

2025 Rule	Section Heading	2026 Amendment	Reason
This Key Amendment Summary is intended to provide an overview of the amendments made to the 2026 AFL NSW/ACT Rules that have the biggest impact on Club use and application. Please reach out to your Community Football Manager and/or the AFL NSW/ACT Football Operations team if you require further clarity on any of these amendments. Additionally, please see the Quick Guides for reference in relation to any compliance processes.			
PART A - GENERAL			
6.6.1 (A), (B)	AFL Commitment	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) 2026 NEW Clause Number – 6.5.2 (A) Refer to Sections 11.1(a) and 11.2 of the Policy Handbook for AFL and Controlling Body 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. (B) The AFL is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Young People as defined under State of Territory child safeguarding legislation.	To align with the Policy Handbook
6.6.2	Minimum Standards for Leagues & Clubs	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) 2026 NEW Clause Number – 6.5.3 (A) All Leagues, Clubs and persons must comply with: (i) Section 11 and Appendix 6 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> ; (ii) Any AFL NSW/ACT Child Safeguarding policy, as introduced or amended from time to time, relating to the Child Safe Scheme and associated child safe standards. (iii) Applicable child safeguarding legislation (B) Each Club and League must ensure its board (or committee) members are familiar with, and adhere to, the reporting procedures under Section 11.5 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> . GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): It is strongly recommended that each Club appoints someone to the role of Child Safeguarding Officer. This person is responsible for ensuring Club compliance in relation to all Child Safeguarding policies, and is also the nominated point of contact within the Club for any incidents to be reported. It is incumbent upon a club to take immediate action to remediate any Code of Conduct matter that has	To align with the Policy Handbook

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		<div>been reported to it (e.g. via the Ground Manager). Any such remedial action taken by the club will be taken into consideration by the Controlling Body in any investigation of a complaint and any sanctions that may apply.</div> <div>Any AFL NSW/ACT Child Safeguarding policy, as introduced or amended from time to time, relating to the Child Safe Scheme and associated child safe standards: (i) applicable child safeguarding legislation; (ii) Section 11 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i>; (iii) any AFL NSW/ACT Child Safeguarding policy, as introduced or amended from time to time, relating to the Child Safe Scheme and associated child safe standards:</div> <div>(B) All Leagues and Clubs are to: (i) have zero tolerance for child abuse; and (ii) provide an environment in which all children and young people feel safe, supported and respected.</div>							
PART B - STAKEHOLDERS									
8.7.3 (A)	AFL Logo & Approved Suppliers	<div>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</div> <div>(A) The suppliers listed in Table 2 are licensed and authorised as the only suppliers in NSW and ACT to use the AFL logo, including the AFL NSW/ACT Logo.</div> <div>(B) No other businesses or organisation is entitled to use AFL, AFL NSW/ACT and/or League logos</div> <table><tr><th colspan="2">Supplier Companies</th></tr><tr><td>Aceit Sport</td><td>JS Sports (Belgravia)</td></tr><tr><td>ISC Teamwear</td><td>S-Trend Sportswear</td></tr></table>	Supplier Companies		Aceit Sport	JS Sports (Belgravia)	ISC Teamwear	S-Trend Sportswear	To provide clarity that only the approved suppliers are licensed to provide uniform with the AFL and/or AFL NSW/ACT logos.
Supplier Companies									
Aceit Sport	JS Sports (Belgravia)								
ISC Teamwear	S-Trend Sportswear								
8.7.6	Jersey Design	<div>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</div> <div>(a) Jersey design must comply with Table 3.</div> <div>(i) Any design component nor reference in Table 3 must be submitted to the CMC for review and approval at its ultimate discretion.</div>	To include matters not accounted for in Table 3						
9.4.3 (C), (D), (F), (G)	Umpire Escort	<div>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</div> <div>(C) An Umpire exclusion zone should be implemented at quarter, half time and three-quarter time encompassing the centre square.</div> <div>(D) The Umpire Escort is to:</div>	To align with other Rules in this document and provide additional clarity on the role of Umpire Escort						

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		<p>(i) stand with the Umpires during the quarter and three-quarter time intervals, and half time where the umpires do not leave the and field;</p> <p>(ii) arrange for water to be provided to the Umpires, if required;</p> <p>(iii) Ensure that the only persons to approach an Umpire are those entitled to, as listed in Rule 10.13 and Table 11.</p> <p>(E) The Umpire Escort is expected to be identifiable as required by the League,</p> <p>(F) Any Umpire Escort provided is expected to assist in providing and/or obtaining details of any alleged breach of the Code of Conduct immediately after completing their duties in liaison with/at the request of the Umpire or Ground Manager.</p> <p>(G) Failure to provide an identifiable Umpire Escort will be deemed a breach of these Rules and the Club may be sanctioned at the discretion of the CMC.</p>							
10.13	Approaching Umpires	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(A) No person, except as listed in Rule 10.13 (B); Table 11 shall approach or talk to an Umpire (field, boundary, or goal) prior to, during or after the conclusion of a Match, or leaving the playing arena.</p> <p>(B) The following excepted persons referred to in Rule 10.13 (A) may approach an umpire, in a respectful manner, during a quarter time break, or following the conclusion of the match:</p> <p>(i) a full time AFL NSW/ACT staff member, who is not otherwise participating in the Match as a Player, Coach or Team Official;</p> <p>(ii) the Ground Manager, including any designated assistant;</p> <p>(iii) the Umpire escort;</p> <p>(iv) the Umpire Manager or Umpire Coach;</p> <p>(v) the Team Manager, but only for the purpose of confirming the score of a Match where the Mercy Rule under Rule 15.2.8 may apply and only during a quarter break;</p> <p>(vi) for Senior Competitions only, one (1) captain from each competing team as designated on the Official Team Sheet; or</p> <p>(vii) the Team caption, vice-captain or Team runner, but only for the purposes of requesting a headcount in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football.</p> <p>Table 11 – Who can approach an Umpire.</p> <table><tr><th>Role</th><th>When/Criteria</th><th>Purpose</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	Role	When/Criteria	Purpose				Formatting amendment
Role	When/Criteria	Purpose							

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		<div>1. A full-time AFL NSW/ACT staff member</div> <div>(i) Who is not otherwise participating in the Match as a Player, Coach or Team Official</div> <div>(ii) Before or after the match, at match breaks and when requested to assist the umpire at any other point in the match/on the day</div>	<div>(i) Support the Umpire</div> <div>(ii) Provide appropriate and relevant feedback</div> <div>(iii) Protect the Umpire’s during breaks and before, after and between matches</div>		
		<div>2. The Umpire Escort (who must be appropriately identifiable on the day)</div>	<div>(i) As outlined in Rule 9.4.3</div>	<div>(i) To fulfil the duties outlined in Rule 9.4.3</div>	
		<div>3. The Ground Manager, including any designated assistant (who must be appropriately identified on the day)</div>	<div>(i) As outlined in Rule 9.4.1, Table 5</div>	<div>(ii) To fulfil the duties outlined in Rule 9.4.1 and Table 5</div>	
		<div>4. Umpire Manager and/or Umpire Coach</div>	<div>(i) Before or after the match, at match breaks and when requested to assist the umpire at any other point in the match/on the day.</div>	<div>(ii) Support the Umpire</div> <div>(iii) Provide appropriate and relevant feedback</div> <div>(iv) Protect the Umpire’s during breaks and before, after and between matches.</div>	
		<div>5. Team Manager</div>	<div>(i) Only at a quarter break</div>	<div>(i) To confirm the score of a Match where the Mercy Rule in Rule 15.2.8</div>	
		<div>6. One (1) captain from each competing team as designated on the Official Team Sheet (Senior Competitions only)</div>	<div>(i) At quarter breaks or any appropriate break in play, at the approval of the Umpire</div>	<div>(i) To confirm/clarify whether a Player on their team has been reported</div> <div>(ii) To clarify a rule or decision made by the Umpire, only for the purposes of providing feedback to their team</div>	
		<div>7. The Team captain, vice-captain or Team runner</div>	<div>(i) At any time during at Match</div>	<div>(i) For the purposes of requesting a headcount in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football</div>	
		<div>8. The Team captain</div>	<div>(i) At a quarter break</div>	<div>(i) For the purpose of seeking clarity as to why a white or red card was issued in line with Rule 2.5(B) of the <i>Coaching Box Card Policy</i></div>	
11.1.6	Multiple Registrations or Profiles	<div>Removal of (in red): Addition of: (in green)</div> <div>(D) Where a Player has a duplicate profile that has the effect of circumventing a suspension,</div> <div>dDeregistration or tTransfer, that Player will be</div>			Admin change

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		deemed ineligible and the Controlling Body may also deal with the matter as a Policy Breach by that Player.	
11.2.5 (B) (D) (i)	Player Eligibility to Move Between Seniors Grades	<p>Removal of (in red): Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(B) If, in a particular Round, a Team is scheduled for a bye, or has its fixture cancelled or postponed for any reason a fixtured match is cancelled for any reason, no Player who was in that Team or a Team in a higher Grade in the previous Round is eligible to play in a lower Grade.</p> <p>(D) A Club may apply to the CMC in writing for an exemption from Rule 11.2.5(B) or Rule 11.2.5(C):</p> <p>(i) where there are exceptional circumstances as to why the Player should be allowed to play down in a lower Grade in the next consecutively ranked Grade as per Rule 12.5, or as otherwise determined by the CMC; and</p> <p>(ii) where any such application is made no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Match in which permission is sought for the Player to play.</p>	Admin change to provide further clarity
11.6 (A)	Ineligible Players	<p>Removal of (in red): Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(A) An ineligible Player includes a Player who:</p> <p>(i) is not properly registered in accordance with the Rules or the <i>Policy Handbook</i> <i>including where 11.1.6(D) applies.</i></p> <p>(B) Any Club that fields an ineligible player in a Match (including in a finals Match) may be subject to disciplinary sanctions to be imposed by the CMC including but not limited to:</p> <p>(i) if the Club won the Match; the loss of the relevant Competition Match points; <i>with the result of the match determined in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 as a forfeit in favour of the opposing team;</i></p> <p>(ii) if the Club did not win the Match; the deduction of the equivalent of Competition Match point for one Match</p> <p>(iii) a fine of up to one thousand (1000) dollars for each Competition Match in which such player has played: and</p> <p>(iv) any additional conditions as reasonable determined by the CMC.</p> <p>(C) Only under exceptional circumstances will the sanction under 11.6(B) not include the loss of the relevant Match or Matches.</p> <p>(D) Where a match result is overturned in accordance Sections with 11.6(B)(i) or 11.6(B)(ii) is applied:</p>	Admin change to improve Policy alignment

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		<p>(i) the result of the match will be determined in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 as a forfeit in favour of the opposing team;</p> <p>(ii) (i) best and fairest votes and goals kicked by the non-offending team will be maintained; and</p> <p>(iii) (ii) best and fairest votes and goals kicked by the offending team will be determined by the CMC.</p>	
PART C – COMPETITION MANAGEMENT			
14.4	Numbers of Players in a Team – Senior Competitions	<p>Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): <i>All table references in this clause have been edited to Table 15.</i></p> <p>(G) (i) The Match is to continue and the Team has fifteen (15) minutes to ensure the minimum number of Players is reinstated with players who are fit and able to play; and</p>	Admin change- all players on the field must be fit to participate
15.2.6	Out of Bounds	<p>Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): (A) Where Boundary umpires have not been designated to a Match, and when the ball goes out of bounds, the field Umpire will bring the ball back in 5m from the boundary line and a ball-up will apply. (B) The last touch interpretation as introduced by the AFL for 2026 will not apply to Junior Grades up to and including U12's and Masters.</p>	Addition of A, B, C and D which better aligns with the New Laws of Australian Football.
15.2.10	Persons Allowed on Field of Play	<p>Addition of: (in green) (A) Only Players, Umpires, medical staff (trainers, QMP's or first aiders), runners and water carriers are permitted on the field during the course of play, including any period of delay in play caused by an injury to a Player and their presence on the field must be in accordance with the provisions of these Rules.</p> <p><i>GUIDANCE NOTE:</i> Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): Development age groups are non-competition ages groups like under 9's where no there is no formal scoring result or ladder maintained. Any incursion onto the field during the course of play by an unauthorised person is a serious offence and will be managed accordingly.</p>	Admin change to provide additional clarity on intent of rule
15.2.11	Procedure for Stopping Play (Injured Player)	<p>Addition of: (in green) (ii) where an ambulance is required or where a stricker is required in accordance with Law 7.2.</p>	To accommodate situations where an ambulance has been called and the player isn't moved from the field via stretcher

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15.2.13 *New Clause	Interchange Process	<p>Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>A. In accordance with Law 7.2 of the Laws of Australian Football, the following procedure shall apply to the interchange of Players during a Match who are listed on the Team Sheet:</p> <p>i. Unless a stretcher is required in accordance with Law 7.3 of the Laws of Australian Football, the Players intending to interchange shall leave and enter the Playing Surface through the Interchange Area;</p> <p>ii. Where a Player does not leave or enter the Playing Surface as specified in in 15.2.13(A)(i), this will be reported to a field Umpire and the following shall apply:</p> <p>a. The field Umpire shall stop play at the first available opportunity;</p> <p>b. A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick to the nearest player of the opposing Team; and</p> <p>c. A fifty (50) metre penalty shall then be imposed from the position where the Free Kick was awarded.</p>	Addition of Rule from Laws of Australian Football to provide clarity on Interchange process
15.2.14 *New Sub Clause	Nomination of Ruck	<p>Addition of (in green):</p> <p>The restart of play without a nominated ruck interpretation as introduced by the Junior Grades up to and including U17.</p>	To align with the Laws of Australian Football
15.3.3 (A)	Table 20 – Undergarments & Other Items in Matches	<p>Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green):</p> <p>Undergarments</p> <p>Undergarments, such as lycra shorts or compression garments, including socks, are permitted to be worn under shorts and jerseys as follows:</p> <p>(2) Undergarments worn under jersey must be sleeveless unless the jumper being worn is long sleeve or the undergarment is the same colour as the jersey.</p> <p>3) Compression socks must be worn under playing socks and must be skin tone, black or the same colour as Club socks. Compression socks must not be longer than the bottom of the knee.</p> <p>Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>Arm Bands</p> <p>Black tape arm bands are permitted where worn to commemorate a deceased person. Other colour tape arm bands may only be worn with permission of</p>	Addition of compression socks as accepted undergarments

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		the GME are permitted in line with an appropriate themed event.	
15.6 (B) (ii)	Match Footballs	Addition of: (in green) (ii) yellow, for any Match that commences at or after 3.00pm, or any Match commencing at or after 2.30pm where the lighting conditions are poor as determined by the Ground Manager in consultation with Field Umpire.	Provides discretion to use a yellow ball earlier than previously allowed under certain conditions
15.9	Ground Closures	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(A) Where a ground at which a Match is scheduled to be played becomes unavailable due to adverse weather conditions or any other reason, the home Club is to advise the League and any opposing Club as early as it becomes aware of the likelihood of the ground closure to enable alternative arrangements for the playing of scheduled Matches to be considered.</p> <p>(B) Where a ground has been closed by the local Council, no Competition Match is to be played on that ground unless the home Club:</p> <p>(i) has a written agreement with the local Council that allows it to override the ground closure; and in making its decisions on the use of the ground, has followed any risk assessment process expected as part of that agreement with the local Council;</p> <p>(C) Where a venue at which a Match has been scheduled to be played is deemed unfit for play or has been closed, the League will, in consultation with the Clubs concerned and Umpires, provisionally reschedule the Match to be played on the opposing away Club's ground if available:</p> <p>(i). Where a Match is transferred to the opposing Club's venue, the following will occur:</p> <p>(a) that Club will assume the Host Club responsibilities in line with Rule 15.4 and Table 21; and</p> <p>(b) where practicable, the venue of the next Match between the two Clubs concerned will be reversed to compensate for the loss of the home ground privilege;</p> <p>(D) Where a Match is transferred to the opposing Club's venue:</p> <p>(i) that Club will assume the Host Club responsibilities; and</p> <p>(ii) where practicable, the venue of the next Match between the two Clubs concerned will be reversed to compensate for the loss of the home ground privilege;</p>	Formatting amendment

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~~(E) Where neither the Host Club nor opposing Club's venue is available:~~

- ~~(i) the League will make every effort to reschedule the Match to an alternative available venue that is most convenient to the Host Club;~~
- ~~(ii) other Clubs whose venues are vacant and playable will be expected to co-operate with the League by making their venue available to minimize the likelihood of cancellations;~~
- ~~(iii) the Host Team responsibilities will be assumed by the Host Team as nominated in the fixture.~~

~~(F) Where a change of venue of a Match is required:~~

- ~~(i) the League is to provide as much notice of this as possible to the participating Clubs and Umpires providing that all adjustments to Wet Weather affected Matches are made and communicated prior to 7.00pm on the day preceding the scheduled Match with no further adjustments being permitted after this time or no Match day;~~
- ~~(ii) the competing clubs must comply with any adjustment made under Rule 15.9;~~
- ~~(iii) failure to comply with this by a Club will be deemed as forfeit unless determined otherwise by the GMC; and~~

~~Should both clubs fail to comply, both clubs will be deemed to have forfeited the match unless determined otherwise by the GMC.~~

TABLE 31 – Change of Venue Procedure

Reason for Closure	Actions/Exemptions
1.. Where a ground has been closed by the local Council, no Competition Match is to be played on that ground.	Unless the home Club: (i) Has the written agreement with the local Council that allows it to override the ground closure; and (ii) In making it's decision on the use of the ground, has followed any risk assessment process expected as part of that agreement with the local Council.
2. Where the League determines to cancel the entire Round due to multiple ground closures or any other circumstances at their ultimate discretion	(i) The League will determine whether the Round can be re-fixtured based on an available date such as a general bye or wet weather round within the fixture and notify the Club's accordingly; or (ii) The League will cancel the entire Round with no reschedule options if no available fixture dates are available and notify the Club's accordingly
3. Where a venue at which a match has been scheduled to be played is deemed unfit for play or has been closed, the League	Where a Match is transferred to the opposing Club's venue, the following will occur:

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		<p>will, in consultation with the Club's concerned and Umpires, provisionally reschedule the Match to be played on the opposing Club's ground if available.</p>	<p>(i) That Club will assume the HOST Club responsibilities in line with Rule 15.4 and Table 21; and (ii) Where practicable, the venue of the next Match between the two Clubs concerned will be reversed to compensate for the loss of home ground privilege</p>	
		<p>4. Where neither the Host Club nor the opposing Club's venue is available:</p>	<p>(i) The League will make every effort to reschedule the Match to an alternative available venue that is most convenient to the Host Club; (ii) Other Clubs whose venues are vacant and playable will be expected to co-operate with the League by making their venue available to minimize the likelihood of cancellations; (iii) The Host Team responsibilities will be assumed by the Host Team as nominated in the fixture.</p>	
		<p>Where a change of venue is required due to any of the above clauses:</p>	<p>(i) The League is to provide as much notice of this as possible to the participation Clubs and Umpires providing that all adjustments to Wet Weather affected Matches are made and communicated prior to 7.00pm on the day preceding the scheduled Match with no further adjustments being permitted after this time of on match day. (ii) The competing clubs must comply with any adjustments made under Rule 15.9; (iii) Failure to comply with this by a Club will be deemed as a forfeit unless determined otherwise by the CMC; and (iv) Should both clubs fail to comply, both clubs will be deemed to have forfeited the match unless determined otherwise by the CMC</p>	
		<p>5. Where a change of venue is required in the last 4 Rounds of the fixture, the League will review the ladder for each applicable Grade</p>	<p>(i) In taking into consideration all cancelled matches and proposed venue changes, the League will also take into consideration the ladder positions of all teams impacted and prioritize Matches that will have the most impact on the Ladder in the last 4 rounds (ii) Matches from any Grade within the Competition that has the most impact on the ladder may be moved to an available venue, taking precedence over the relevant Host and opposing Club, if applicable</p>	

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		<p>(B) If a Match is unable to be played because no venue is available, the CMC will decide whether or not the Match is to be rescheduled to another date, as per Rule 15.10, or cancelled.</p> <p>(C) Each Club is required to have procedures in place which enable them to contact their Players and Officials at short notice regarding any changes to scheduled Matches.</p>	
15.10 (B) (C) (ii)	Postponed Matches	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (B) Any Match scheduled to be played in the last three (3) rounds of the home and away season (this is inclusive of any rounds that were rescheduled in line with Rule 15.9 and Table 31) that is unable to be played for any reason, as agreed by the League or the CMC, cannot be rescheduled and will be deemed cancelled in accordance with Rule 15.11.</p> <p>(C) (ii) a forfeit in accordance with Rule 16.5.3 where it is considered by the CMC that a Club has not made best reasonable endeavours to reschedule the Match or does not have reasonable grounds to decline playing the Match.</p> <p><i><u>GUIDANCE NOTE:</u></i> Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): Both Clubs are to co-operate with each other and with the Leagues to agree on an available date and venue for the Match to be rescheduled, including options such as playing midweek or playing on a date set aside as a wet weather round. Reasonable endeavors include proof of communication between clubs with proposed date, time and venue as well as proof as to why one or both clubs were unable to meet the requirements of 15.10(A).</p>	Admin change to provide further clarity regarding the intent and application of this Rule
16.1	Determination of Match Results	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) Results of Matches will be determined by the CMC in accordance with these Rules and the <i>Laws of Australian Football</i> and these Rules. The CMC will determine any dispute in relation to the result of the Match.</p>	Admin change
19.6	Competition Rules	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) 2026 HEADING CHANGE: 19.6 Competition Rules Offences (A) The CMC will determine any specific rules that apply to the Representative Competition, including but not limited to, registration of players and teams, fixture, match rules, disciplinary provisions, umpire</p>	Amendment of Clause for specific rules applicable to Representative Football matches

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		<p>appointments. Where no such rules are provided, the relevant provisions of the AFL NSW/ACT Rules will apply.</p> <p>(B) Any Player or Official reported in an inter-league or representative Match, or in a Match between Clubs of different Leagues, shall be subject to Where it is determined that the disciplinary processes prescribed by Rule 25 and Rule 27 will apply to the Representative Competition, with reference to 'Club' in those Rules also extendsing to mean 'representative Team' where applicable.</p>	
PART E – DISCIPLINARY & APPEALS			
24.1.1	Yellow Card	<p>Addition: (in green)</p> <p>(C) A Player ordered off under a yellow card is;</p> <p>(i) required to leave the playing area immediately through the interchange area;</p> <p>(ii) to be seated with the Timekeeper or where provided, the Interchange Steward during play;</p> <p>(iii) to be accompanied by an adult Team Official for Junior Competitions.</p> <p>(iv) not permitted to resume playing the Match for:</p> <p>(a) subject to Rule 24.1.1(C)(iv)(b), a period of fifteen (15) consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters; or</p> <p>(b) for matches with a quarter duration less than fifteen (15) minutes, an amount of time equivalent to one quarter, as detailed in Table 29, of consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters; and</p> <p>(v) not permitted to enter the Field of Play for the duration of the penalty period, including breaks between quarters.</p>	Admin change after feedback regarding Junior send-offs
24.1.3 (B) (iii)	Blue Card	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(B) A Player ordered off under a blue card is;</p> <p>(i) required to leave the playing area immediately through the interchange area;</p> <p>(ii) not permitted to resume playing the Match for a period of ten (10) consecutive playing minutes, excluding breaks between quarters;</p> <p>(iii) required to sit at the Ground Manager or Timekeeper table, or with an adult Team Official for the duration of the penalty period; and</p> <p>(iv) not permitted to sit on the bench or enter the Field of Play at any time(including breaks) for the duration of the penalty period.</p>	Admin change after feedback regarding Junior send-offs
25.2.2 (D) (i)	Umpire Report	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)	Admin change

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		<p>(C) The Umpire must, as soon as practicable after completion of the Match, but by no later than 10.00am 5.00pm on the next business day after that Match or for weekday Matches, this must be met by no later than 5.00pm of the next business day, complete and lodge a <i>Notice of Report</i> with the relevant Controlling Body via OfficialsHQ or in any other such manner as allowed by the Controlling Body.</p>	
25.2.3	Club Citing	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) Re-Write of Entire Clause</p> <p>(A) Subject to Rule 25.2.3(B), if a Club has evidence that a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence, and the Player or Official has not been reported by the Umpire for that offence, the Club may complete and lodge a Notice of Citing- Part A and Part B with the relevant Controlling Body.</p> <p>(B) A Club may only lodge a Notice of Citing under Rule 25.2.3(A) for a Reportable Offence, that is: (i) a Classifiable Offence with a Base Sanction of at least three (3) Matches as defined in Appendix 1 of the Policy Handbook; or (ii) a Direct Tribunal Offence</p> <p>(C) A Notice of Citing- Part A must be lodged by the Club with the relevant Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day after the relevant Match.</p> <p>GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green):</p> <p><i>The intent of this deadline is to ensure matters are managed and, communicated and reviewed in an appropriate timeframe. If an incident is serious enough to warrant a Notice of Citing, the relevant Club Officer should have adequate information to submit the Notice of Citing-Part A by this deadline, without significant impact on a volunteer's external workload. Additionally, this deadline prevents vexatious or retaliatory Citing's being submitted as a response to a Notice of Charge received.</i></p> <p>(D) Notice of Citing- Part B can be submitted at the same time as Notice of Citing- Part A if all relevant evidence has been obtained, otherwise the Notice of Citing- Part B must be lodged by no later than</p>	Rule change based on Club Feedback regarding submission timelines

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		<p>5.00pm on the second business day after the relevant Match.</p> <p>(E) All evidence the Club relies upon to support the citing must be lodged with <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i>, including any medical evidence to support the Club's grading of "impact".</p> <p>(i) Witness statements can only be provided by Players or Officials, only in exceptional and compelling circumstances will statements from spectators be accepted.</p> <p>GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): <i>Examples of evidence include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Written statements from those who directly witnesses the incident (Player and Officials only unless allowed for under exceptional circumstances).</i> • <i>Footage and/or photos of the incident.</i> • <i>Any Medical Reports relevant to impact on the offended against Player</i> <p>(F) On application by a Club to the Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the next business day following the Match, an extension of the time for lodgement of a <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i> may be approved by the Controlling Body, but only where the Controlling Body is satisfied the Club has provide evidence there are exception circumstances to justify this.</p> <p>(i) If, after completing the <i>Notice of Citing- Part A</i>, Club elects not to proceed with <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i>, the Club is to notify the Controlling Body in writing prior to the time outlined in 25.2.3(D)</p> <p>GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): <i>Simply not having evidence available would not be considered exceptional circumstances, unless for example, the Club was waiting for a statement from an injured Player who was in hospital and unavailable to provide a statement and/or medical evidence such as discharge paperwork, but the deadline.</i></p>	
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		<p>(G) The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO will review the <i>Notice of Citing Part A and B</i> in line with Rule 25.3</p> <p>(H) A fee of five hundred (500) dollars is payable by the Club to the Controlling Body for each <i>Notice of Citing- Part A and B</i> lodged and;</p> <p>(i) payment for this must be agreed to by the Club upon lodgement of the <i>Notice of Citing- Part A and B</i></p> <p>(ii) the Controlling Body will invoice the Club at the end of the Season for any relevant costs incurred in line with Rule 25.2.3(G) and Rule 25.2.3(H) as applicable; and</p> <p>(iii) the Controlling Body may, in it's absolute discretion, refund the citing fee in full or part of the Controlling Body proceeds with issuing a Notice of Charge to the Player or Official subject of the Notice of Citing.</p> <p>(I) A <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i> in accordance with Rule 25.2.3(A) may not be withdrawn by the Club after it has been lodged, unless the withdrawal is approved by the Controlling Body</p> <p>(J) The Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable upon receipt of the <i>Notice of Citing- Part A</i>, notify the reported Player or Official's club of the intended citing.</p> <p>(K) For the avoidance of doubt:</p> <p>(i) the lodgement of the <i>Notice of Citing- Part A</i> will not constitute a formal citing;</p> <p>(ii) the lodgement of <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i> will constitute a formal citing;</p> <p>(iii) if the <i>Notice of Citing- Part B</i> is not lodged in line with Rule 25.2.3(D) or another such time as determined in conjunction with 25.2.3E, a citing will be deemed not to have been made;</p> <p>(iv) a <i>Notice of Citing- Part A and B</i> must be lodged for each separate incident</p>	
25.2.4	Review of Footage	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(A) A club may request the Controlling Body to review footage of an incident where it considers the footage shows a Player or Official has committed a Reportable Offence. <i>The footage must show the incident in its entirety, and no part of the incident should be obstructed or off-screen.</i></p> <p><i>GUIDANCE NOTE:</i></p> <p>Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green):</p> <p><i>In circumstances where footage does not capture the entire incident, the Club may choose to proceed</i></p>	Admin change to provide further clarity and intent of Rule application

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		<p>with a Notice of Citing in accordance with Section 25.2.3 rather than a Review of Footage.</p> <p>Examples of evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statements from those who directly witnessed the incident (Players and Officials only unless allowed for under exceptional circumstances) • Footage and or Photos • Any Medical Reports relevant to impact on the offended against Player <p>(B) A request by a Club for a review of footage must be submitted to the relevant Controlling Body by no later than 5.00pm on the first business day following the Match the incident arises from.</p> <p>(C) A Review of Footage request must be submitted for each separate incident.</p> <p>(D) A Club making a request under this Rule must, within the time specified in 25.2.4(B):</p> <p>(i) complete and lodge the prescribed Request for Review of Footage form together with the footage relied upon; and</p> <p>(ii) provide evidence of payment of the fee specified in Rule 25.2.4(D); and</p> <p>(ii) where available, provide any incident or medical report in relation to the offended Player.</p> <p>(E) A fee of two hundred and fifty (250) dollars is payable by the Club to the relevant Controlling Body for each request to view footage of an incident and:</p> <p>(i) the Controlling Body will invoice the Club at the end of the Season for any relevant costs incurred in line with Rule 25.2.4(D)(ii) as applicable is payable at the time of lodgment of the request; and</p> <p>(ii) may, at the absolute discretion of the Controlling Body, be refunded to the Club in full or part if the Controlling Body proceeds with issuing a <i>Notice of Charge</i> to the Player or Official subject of the <i>Request for Review of Footage</i>.</p> <p>(F) The Controlling Body must, as soon as practicable upon receipt of the Review of Footage, notify the reported Player or Official's Club of the</p>	
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		<p>submission and provide the Player or Officials club with a copy of the footage.</p> <p>(G) Following review of the footage, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may determine, in line with Rule 25.4 to:</p> <p>(i) proceed with the issuing of a <i>Notice of Charge</i> in accordance with Rule 25.4; or</p> <p>(ii) not proceed with a <i>Notice of Charge</i> if not satisfied based on the evidence provided that a Reportable Offence was committed in line with Rule 25.3.4.</p> <p>(H) Where the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO determines to proceed with a <i>Notice of Charge</i>, the Controlling Body is, within one (1) business day of this, to:</p> <p>(i) notify the reported Player or Official's Club that the Player or Official has been charged following a review of footage; and</p> <p>(ii) provide the reported Player or Official's Club with a copy of that footage.</p>	
25.2.6	Reporting of Junior Players	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>The procedures for handling of reports of Junior Players 9 to 12 years old and any subsequent disciplinary processes will be determined by the relevant Controlling Body.</p> <p>(A) The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may determine to manage a report of a Junior Player aged 9 to 12 years old and any subsequent disciplinary process in an alternate manner at their absolute discretion.</p> <p>(B) If it is determined that a report meets Rule 25.2.6, the MRP will provide a provisional grading of the incident in line with Appendix 1 of the National Community Football <i>Policy Handbook</i> and offer the Reported Person's Club the opportunity to impose a club-based sanction.</p> <p>(i) If the Reported Person and their Club accept this, the sanction will be recorded, as applicable, on the Reported Person's PlayHQ profile only for the duration of their suspension (if applicable) to ensure compliance, then the incident will be deleted.</p> <p>(ii) If the Reported Person and their Club elect to reject this alternative process, the matter will proceed to a formal Notice of Charge in line with</p>	Admin change to provide further detail on application of Rule

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		Rule 25.5 and the matter can be accepted and formally recorded on the Reported Person's PlayHQ profile, or contested at Tribunal.	
25.3.3 (A)	Further Investigation	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (A) The Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may use reasonable measures to establish the facts of a report made investigate any incident reported under Rule 25.2 using reasonable measures to obtain further evidence, to assess whether a Reportable Offence has been committed.</p> <p><i>GUIDANCE NOTE:</i> Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): This provision is to be used for serious reportable offences where it was not practicable for any of the other reporting mechanisms to have been invoked. It is not to be used to circumvent those other mechanisms where it is reasonable evident that one or more of those could have been used.</p> <p>Reasonable measures may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the evidence provided and requesting additional information from the Club • Determine that all relevant evidence has been provided and make a determination accordingly • Provide details of the Reported Person's response to relevant parties to take into consideration in relation to statements or evidence already provided. <p>(A) All Players, Officials and Clubs are to cooperate with an investigation under this Rule, including the provision of any footage taken of a Match as requested by the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO. (B) Failure by a Person or Club to comply with Rule 25.3.3(B) will be considered to be a Policy Breach and dealt with in accordance with Rule 26. (C) On completion of any investigation under this Rule, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO is then to determine: (i) if it is satisfied a Reportable Offence has been committed and a <i>Notice of Charge</i> is to be issued in accordance with Rule 25.5 or (ii) if the Reportable Offence is to be dismissed in accordance with Rule 25.3.4 (D) If in the course of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO identifies that further</p>	Admin change to provide further clarity on intent and application of Rule.

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		Reportable Offences have been committed and have not been reported, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may proceed to issue a <i>Notice of Charge</i> in respect of that finding. (E) If in the course of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO identifies actions constituting a Policy Breach, the matter can be referred for review under Rule 26.2(A)(ii).	
25.3.4	Dismissal of a Report	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (A) After assessment and completion of any investigation, the Controlling Body, MRP or MRO may dismiss a matter if it considers there to be insufficient evidence of a Reportable Offence occurred or does not meet the threshold to lodge a <i>Notice of Citing</i> under Rule 25.2.3(B)(ii). (B) Where a matter is dismissed in accordance with Rule 25.3.4. (i) the Controlling Body is to notify the reported person's Club of this as soon as practicable after the decision is made and (ii) this decision is not able to be: (a) reviewed by the Controlling Body even where additional information is provided by the Club; and (b) appealed under Rule 28 of these Rules or Section 26 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> .	
25.4.2	Reportable Offence in a Special Round	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (A) The Controlling Body, MRP, MRO or Tribunal, as applicable, may apply at its absolute discretion, a loading of up to one hundred percent (100%) in relation to the base sanction for any Auditory Reportable Offence committed toward or in relation to an Umpire during a Community Umpiring Week.	Admin change
25.4.3	Multiple Reportable Offences	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (B) Where a Person has been found or plead guilty to two Reportable Offences in the previous 12 month period, for any subsequent Reportable Glassifiable Offence the Controlling Body will not offer a reduced sanction in an early guilty plea offer. This applies until the Player has not been found or pled guilty to a Reportable Offence for a period of 12 months from the date of the last Reportable Offence. GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): The offence dates are determined based on the date the offence is committed, not the date the player has been found or plead guilty. This provision is to be used for serious reportable offences where it was	Admin change to provide further clarity on intent and application of Rule

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		not practicable for any of the other reporting mechanisms to have been invoked. It is not used to circumvent those other mechanisms where it is reasonably evident that one or more of those could have been used.					
25.6.1	Early Guilty Plea Offer	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>(C) The Controlling Body may choose not to make an early guilty plea offer and refer the matter directly to the Tribunal to be determined under Rule 27, and where this occurs, the reported Person may not enter an early guilty plea. However, the Reported Person must provide all required documents in line with Rule 27 and as outlined in the <i>Notice of Charge</i>.</p> <p>(D) Where a magter is referred directly to the Tribunal under Rule 25.6.1(C), the Reported Person must provide all required documents....</p> <p>GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): This provision is to be used for serious reportable offences where it was not practicable for any of the other reporting mechanisms to have been invoked. It is not to be used to circumvent those other mechanism where it is reasonable evident that one or more of those could have been used. An Early Guilty Plea does not automatically entitle the Reported Person to a reduction in the base sanction. It is the option for the Reported Person to accept the prescribed penalty without a Tribunal Hearing.</p>	Admin change to provide further clarity on intent and application of Rule				
26.2	Identifying and Reporting a Policy Breach	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>2026 HEADING CHANGE: 26.2 Identifying and Reporting a Policy Breach</p>	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook				
26.2.1	Complaint Procedure	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <table border="1"><tr><th colspan="2">Complaint Procedure</th></tr><tr><td>How to make a complaint</td><td>Complete a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> form and attach all supporting evidence to be relied upon. Guidance Note – it is the Complainant's responsibility to gather all witness statements and relevant evidence and submit this with the <i>Notice of Complaint</i>.</td></tr></table>	Complaint Procedure		How to make a complaint	Complete a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> form and attach all supporting evidence to be relied upon. Guidance Note – it is the Complainant's responsibility to gather all witness statements and relevant evidence and submit this with the <i>Notice of Complaint</i> .	Admin change to provide further clarity on intent and process
Complaint Procedure							
How to make a complaint	Complete a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> form and attach all supporting evidence to be relied upon. Guidance Note – it is the Complainant's responsibility to gather all witness statements and relevant evidence and submit this with the <i>Notice of Complaint</i> .						

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		<table><tr><td>Who to submit the complaint to</td><td><p>If the complaint relates to a Club, Club Official, Player, Parent/Guardian or supporter, submit to the Controlling Body.</p><p>If the complaint relates to a League or League Official, submit to the Executive Officer or Community Football Operations Manager of AFL NSW/ACT.</p><p>If the Notice of Complaint has been submitted online in the Leagues prescribed format, it will be received by the League and the AFL NSW/ACT Community Football Operations team.</p></td></tr><tr><td>Timeline for submitting a complaint</td><td>Unless otherwise specified in a particular Rule, a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> is to be submitted by no later than 5.00pm on the third (3rd) calendar day after the occurrence of the alleged breach.</td></tr></table> <p>(B) The Controlling Body may allow for a complaint to be submitted up to 14 days after the alleged breach when there is evidence of exceptional and compelling circumstances as to why it was not practicable for the complaint to have been made by the required day and time.</p> <p>(i) The Complaint must make reasonable efforts to ensure the Controlling Body is notified of their intent to submit a Notice of Complaint by the third (3rd) calendar day</p> <p>(C) Subject to Rule 26.2.1(D), a complaint lodged with the Controlling Body under Rule 26.2.1(A) will be dealt within accordance with these Rules.</p> <p>(D) Where the Controlling Body considers that a complaint relates to a potential breach of Sections 11.13 or 14 one of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> sections referred to in Rule 26.2.3, the Controlling Body may refer to the complaint to the AFL for management in accordance with Section 23 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i>.</p>	Who to submit the complaint to	<p>If the complaint relates to a Club, Club Official, Player, Parent/Guardian or supporter, submit to the Controlling Body.</p> <p>If the complaint relates to a League or League Official, submit to the Executive Officer or Community Football Operations Manager of AFL NSW/ACT.</p> <p>If the Notice of Complaint has been submitted online in the Leagues prescribed format, it will be received by the League and the AFL NSW/ACT Community Football Operations team.</p>	Timeline for submitting a complaint	Unless otherwise specified in a particular Rule, a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> is to be submitted by no later than 5.00pm on the third (3rd) calendar day after the occurrence of the alleged breach.	
Who to submit the complaint to	<p>If the complaint relates to a Club, Club Official, Player, Parent/Guardian or supporter, submit to the Controlling Body.</p> <p>If the complaint relates to a League or League Official, submit to the Executive Officer or Community Football Operations Manager of AFL NSW/ACT.</p> <p>If the Notice of Complaint has been submitted online in the Leagues prescribed format, it will be received by the League and the AFL NSW/ACT Community Football Operations team.</p>						
Timeline for submitting a complaint	Unless otherwise specified in a particular Rule, a <i>Notice of Complaint</i> is to be submitted by no later than 5.00pm on the third (3rd) calendar day after the occurrence of the alleged breach.						
26.3	<p>Assessing a Policy Breach</p> <p>Notice of Complaint</p>	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>2026 Subheading Change</p> <p>Initial Assessment of Assessing and Investigating a Complaint</p> <p>*removal of entire section -> new amendments below</p> <p>(A) Section 23.2 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> applies in relation to assessing and investigating a complaint.</p>	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook				
26.4	Determining a Policy Breach	<p>Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green)</p> <p>*removal of entire section -> new amendments below</p>	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook				

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		(A) Section 23.3 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> applies in determining a Policy Breach.	
26.5	Notice of Breach	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) *removal of entire section -> new amendments below (A) Section 23.4 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> applies for issuing a Notice of Breach.	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook
26.5.3	Response to a Notice of Breach and Early Guilty Plea	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) *removal of entire section -> new amendments below Section 23.5 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> applies in relation to responding to a Notice of Breach and entering an Early Guilty Plea.	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook
29.2	Public Comment and Criticism	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) *removal of entire section -> new amendments below Section 27.5 of the <i>Policy Handbook</i> applies in relation to public comments and criticism.	Admin change to align with Policy Handbook
30.3	Suspension of a Person	Removal of: (in red) Addition of: (in green) (C) A suspended person must serve a suspension in the Grade in which the person played, or was officiating in, immediately prior to such suspension or disqualification. The suspension will apply to the Grade in which the person played, or was officiating in, immediately prior to such suspension or disqualification. GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): The effect of this Rule (D) is that a Player cannot count towards his/her suspension matches in more than one grade in each round, even if he/she regularly ‘doubles up’ and/or in circumstances where the Player or Official also participates in another Competition under a Permit. (L) Where a suspension carries over to subsequent season, a person who was suspended in a Junior Competition in the previous season and has graduated transitioned to a Higher Age Group or Senior Competition in the subsequent season, must serve the suspension in the Senior Competition Competition most aligned to their age. GUIDANCE NOTE: Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): A Person suspended in a Junior Competition may not serve any part of their suspension in a Senior	Admin change to provide further clarity on intent and application of this Rule

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		<p>Competition within the same Competition year in which they were suspended. For example, a person suspended in an Under 17s competition in 20253 is unable to serve their suspension in Senior Competition until the commencement of the 20264 season.</p> <p>Example: A player who is suspended at the end of the season in an Under 17s competition but also plays in a Senior First Grade Competition which has not yet concluded is unable to serve any part of their suspension in the subsequent First Grade Competition matches for the remainder of the 2026 season, regardless of whether their Under 17s competition has finished.</p> <p><i>GUIDANCE NOTE: under (Q)</i> Removal of (in red) Addition of (in green): For example, a suspended Player cannot perform the role of runner or assistant coach for the duration of the suspension. Equally a suspended Official, who is also a registered Player, cannot play for the duration of the suspension. However, a suspended person can perform other unofficial duties such as working in the canteen or bar.</p>	
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