it shall be entitled to lodge an official team sheet for the match in question, whereupon the Players named on the list will be recorded as having played in the round, provided that the team sheet is lodged in competition database within 48 hours of the match being completed.

3.3.5 In the case of a team forfeiting the following penalties will apply;

- Where a club forfeits a game in a Senior Men's competition, the club will be fined fifty (50) penalty units.
- Where a club forfeits a game in Senior Women's, Reserves, Under 18's or Thirds competition, the club will be fined twenty (20) penalty units
- Where a club forfeits a game in a Junior competition, the club will be fined ten (10) penalty units
- The League shall have discretion to provide part of the refund to the affected club (ie to assist with paid trainers or stock purchased for canteen)

3.3.6 Where any club has more than one (1) team in a division/grade it must forfeit the team in the lower grade first (eg Reserves before Seniors, Under 16 Division 2/3 before Under 16 Division 1 and so on). If a higher team is forfeited before the lower team(s) then the club will lose any points and percentage earned for that game played by the lower teams and fined a sum of up to fifty (50) penalty units after a hearing by the Board who may decide no deliberate intention to forfeit existed contrary to the intention that clubs are required to field their best team wherever possible in which case no penalty shall be imposed.

3.3.7 Any club that has been involved in an incomplete match may be liable to pay an amount not exceeding fifty (50) penalty units (amount of which shall be at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)) for the investigation which may be refunded pending the outcome of the IHC Hearing. If the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) determines that any amount is payable by a club in the circumstances set in this clause, the amount will be invoiced to the club.

3.4 MATCHES NOT COMPLETED

3.4.1 If a Match is unable to commence or proceed, the League will have sole discretion to decide the result of the Match or whether the game will be rescheduled or not based on the following guiding principles:

- The appropriateness and practicality of rescheduling a Match during the Home and Away Season or Finals Series;
- If any one Match is cancelled or abandoned in a particular Grade and cannot be rescheduled, the Match will be

declared a draw and two (2) premiership points will be awarded to each competing team. During the Final Series, if the Match cannot be rescheduled the highest qualified team for that final will progress to the next round of Finals;

- **Prior to half time:** If the Match is unable to recommence within a 30 minute period of the game being stopped, the Match shall be deemed to be drawn and the scores of the Teams at the time the Match was interrupted shall be used in calculating the percentage of each Team.
- **Half time & beyond:** If the half time interval has been reached and the Match is unable to proceed at any time If the Match is unable to recommence within a 30 minute period, the scores of the Teams at the time the Match was interrupted shall be deemed to be the final scores of the Match. The Team with the highest score shall be deemed the winner of the Match and the scores shall be used in calculating the percentage of each Team.
- Where an event (ie injured player or weather event) has delayed the game for 30 minutes or more, the match will be deemed 'unable to proceed' and the above will take place to determine the match outcome.
- If a team is directed to recommence play by the Field Umpire or League Official and the team fails, refuses or neglects to recommence play, the team shall be deemed to have forfeited the Match.

3.5 GOAL AND BEHIND POSTS, BELL OR SIREN AND FLAG

3.5.1 The club on whose ground the match is being played, shall provide a suitable bell or siren for the use of the timekeeper. Each club shall provide flags for the use of their respective club goal umpires, if required in accordance with by-law 5.6.1. Penalty for unsatisfactory bell/siren – fine of three (3) penalty units.

3.5.2 All goal and behind posts must be covered with a protective covering of sufficient height and thickness as per the Laws of Australian Football guidelines to ensure the safety of players. Penalty for not adhering to this is a fine of five (5) penalty units.

3.6 EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

3.6.1 The home club on whose ground the game is being played must

provide emergency vehicle access to the playing ovals and that access must be kept clear at all times (if locked they must have a key). A fine of \$100.00 shall be imposed if this by-law is not adhered to.

- 3.6.2** The home club must ensure that a safe stretcher is in clear site of every playing arena and available for the use of both clubs at all times. A fine of ten (10) penalty units shall be imposed if this by-law is not adhered to.

3.7 BEST AND FAIREST VOTING

- 3.7.1** The field umpire shall include on his/her official match report his/her selection of the three (3) best and fairest players in the match umpired by the umpire to be Nos. 1, 2 and 3 in order of preference. No. 1 to receive three (3) votes, No. 2 to receive two (2) votes and No. 3 to receive one (1) vote.

- 3.7.2** At the end of the home and away matches, the votes will be counted and the player receiving the most votes will receive the trophy. The count back shall not apply, and in the case of a tie, the award shall be shared.

- 3.7.3** Any player who has received a suspension of one (1) match or more during any home and away match in that current season shall be ineligible to receive the award in the year in which the penalty was incurred.

3.8 REPORTING OF UMPIRE BY CLUBS

- 3.8.1** Any affiliated club shall have the power to report any League umpire for inefficiency or neglect of duty.

- 3.8.2** Any charge against a League umpire shall be in writing and forwarded to the General Manager – Operations by 6.00pm on the Monday following the match accompanied with a fee to the value of twenty-five (25) penalty units. One (1) copy of the charge shall be forwarded to the umpire concerned by the General Manager - Operations and both clubs and umpire concerned advised of the time and place where the charge will be dealt with by the Independent Hearing Committee.

3.8.3 The fee paid in By-Law 3.8.2 will not be refunded where it is determined that the matter was frivolous or vexatious, in which case the League will retain the whole amount.

3.8.4 Subject to clause 3.8.3, the fee paid in By-Law 3.8.2 will be refunded, within seven (7) days of a decision being made, less an administration fee of one hundred and twenty five dollars (\$125.00)

3.9 CLUB UNIFORMS AND COLOURS

3.9.1 For Under 8, Under 9 and 10 Mixed teams and all Girls & Womens teams, shorts to be worn shall be special colour registered with the League for all home and away matches.

3.9.2 For all other grades the home team shall wear their club-colour shorts registered with the League, while the visiting team must wear white shorts.

3.9.3 Undergarments

For all junior and senior players, the colour of lower body undergarments that are visible below the team uniform shorts shall be either beige, black or the same colour as the shorts.

For junior players only, any upper body undergarment worn with sleeveless jumpers shall be the same colour as the predominant jumper colour.

For senior players, upper body undergarments with sleeves of any length may not be worn with sleeveless jumpers.

Failure to comply with this By-law will attract a fine of five (5) penalty units for each breach.

3.9.4 Other garment types in addition to a player's uniform are not permitted to be worn unless prior approval is granted by the League.

3.9.5 A fine of \$100.00 will be imposed if five or more players in any team are incorrectly attired. In addition, the following fines will

apply for each individual player's uniform breach:

- incorrect shorts (colour) 0.5 penalty units per player;
- incorrect socks 0.5 penalty units per player;
- incorrect jumper one (1) penalty unit per player, and
- incorrect undergarments (eg bike shorts or undergarments) colour and/or style 0.5 penalty units per player.

3.9.6 The colours of the League shall be red, white and blue.

3.9.7 Alterations of club uniforms including attachment of advertising logo badges, etc., shall be submitted to the CEO for approval. Umpire apparel advertising must also be approved.

3.10 SPONSOR LOGOS

3.10.1 JUMPERS

3.10.1.1 Clubs may apply to the Board for approval to incorporate sponsors' logos on their jumpers. Such logos shall be located in accordance with the provisions of WFNL On-Field and On- Court Apparel Style Guide (Appendix F to these By-laws).

3.10.1.2 Application may be made by clubs for logos not conforming to the WFNL On-Field and On- Court Apparel Style Guide, which may be approved at the absolute discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

3.10.2 SHORTS

3.10.2.1 Clubs may apply to the Board for approval to incorporate sponsors' logos on the front of the playing shorts. Such logos shall comply with the provisions of WFNL On-Field and On- Court Apparel Style Guide (Appendix I to these By-Laws).

3.10.3 Fine for breach of this By-Law: two (2) penalty units per player.

3.11 LACE UP JUMPERS

- 3.11.1** Lace up jumpers are not to be worn during home and away games and finals.

3.12 ROPING OFF GOAL AND BEHIND AREA

- 3.12.1** Each home team playing on unenclosed arenas shall secure off the area immediately behind the goal/point post area of not less than four metres, unless a second line has been provided, making certain nobody goes into that area except the goal umpire PROVIDED HOWEVER it shall not be secured with any form of stake or other device that may represent a danger to any player or other person. Failure to comply, the game will not start until it is complied with and the offending club shall be fined for a late start and the shall apply.4 shall apply.

3.13 PROTECTION OF UMPIRES

- 3.13.1** It is the responsibility of both competing clubs to protect the safety of all umpires in all grades appointed to officiate at any WFNL match before, during and after the completion of such matches.
- 3.13.2** Each club shall supply one (1) escort at the quarter-time, half-time, three quarter-time and end of match breaks during home and away matches and two (2) escorts during finals matches. It is also the clubs' responsibility to ensure that all officials appointed as umpire escorts are fully conversant with the duties involved in their role as umpire escort, in protecting the officiating umpires.
- 3.13.3** It is the responsibility of all WFNL Clubs to ensure that the umpires escort is of a mature age (18 years of age or older) and a responsible person who in case of trouble can come to the umpires aid.
- 3.13.4** All team escorts must have an official WFNL escort jacket or other form of identification approved by the Board which must be worn at all times, to indicate to the officiating umpire they are the official umpires escort. These persons must offer all umpires drinks at all breaks and will be the umpires' contacts for the duration of the match.
- 3.13.5** All club officials representing their clubs as umpire escorts must

stand in close attendance to the field umpires' huddle at both quarter and three quarter time and must line up one (1) escort each side and close to the umpiring panel when they are leaving the ground at half time and upon completion of the game to the umpires' change rooms and return to escort the League goal umpires to the umpires change rooms.

3.13.6 The escorts must be at the entrance to the playing arena, together at the end of the quarter ready to move onto the ground and assume their duties to protect the umpires.

3.13.7 It is the officiating umpire's responsibility to report any umpires escort who do not meet the above umpires escort criteria for protecting WFNL umpires and specify the failure in the report.

3.13.8 Clubs may be requested to provide two (2) or more escorts to certain games, at the discretion of the League.

3.13.9 Clubs failing to provide escorts or where escorts fail to properly attend to the field or other League umpire the offending club(s) will be liable to a fine of five (5) penalty units for each offending quarter.

3.13.10 This by-law applies to all Senior and Junior grades, both home & away and finals. In all home and away and finals games in all senior and junior grades, the home club shall supply four (4) large cones which must be placed, by the Umpires' escorts, in the centre of the ground at all breaks that the umpires stay on the ground. The only people allowed inside the coned area are the umpires and any other umpire or observer in official uniform, any trainer the umpires' may have requested and the escorts. If the cones are not supplied the home club shall be fined twenty (20) penalty units and if not taken out at the prescribed breaks the offending club shall be fined five (5) penalty units for each quarter not taken out.

3.14 LOCKABLE FACILITY

3.14.1 Every home club must provide a key to the away clubs and umpires rooms in order to provide a lockable facility. These keys can only be given to the club administrator, President or nominated club official and officiating umpires (fine for non-compliance ten (10) penalty units). Providing the home club has

lockable facilities and has a key readily available (at canteen or with some known/nominated official) it shall have complied with this by-law.

3.15 DRUG AND TESTING PENALTIES

- 3.15.1** All WFNL players and officials are bound by the provisions of the AFL Anti-Doping Policy.

3.16 ALUMINIUM STOPS

- 3.16.1** The wearing of aluminium football stops in all grades of WFNL competition is not permitted.

3.17 MATCH REVIEW OFFICER

- 3.17.1** The League may appoint one or more suitably qualified person(s) to act in the capacity of Match Review Officer(s) (MRO).
- 3.17.2** Under direction from the CEO or his/her appointee, the MRO shall review video records (either official League authorised video or video from other sources) of specific match incidents that did not result in official report(s) by officiating umpire(s) and are subject to request for review received from an officiating umpire or official of an affiliated club in accordance with this By-law.
- 3.17.3** Match review requests must be received at the League in writing no later than 12:00pm on the first business day following the subject match. Requests can be made by the following;
- One (1) or more officiating umpires in that respective game
 - Affiliated clubs in the respective game
 - WFNL League Officials (Staff / Board Members)
 - WFNL Umpire Appointed Coaches

All requests must provide all relevant details of the reason(s) for requesting the review. Where evidence of the incident will rely on review of official League video, an accurate estimate of the time (eg ten (10) minute mark of the third (3rd) quarter) must be provided to facilitate timely location of the evidence if available. Where evidence of the incident will rely on video from sources

other than official League recordings, a video file in approved format must be provided with the request for review: any such video must be clear and not amended in any material way.

- 3.17.4** The MRO shall examine the request for review in conjunction with any video evidence provided in accordance with this By-law. Where the MRO determines that a reportable offence has occurred but not been reported by the officiating umpire(s), the MRO may:
- a) refer a charge to the Independent Tribunal; and/or
 - b) impose one (1) or more set penalties in accordance with reportable procedures outlined on the WFNL Report Sheet and/or
 - c) direct that a Yellow Card infringement (including any associated set penalty) be retrospectively imposed on any player or match official.

Where a set penalty or Yellow Card infringement is imposed by the MRO in accordance with this By-law, the player's club must advise the League no later than 10:00am on the next day scheduled for sitting of the Independent Tribunal should the player wish to reject the set penalty and have the matter heard by the Independent Tribunal. In the absence of such advice, the Yellow Card infringement will be noted automatically on the player's record.

- 3.17.5** Where the MRO is unable to locate evidence of the subject incident on official League video, the MRO shall:
- a) dismiss the request for review on the ground of lack of evidence; and/or
 - b) determine that the request for review was frivolous; or
 - c) recommend to the CEO that prima facie evidence of a serious offence is evident from the written request for review and that the matter should be referred for further examination by an Investigation Officer pursuant to By-Law 4.11

- 3.17.6** Where the MRO is unable to locate evidence of the subject incident on video provided with the request for review from sources other than official League recordings; or where viewing of the video evidence from any source leads to a conclusion by the MRO that the request for review was frivolous, a fine of twenty (20) penalty points shall be applied to the club from which the request for

review was received.

3.18 PROTESTS, CHARGES AND DISPUTES REFERRED FOR HEARING BY IHC

3.18.1 Any member club or person wishing to refer a protest, charge or dispute to the IHC as provided under WFNL Rule 18 shall deliver a written application on the prescribed IHC form to the General Manager – Operations no later than:

- a) 10:00am on the second business day following any match in or connected with the subject of the protest, charge or dispute; or
- b) within no more than seven (7) business days of the occurrence of the event from which the protest, charge or dispute arises if not associated with a match.

3.18.2 The IHC lodgment shall set out all details of the protest, charge or dispute, including any specific allegations of misconduct or wrongdoing. The club submitting the IHC shall also need to lodge a fee of forty (40) penalty units at the time of lodgment.

Upon lodgment of the IHC form and the (40) penalty units the League will confirm acceptance of the IHC to both member clubs involved. Minimum 50% of the amount will be forfeited if the charge, protest or dispute is not able to be upheld at the IHC Hearing. The League will keep an administrative fee of five (5) penalty units for an IHC Hearing that is heard.

3.18.3 The General Manager – Operations shall send notification of the protest, charge or dispute to any affected member club or person as soon as possible following receipt of the lodgment on the prescribed IHC Form and amount has been deposited to the League.

3.18.4 Where a charge has been made by one (1) member club against another member club of playing an unqualified or ineligible player, the member club charged shall be responsible for the appearance of such player before the IHC and failure to so produce such player shall be taken as prima facie evidence of the charge.

3.18.5 In the event of a protest, charge or dispute arising from or concerning the correct age of a player, the onus shall be on the player and his/her club to produce satisfactory documentary evidence as to his/her age.

- 3.18.6** The IHC shall have the power to resolve any issue not specifically dealt with by the Rules and By-laws of the WFNL and all decisions of the IHC shall be binding on all parties, subject to the appeal provisions specified in WFNL Rule 19.
- 3.18.7** Should clubs come to an agreement prior to the IHC Hearing being heard which results in the IHC being withdrawn, then the full amount will be returned to the club who lodged the IHC.
- 3.18.8** A player who is required to defend a charge which is to be heard by the IHC, may still play if the IHC hearing is scheduled after their next match.

4. ADMINISTRATION

4.1 PLAYERS

4.1.1 REGISTRATION

- 4.1.1.1** Affiliated clubs and any persons wishing to play in Junior Official Competition and/or Senior Official Competition must comply, as applicable, with the provisions of:
- National Community Football Policy Handbook
 - AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program – Player Points Policy (Appendix B to these By-laws);
 - AFL Victoria Community Club Sustainability Program – Player Payment Rule (Appendix C to these By-laws);
 - WFNL Junior Player Points System (Appendix J to these By-laws).
- 4.1.1.2** To gain registration, every player must register through the League’s prescribed Online Competition Database. It is the club’s responsibility to ensure that all players participating are registered players within the League. All Players must be correctly registered prior to the commencement of the first match in which they take part in. It is the club’s responsibility to ensure that all players participating are registered players within the League.
- 4.1.1.3** Any playing wishing to transfer between clubs must register a transfer on the League’s Competition Database. The source club must action the transfer within six (6) full calendar days. If the source club fails to reply to the transfer within that time the transfer will be automatically granted.
- 4.1.1.4** All Players wishing to play in a WFNL competition must have an approved transfer and registration prior taking the field otherwise they will be deemed as an ineligible player.
- 4.1.1.5** Limit to Number of Players Transferring Between Member Clubs:
- a) Definitions: For the purpose of this By-law: “age group” refers to the Junior Official Competition

grades and to the Under 18 grade.

- b) No more than three (3) players of any single age group shall be permitted to transfer in any year from any one affiliated club to any other particular affiliated club unless:
 - i. the club from which more than three (3) players of any single age group apply to transfer agrees to such transfer(s); and
 - ii. Under extenuating circumstances, any such application is approved/denied, in their absolute discretion by the CEO or their delegate.
 - iii. Players registered with the League either in the current or prior season will be permitted to transfer only once per season, directly between affiliated clubs, UNLESS the affiliated club with which the player was originally registered consents to the additional transfer(s).
- c) In the event that a club from which more than three (3) players wish to transfer in accordance with 4.1.1.5 (b) (i) does not agree to the transfer(s), the player(s) so refused may make written application to the CEO for special permission to transfer. The CEO or his/her delegate shall consider all materials and matters relevant to the application, including but not limited to the impact on the club from which transfer is sought and may approve or refuse the application in his/her absolute discretion.

4.1.2 UNDER-AGE ELIGIBILITY

- 4.1.2.1** To be eligible for registration, all players must attain the age of 7 years no later than 30 April of the year of the season in which they wish to play.

The eligibility of an under-age competition player shall be determined by the age of the player on the last day of December immediately prior to the start of the current season.

- 4.1.2.2** To be eligible to participate in Men's or Women's Under 18 grade matches, a player must NOT have

reached the age of nineteen (19) years before 1st day of July in the year for which he desires to be registered for Under 18 competition (Unless approved for an Over-Age Permit as per the WFNL Under 18 Over-Age Policy or through the age dispensation policy through the National Community Football Policy Handbook)

4.1.2.3 The WFNL will be fully aligned with the Age Group Eligibility in the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

Section 3.1(b)(ii) allows an underage player to play in age groups that are two years above their age without dispensation. For example, a player who is 9 (turning 10 in the playing year) may play Under 10 and Under 12 grades.

Players who require dispensation will need to complete the underage application to 'play up' and this will need to be submitted to the Junior Football Manager prior to the player playing the game in the higher age group.

4.1.3 MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS BETWEEN TEAMS DURING HOME AND AWAY SEASON

4.1.3.1 Where a club has multiple teams in the under 12 to under 16 age groups movement of players between teams is subject to the following:

- a) When a higher-grade team has a bye no player who played in that team in the previous round will be permitted to play with a team in a lower grade in the same age group or lower age group.
- b) A Bye relates to where an individual team is fixtured a bye in a particular round or the entire competition in that grade is fixtured a bye.
- c) If the lower grade or lower age group team has a genuine shortage of players the club cannot utilise players from the higher grade or age group team.

Penalty for breach: treated as per ineligible player

- d) For the purpose of By-Law 4.1.3.1 (c), a team

has a "genuine shortage" when they have less than 20 players (U12 Mixed, U14 Mixed, U16 Boys) or less than 18 players (U12 Girls, U14 Girls, U16 Girls). Teams where approval has been granted must not have more than with any more than 20 players (U12 Mixed, U14 Mixed, U16 Boys) or 18 players (U12 Girls, U14 Girls, U16 Girls).

- e) Players shall be permitted to play in more than one (1) under age competition (*ie* age group) in any given home & away round provided they qualify by age to play in such under age competition(s) as provided in these By-laws. Players are NOT permitted to play in more than one (1) division of the same under age competition in any given round.

4.1.3.2

Where a club has multiple teams in the Under 18 age group movement of players between teams is subject to the following:

- a) When a higher-grade under 18 team has a bye no player who played in that team in the previous round will be permitted to play with a team in a lower grade in the same age group or lower age group.
- b) A Bye relates to where an individual team is fixtured a bye in particular round or the entire competition in that grade is fixtured a bye.
- c) Players are NOT permitted to play in more than one (1) division of the same under 18 competition in any given round.
- d) Should a higher Under 18 team have a BYE, any player who has also played Senior or Reserve grade football in the week prior, shall not be allowed to drop to the lower Under 18 team for that respective weekend.
- e) Under extenuating circumstances, a club may request to the General Manager – Operations in writing a player to double up in the same weekend across multiple under 18 divisions. The League will consider the request & any decision made on this by the League shall be binding.
- f) Under extenuating circumstances, a club may request to the General Manager – Operations in writing a player who has played in the higher

grade the week prior, to drop to the lower grade team when the higher-grade team has a BYE. The League will consider the request & any decision made on this by the League shall be binding.

4.1.4 UNDER-AGE PLAYER REGISTRATION (ALL UNDER AGE DIVISIONS UP TO AND INCLUDING UNDER 18'S)

4.1.4.1 No person may play in any competition match authorised or conducted by the League, unless that person has:

- a) Registered in the League competition database for an affiliated club;

4.1.4.2 The registration will be confirmed when the player appears on the WFNL online database.

4.1.4.3 Proof of age must be obtained by the club when a player registers with the League and may be:

- a birth certificate or extract; or
- a passport; or
- such other proof of age, documentary or otherwise, that the CEO shall in his or her absolute discretion deem appropriate in a particular case.

Evidence obtained as proof of age must be provided to the League by the club within 24 hours if requested by the League.

4.1.4.4 No permit to play will be dealt with prior to the first day of February in any season and transfer requirements still apply.

4.1.4.5 It is the responsibility of all club officials to carry out the above procedures. Failure to comply will result in loss of match points. The offending team will be credited with the "for" and "against" score recorded by the team that was defeated by the greatest winning margin in a game in that division of that round. The team that played the offending team shall receive the "for" and "against" score for the team that won by the greatest winning margin in a game in that division of that round. Should the greatest winning margin be the game in question, then the teams shall receive the "for" and "against"

for that game. A fine of up to fifty (50) penalty units per player can also be applied by the Board.

4.1.5 FEMALE PARTICIPATION

- 4.1.5.1** Females can play in mixed competition within the WFNL up to and including the Under 14 grades.
- 4.1.5.2** To be eligible to participate in Senior Women's grade matches, a player must have reached the age of sixteen (16) years before 1st day of January in the year for which she desires to be registered for Senior Women's competition.
- 4.1.5.3** A player may be permitted to play in Senior Women's competition when she is under the minimum age as specified in by-law 4.1.2 by written application submitted by the player's club to the General Manager - Operations, accompanied by written consent of the player's parent or guardian using a Parent Consent Form. Approval by the League shall only be granted in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the relevant considerations of the Australian Football Match Policy

4.2 UNREGISTERED OR INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

- 4.2.1** The onus of the eligibility of players shall be placed on the club concerned and in any instances of unregistered, ineligible or unqualified players taking part in matches shall be referred to the General Manager - Operations and an investigation immediately put in hand. If after due investigation, either the club or the player is found guilty, the club loses all match points from that or any other game the unregistered or ineligible player has played in and the points in question will be awarded to the opposition team. The offending team will be credited with the "for" and "against" score recorded by the team that was defeated by the greatest winning margin in a game in that division of that round. Should the greatest winning margin be the game in question, then the teams shall receive the "for" and "against" for that game. The club shall be dealt with as the Board League deems fit and a fine of up to one hundred (100) penalty units per player can be imposed by the League.

4.3 PLAYER PERMITS AND TRANSFERS

4.3.1 CONTROL

- 4.3.1.1** The League shall ensure that permits and transfers of players are dealt with in accordance with the National Community Football Policy Handbook. Players and officials who are registered with the WFNL or seeking registration with any member club will be subject to de-registration/non-registration in accordance with the de-registration policy within the national community football policy handbook.

4.3.2 TRANSFER APPEAL (MEMBER TO MEMBER CLUB)

- 4.3.2.1** A player who has been refused a transfer may appeal to the League. The appeal must be lodged within seven (7) full business days of the refused transfer denied. The appeal will be heard by the IHC and a player will have the right to one (1) appeal only in any given season. Upon lodgment of the appeal the club will be invoiced a sum equivalent to fifty (40) penalty units. This comprises a non-refundable administrative fee equivalent to five (5) penalty units. Upon notification of such an appeal, the defending club must acknowledge their intentions to defend the appeal within two (2) full working days of the notice and will be invoiced a deposit equivalent to twenty (20) penalty units. Player requiring a domestic transfer must have had one (1) refused transfer prior to lodging his/her appeal. Clubs reaching transfer agreement prior to the scheduled appeal hearing must advise the League no later than 48 hours prior to the said hearing.

Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of twenty (20) penalty units lodgement fee. Clubs reaching transfer agreement following a denied appeal may have the transfer approved by lodging with the League.

- 4.3.2.2** Either appeal or defence, which is deemed frivolous, may result in the invoiced amount being forfeited. If either party fails to attend, their invoiced amount will be forfeited.
- 4.3.2.3** Players are granted an automatic transfer under these by-laws where the player is registered with a club which does not have any team in which he/she is eligible to play, provided the player does not owe his/her club any money/property.

- 4.3.2.4** The IHC shall only hear evidence relevant to the submitted transfer/appeal forms. One (1) advocate only shall be permitted to represent player at appeal hearings.
- 4.3.2.5** Player transfer applications will be accepted for processing during the times specified in National Community Football Policy Handbook.
- 4.3.2.6** Player/club lodging the appeal must be in attendance at the appeal hearing.

4.3.3 PLAYING OF AFL, VFL, VFLW, STATE TALENT LEAGUE OR ANY SENIOR INTERSTATE GRADE FIRST EIGHTEEN PLAYERS

- 4.3.3.1** A player selected to play a match in either VFL/VFLW or State Talent League competition shall not be allowed to play with OR be selected by their WFNL club during that same round/weekend.
- 4.3.3.2** If a club breaches the above by-law, it will be treated as an ineligible player.
- 4.3.3.3** No affiliated club may apply for Local Interchange Permits or Match Day Permits, unless as specified in National Community Football Policy Handbook.

4.4 INELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

4.4.1 DISQUALIFIED PLAYERS

- 4.4.1.1** No player who has been suspended by the AFL, VFL or any affiliated club with AFL Victoria or other body controlling football at State level, shall not be allowed to play with any club of this League until such suspension expires or has been removed by the body which made the suspension occurred.

4.4.2 SUSPENDED PLAYERS AND/OR OFFICIALS

- 4.4.2.1** Any club, in suspending a player or official from its ranks, shall forward to the League within one (1) week of such suspension the name of the person together with particulars of the offence for which he/she was suspended and that suspension shall be deemed to be a suspension by the League and the League's records will show that suspension.

4.5 PLAYING OF PLAYERS CONTRACTED TO THE AFL, VFL, VFLW, STATE TALENT LEAGUE AND ANY SENIOR INTERSTATE GRADE CLUB

- 4.5.1** A player who is contracted to one of these bodies and is selected to play for their contracted club cannot play for their WFNL club on the same weekend (a player on the supplementary list may be excluded from this by-law upon special circumstances).
- 4.5.2** VFL/VFLW clubs will nominate a list of players or such number set by the VFL/VFLW or body that administers football for the VFL/VFLW prior to Round 1 of their season. These players will remain as registered players of their original club providing they are registered within the by-laws. If a player is nominated by a VFL/VFLW club on their list of then they cannot play with his registered club unless they are released by the VFL/VFLW club on a particular weekend. All WFNL Senior players shall be deemed to participate under the terms and conditions as stated in the Standard Playing Contract – Community Football, regardless of being contracted or not (see Appendix C).
- 4.5.3** WFNL clubs which sign up players on player declarations must use the Standard Playing Contract – Community Football, regardless of being contracted or not (see Appendix C).
- 4.5.4** Any player contracted to an AFL/AFLW club as either a primary list or rookie list player will be ineligible to compete in any WFNL competition whilst so contracted.

4.6 UMPIRES APPOINTMENT DUTIES

4.6.1 FIELD, BOUNDARY & GOAL UMPIRES

In all matches under the control of the League the Field, Boundary & Goal umpires shall be appointed by the WFNL Umpiring Department. It shall be the duty of the League umpires to ensure that the competition Rules, By-laws and match conditions of the League are carried out and to report all instances wherein a club has neglected to make proper arrangements.

It shall be in the Field Umpires power to reject any ball which in their opinion is unfit for play. Field umpires shall advise the team manager at conclusion of match of their intention to report fineable offences and the nature of same. The result of all matches and any comments thereon, on the official form provided

by the League together with team sheets and score cards must be completed on the competition match report through the online competition database.

4.7 UNIFORMS FOR LEAGUE UMPIRES

- 4.7.1** All League umpires shall appear in uniforms approved by the League

4.8 CLUB FIELD UMPIRES

- 4.8.1** Each club must have a person to act as a club umpire, and in the event that a League umpire is not appointed or available or does not turn up, then each competing team shall have that person umpire, if in attendance. Club field umpires must be sixteen (16) years or older and have attended an education course conducted by the Umpires Adviser/Coaches.

The club field umpire(s) must:

- a) wear green umpire bib OR white top and shorts with no club or League logo and must be equipped with a whistle and note book (supplied by his/her club);
- b) must record their name on their club's team sheet, sign the team sheet and also list their accreditation number. If there is any breach there will be a fine of three (3) penalty units.

- 4.8.2** In the event of a League umpire or accredited club umpire not being available, the coach/team manager of each team shall appoint, by mutual agreement, some other person to officiate, and he/she shall carry out all duties of the umpire appointed. The result of the match shall be officially recognised by the League providing a letter is received from each club confirming the appointment of the person who officiated.

- 4.8.3** In the event of the coaches of each side not reaching a mutual agreement on the person to officiate, no play shall take place, and the match shall be referred to the League, who shall decide the date and place it shall be played, or whether the premiership points shall be divided.

- 4.8.4** The clubs shall be responsible for any payment to club or accredited umpires and in any situation where one club does not

have an accredited umpire officiating, shall pay half any fee the umpire agreed to or half the WFNL Umpire Payment Schedule for the appropriate grade.

4.9 CLUB GOAL AND BOUNDARY UMPIRES

4.9.1 For all home and away matches each club (unless provided by the League) shall provide a boundary umpire who shall be correctly dressed appropriately and a goal umpire who shall at all times during the match have Goal umpire flags.

4.9.2 In the event of a club not providing these officials a fine of five (5) penalty units in each case will be inflicted and if either is not correctly attired the fine will be three (3) penalty units. The names of club goal and club boundary umpires must appear on the official team sheet of the club with his/her signature.

4.9.3 Goal umpires must be fourteen (14) years of age. Boundary umpires must be at least fourteen (14) years of age for Senior matches, and for Junior matches old enough to competently throw the ball back in to play and to keep up with play.

4.9.4 INCOMPETENT GOAL AND BOUNDARY UMPIRES

If either team manager considers a club goal or club boundary umpire incompetent he/she shall be at liberty to request the field umpire to ask for the official to be replaced. If the umpire considers the request justified or at the time himself/herself considers a club goal or club boundary umpire incompetent, he/she shall ask for that official to be replaced and his/her request to the club concerned shall be granted. This by-law shall apply to home and away matches only.

4.9.5 VETO OF CLUB GOAL AND BOUNDARY UMPIRES DECISION

In all home and away matches the field umpire, if they considers a club goal or boundary umpire has given an incorrect or unfair decision they shall have the power to veto such decisions and the field umpires decision shall stand.

4.9.6 OFFICIAL RELINQUISHING DUTIES

In the event of a club boundary umpire, goal umpire, or club timekeeper relinquishing his/her duties during the process of a match, the club on whose behalf such official is acting shall immediately notify the field umpire and appoint another person to act in his/her stead and shall be responsible for the signing of the official team sheet by the duly appointed official.

4.10 UNIFORMS FOR MATCH OFFICIALS

4.10.1 Unless specified elsewhere in these by-laws, the following match officials shall wear the uniforms as set out in the following table. All on-field officials' uniforms must comply with the requirements of WFNL On-Field & On-Court Apparel Style Guide (Appendix F to these By-laws):

Match Official Role	Required Uniform	Effective from season:
Trainer	White vest (WFNL approved)	2014
Water Person	Pink vest (WFNL approved)	2015
Runner	Orange shirt (WFNL approved)	2015
Umpire Escort	Yellow vest (WFNL Approved)	2016
Junior Ground Marshall	Yellow vest (WFNL Approved)	2026
Junior Coach	Light blue vest (WFNL approved)	2014
Assistant Jnr Coach	Dark blue vest (WFNL approved)	2019
Venue Manager	Red vest (WFNL approved)	2026
Team Manager	Green vest (WFNL approved)	2019
Club Umpire	Green vest to match Umpires uniforms	2026

All official uniform vests and T-shirts shall be as specified from time to time by the CEO, including any requirements for role identification wording, numbers, logos and sponsor displays.

4.11 INVESTIGATION OFFICER(S)

4.11.1 The Board may appoint one (1) or more Investigation Officers who must hold no other position with the League. An Investigation Officer shall investigate any matter referred by the Board or CEO and report direct to the CEO on his/her findings. In order to investigate any matter referred to him/her, an Investigation Officer shall have the right:

- to interview any member club official(s), player(s), member(s) of member club(s), public spectators, and field, boundary, goal or emergency umpire(s); and
- to attend any game as directed by the CEO or his/her delegate.

4.11.2 Notwithstanding by-law 4.11.1, the Board may appoint a member of the WFNL Board or staff to carry out the role of the Investigation Officer for the purpose of a particular investigation which the Board deems proper and that member shall have all the powers of the Investigation Officer given herein.

4.11.3 All league officials, member clubs, member club officials, players and member club members shall assist fully any investigation conducted by the Investigation Officer and neither the league officials, member clubs, member club officials, players or club members shall obstruct or hinder the Investigation Officer in the execution his/her duties in carrying out any investigation under these rules.

4.11.4 If any member club, member club official, player or member club member does not co-operate with the Investigation Officer in the investigation of any matter, the member club shall be notified by the League to co-operate with the Investigation Officer. If after three (3) full working days the notification is not rectified, the Board or CEO may lay appropriate charges to be heard by the IHC. The following penalties may be applied by the IHC if found guilty at such hearing:

4.11.4.1 In the case of a member club, the member club shall be fined a sum of up to 100 penalty units;

4.11.4.2 In the case of a member club official, the official's member club shall be fined up to 100 penalty units and/or the official suspended as acting in any form as an official for a period of not less than 5 matches in which the club plays;

- 4.11.5** The Investigation Officer shall complete a report no later than three (3) weeks from the date on which the matter is reported to the CEO or his/her delegate. The CEO or his/her delegate may grant an extension of time in exceptional circumstances upon application in writing setting out the reasons for the delay in the investigation and any other relevant matter.
- 4.11.6** Any charge arising out of an investigation must be laid within one week of the report being finalised.
- 4.11.7** Any member club or person charged as a result of an investigation shall be given at least 72 hours advance notice of the hearing of the matter. Witnesses, such as umpires, must be given no less than 48 hours advance notice of any request for them to appear before the Tribunal/IHC.
- 4.11.8** After investigating a matter referred to him/her, the Investigation Officer shall lodge with the CEO or his/her delegate all relevant documents and a notice in writing setting out the results of his/her investigation, including the Investigations Officer's opinion as to whether the player, official, member club or club member club member under investigation has breached the Laws of Australian Football, the Rules or the By-laws of the League and whether the matter should be dealt with by the Board or the Tribunal/IHC. The Board will consider the Investigation Officer's recommendation and may deal with the matter itself or refer the matter to the Tribunal/IHC for hearing and determination.
- 4.11.9** In any matter referred to the Tribunal/IHC under this By-law the Investigations Officer shall appear personally before the Tribunal/IHC to lay the necessary charges and assist the Tribunal/IHC in the consideration of the matter.

5. CLUBS & GENERAL

5.1 SMOKING RULES

5.1.1 The following WFNL facilities and areas are to be designated Smoke free:

- administration and office areas;
- social/club rooms; and
- all Interleague change rooms and toilets.

5.1.2 Functions

All official WFNL functions will be 100% Smoke free. Such functions include:

- dinners;
- fund raising events;
- prize giving;
- meetings;
- social occasions; and
- any other event, seminar, course or function.

5.1.3 Representatives

The following WFNL representatives are to refrain from smoking while in uniform and in public, and or while acting in an official capacity for the WFNL:

- staff;
- Board and Junior Football Advisory Group members;
- officials including umpires;
- Interleague players;
- Interleague coaches; and
- Interleague trainers.

5.1.4 Non-Compliance Strategy

The following five step non-compliance strategy will be followed if anyone breaches WFNL Smoke free policy:

- a) assume that the person is unaware of the Smoke free policy;
- b) A WFNL official will approach the person breaching the policy and politely ask them to refrain from smoking and advise them about the Smoke free policy;
- c) If the offence continues then the most senior official or most senior representative will verbally warn them again and hand over a formally written letter. The offending patron must also be made aware that if they don't stop smoking then they will be required to leave the facility. The letter will outline WFNL Smoke free policy and state that if the patron continues to breach the policy he/she will be asked to leave. A representative of WFNL Board or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will send a letter which has been pre-written and kept ready for use at WFNL office and at functions and events;
- d) If the offender does continue then the patron will be escorted out of the facility by staff and or senior representative;
- e) Under no circumstances should WFNL Smoke free policy be breached, no matter who the offender is.

5.1.5 Sale of Tobacco Products

Tobacco products will not be sold at any of the facilities or events under the direct control of the WFNL.

5.1.6 Junior Sport

The following steps will be taken to ensure that all Junior football under the control of the WFNL conforms to our Smoke free policy:

- all coaching courses will highlight the importance of role modelling Smoke free behaviour to our Junior members.

5.2 OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

- 5.2.1** No club player, official or member shall bring any offensive weapon onto the playing arena or into any official League function. If found guilty of such an offence a minimum **suspension** of five (5) years shall apply.

- Food Service Sealane

(1) Note: "On-field/On-court apparel means:

*Football shorts, socks, jumpers and run-on (warm-up) tops;
Netball dresses*

Suppliers of footballs, netballs and on-field and on-court apparel have been licensed to incorporate the WRFL or WFNL logo (trademark) on their goods. All such equipment used in competition matches must incorporate the WRFL or WFNL logo.

Clubs found in breach of the Properties Division by-law shall be dealt with as the Board deems fit. A fine of up to five hundred (500) penalty units may be imposed by the Board for any breach of the Property Division By-law(s).

5.5 CLUB FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

5.5.1 All recurring League fees and charges payable by affiliated clubs (e.g. affiliation fees, umpire payments, insurance charges, match video expenses, Football Records, function tickets, etc.) will be payable as an annual Management Fee, the schedule of which shall be published at the Annual General Meeting each year, following preparation of the League's budget for the next following year. Management Fees payable by each affiliated club will be invoiced in instalments, payable as follows:

- First instalment (10% of total): payable by 31 March;
- Second instalment (20% of total): payable by 30 April
- Third instalment (30% of total): payable by 31 May
- Fourth instalment (20% of total): payable by 30 June
- Final instalment (20% of total/balance): payable by 31 July

All other monies payable by affiliated clubs to the League (e.g. properties, fines, etc.) shall be invoiced separately and are payable no later than the last day of the month immediately following that of the invoice date.

5.5.2 Any affiliated club that disputes liability for any payment invoiced by the League is required to:

- render the payment in full to the League by the due date; and
- notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a "disputed payment".

Failure to lodge a disputed payment as above shall result in the affiliated club being declared as “unfinancial” pursuant to by-law 5.5.3.

The CEO shall investigate the dispute, make a determination and, if it is held that the affiliated club was not liable, then the disputed payment will be refunded in full or credited to that club’s debtor account.

- 5.5.3** An affiliated club shall be declared as “unfinancial” if, in the absence of written agreement authorised by the Board, it fails to meet any or all payment obligations owing to the League by the due date(s). Unless otherwise specified, payments owing by affiliated clubs to the League are due and payable in full no later than the last day of the month immediately following that of the invoice date.
- 5.5.4** The CEO may, on behalf of the Board, negotiate a payment plan (agreement) for overdue payments owing by an affiliated club. Any such payment plan must be acknowledged in writing by the CEO on behalf of the Board; and by the President and Treasurer of the affiliated club. Failure to meet any condition specified in a payment plan shall result in the offending club being declared “unfinancial” pursuant to by-law 5.5.3.
- 5.5.5** In any case where an affiliated club has overdue amounts owing to the League in excess of fourteen (14) days past the due date, interest shall be charged on the entire overdue balance, calculated from the date when the amount first became overdue. Any such interest shall be charged at the rate payable by the League to its bankers for overdraft balances, compounding daily.
- 5.5.6** Credit payment terms for properties purchases specified in by-law 5.5.1 may be suspended for the period that an affiliated club is declared to be “unfinancial”. In such cases, payment in full for the cost of purchases shall be required prior to ordering and/or delivery of goods.
- 5.5.7** In the event that any payment rendered by an affiliated club to the league, whether by electronic funds transmission, cheque or any other method is dishonoured for any reason, the club may be declared “unfinancial” pursuant to by-law 5.5.3, at the discretion of the CEO; and all costs to the league resulting from the default shall be immediately payable by the defaulting club.
- 5.5.8** In the event of an affiliated club being declared “unfinancial”

pursuant to by-law 5.5.3, all competing teams fielded by that club shall be ineligible for premiership points resulting from games that they win in official competition for the duration of any period of default. All teams of clubs declared as “unfinancial” will still be required to play in fixtured matches, and to prepare and submit team sheets In the event that an affiliated club declared as “unfinancial” pursuant to by-law 5.5.3 does not field one or more teams as fixtured, The Board may apply a **penalty of up to fifty (50) penalty units per instance of team default.**

- In the event that a team of an unfinancial club should win a game in official competition:
 - no premiership points shall be awarded to either competing team; and
 - for the purpose of ladder percentage calculation, the average of winning-team points recorded in that grade for that round shall be awarded to the unfinancial club’s team; and the average of losing-team points recorded in that grade for that round shall be awarded to the opposition team.

- In the event that a team of an unfinancial club should lose a game in official competition:
 - the opposition team (if not also declared “unfinancial”) shall be awarded the premiership points for that game; and

- for the purpose of ladder percentage calculation, points for and against will be awarded to the winning and losing teams respectively.
- In the event that a team of an unfinancial club should draw a game in official competition:
 - the opposition team (if not also declared “unfinancial”) shall be awarded two (2) premiership points for that game; and
 - for the purpose of ladder percentage calculation, points for and against (identical scores) will be awarded to each team.
- In the event that two (2) unfinancial teams should be fixtured to play against each other in official competition:
 - no premiership points shall be awarded to either team; and
 - for the purpose of ladder percentage calculation (except in the case of a drawn game), the average of winning-team points recorded in that grade for that round shall be awarded to the winning unfinancial club’s team; and the average of losing-team points recorded in that grade for that round shall be awarded to the losing unfinancial club’s team; or
 - in the event of a drawn game, for the purpose of ladder percentage calculation, the actual points (identical) scored by each team shall be awarded.

5.5.9 No team of any affiliated club declared as “unfinancial” pursuant to by-law 5.5.3 shall be permitted to play in finals matches. In the event that a participating club is not financial, the Board may at its discretion, remove all or any of its teams from their position(s) in finals series matches and promote the next entitled financial teams in their place to participate in the finals series.

5.5.10 All affiliated clubs shall forward to the (CEO) no later than 31 December each year, copies of their Annual Reports, Profit and Loss Statements and Balance Sheets for the immediate past year. Financial statements must be the official records of the club for the year under review, as required for submission to Consumer Affairs Victoria pursuant to the Associations

Incorporation Reform Act 2012, as amended. Fine for non-compliance: 10 penalty units.

5.6 MEDIA POLICY

5.6.1 No member club, member club official, member of member club, registered player, trainer, umpire, league official or any other person associated with a member club or the League shall, through any form of media, criticise the League, any official of the League, any other member club, the League's Rules or these By-laws. In default, any such member club may be charged with bringing the league into disrepute. Such a charge shall be heard by the Independent Hearings Committee ("IHC") or Tribunal, as directed by the CEO and a fine not exceeding 200 penalty units may be applied where such charge is sustained. An individual or person/s found guilty of the above may also be suspended by the IHC or Independent Tribunal.

5.7 CONDUCT UNBECOMING

5.7.1 No member club, member club official, member of member club, registered player, trainer, umpire, league official or any other person associated with a member club or the League shall act in any way to contravene the intent and/or spirit of WFNL Rules and/or these By-laws (including appendices) as amended from time to time; nor to act in any way to bring the League into disrepute. Where any such contravention is alleged and is not covered specifically by other provisions of the Rules and/or By-laws, a charge of "conduct unbecoming" may be made against the alleged offending club(s) and/or individual(s).

5.7.2 A charge of "conduct unbecoming" may be made by any Board member, league official or member club and lodged with the CEO no later than 5:00pm on the third working day following the alleged offence. The CEO or his/her delegate shall, within two (2) business days of receipt of such charge, notify all parties named in relation to the charge.

5.7.3 Any charge of "conduct unbecoming" must be in writing, setting out all relevant details of the alleged offence.

5.7.4 At his or her sole discretion the CEO may:

- refer the charge for determination by the WFNL Board, the Independent Tribunal or the Independent Hearing Committee; or
- prior to referring the charge for determination as above, refer the charge to an Investigation Officer for investigation

and recommendation(s); or

- prior to referring the charge for determination as above, investigate the matter himself/herself; or
- conclude, based on the particulars of the written charge and/or the recommendation(s) arising from investigation, that the charge cannot be sustained and should be dismissed.

5.7.5 Where the CEO determines in accordance with By-law 5.7.4 that a charge should be dismissed he or she shall provide the person(s) or club(s) who/that lodged the charge with written advice of such decision, including reasons.

5.7.6 Any club or individual(s) that/who have made a charge of “conduct unbecoming” pursuant to By-law 5.7.4 and is/are dissatisfied with a determination by the CEO that the charge cannot be sustained and should be dismissed may lodge an appeal under the provisions of WFNL Rules, as amended from time to time, for hearing by the WFNL Appeals Board.

5.7.7 Where the WFNL Board, Independent Tribunal or Independent Hearing Committee finds a charge of “conduct unbecoming” sustained, it may impose any penalty deemed fitting within the limits of WFNL Rules and By-laws.

5.7.8 Any club or individual(s) that/who have made a charge of “conduct unbecoming” pursuant to By-law 5.7.4 and is/are dissatisfied with a determination by the WFNL Board, the Independent Tribunal or the Independent Hearing Committee may lodge an appeal under the provisions of WFNL Rules, as amended from time to time, for hearing by the WFNL Appeals Board.