# RULES OF THE
# Victorian Amateur Football Association (VAFA)


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## AFL'S LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

1. The VAFA adopts the AFL's Laws of Australian Football in all men's and women's competitions unless there is specific provision to the contrary contained in Schedule I of these Rules.

## AMATEUR STATUS

2. The VAFA defines an **AMATEUR** as follows:

An Amateur is one who does not receive or agree to receive, either directly or indirectly, any remuneration or reward whatsoever (whether by match payments or expenses or otherwise) in respect to their participation as a player, in the Victorian Amateur Football Association.

**Receive or agree to receive –** remuneration or reward may not be offered in an immediate sense or at some point in the future at an unspecified time.

**Directly or indirectly -** remuneration or reward may not be offered to the individual player or any person associated with that individual.

**Remuneration or reward –** examples of what is permissible or not permissible as a reward or remuneration refer to the Amateur Status Guidelines set out in Schedule H to these Rules.

The spirit of the "Amateur" definition will always prevail and each case will be looked at individually on its own merits. Any payment, reward, or benefit that might induce a person to play with a VAFA club will be regarded as a breach of the definition of Amateur Status. The examples outlined in "Schedule H" are provided as a guide, but clubs should always seek guidance from the VAFA as to whether a situation is within, or in breach of, the definition. If such guidance is not sought before the event, a club will not be permitted to seek an exemption after the event if it is found, notwithstanding technical reliance on the examples outlined in "Schedule H", that a given situation is not within the spirit of the definition.

Any reference in Schedule H to a "senior' team of a club includes a reference to both the senior men's and women's team of that club.

Any reference in Schedule H to "pay" or "paid' includes remuneration or reward (as defined above).

## SECTIONS, PROMOTIONS AND RELEGATION

Men's competitions of the VAFA

3. Sections shall be the categories of the premiership competition matches in which a player may be eligible to represent a Club.

4. The Sections shall be the Men's Premier Competition **(MPC)**, the Men's Divisional Competition **(MDC)**, the Men's Reserves Competition **(MRC)**, the Men's Thirds Competition **(MTC)**, Under 19 Men's Competition and the VAFA Masters Competition.

5. Sections shall be groups of Clubs represented in each Section.

6. The number of Clubs represented in each Section shall be determined by the Board of the Association from time to time.

7. Each Club of the Association shall be represented by a team in a MPC or MDC Section provided that a Club obtaining most or all of their players from a body which has an age limit approximating that of an Under 19 Men's Section of the Association shall be permitted at the discretion of the Board to be represented in an Under 19 Men's Section in lieu of a MPC or MDC Section.

8. *left blank*

9. Each Club of the Association shall be represented by a team in a MRC Section unless granted an exemption by the Board.

10. The MPC and MDC Sections of the Association shall be designated in such manner as the Board considers appropriate.

11. The Under 19 Men's Sections of the Association shall be designated by successive numbers or letters or by such other designation as the Board determines and the composition of each such Section shall be decided by the Board.

12. The MRC and MTC Sections shall be designated by successive numbers or letters of the alphabet or by such other designation as the Board determines.

13. The Clubs represented in the MPC or MDC Sections occupying the lowest two positions on the ladders of each Section, except for the lowest Section of each Section, at the end of the season shall be transferred to the next lower Section in the following season and the two Clubs represented in the Grand Final of each MPC or MDC Section except for the highest of each Section shall be transferred to the higher Section in the following season provided that the Board may in its discretion vary this procedure at any time.

13A. The two Clubs occupying the lowest two positions on the ladders of the two highest Under 19 Men's Sections at the end of the season shall be transferred to the next lower Section in the following season and the two clubs represented in the Grand Finals of the three highest Under 19 Men's Sections except for the highest Under 19 Men's Section shall be transferred to the higher Section in the following season provided that the Board may in its discretion vary this procedure at any time.

14. A Club which is represented by more than one team in a Section shall be considered as two Clubs of that Section and each such Club shall have the same rights, privileges and obligations as every other Club represented in such Section.

15. In the first year a Club of the Association is represented in the MPC or MDC Section such Club shall participate in the premiership competition of the lowest Section of the applicable Section.

Women's competitions of the VAFA

15A. The VAFA shall run a Women's Premier Competition **(WPC)** comprising one or more WPC Sections to which the following rules shall apply:

(i) the Rules set out in Schedule E to these Rules; **and**

(ii) these VAFA Rules, **but excluding Rule 15B** below as well as those Rules which apply only to the men's competitions of the VAFA (being Rules 3 to 15 above).

15B. The VAFA shall run a Women's Divisional Competition **(WDC)** comprising one or more WDC Sections and a Women's Reserves Competition **(WRC)** and a Women's Thirds Competition **(WTC),** and a Women's Under 19's Competition to which the following rules shall apply:

(i) the Rules set out in Schedule F to these Rules; **and**

(ii) these VAFA Rules, **but excluding Rule 15A** above as well as those Rules which apply only to the men's competitions of the VAFA (being Rules 3 to 15 above).

## MEETINGS

16. *left blank*

17. Each member or authorised proxy of a member of the Association shall attend the Annual General meeting of the Association provided that the date of such meeting shall be fixed by a resolution passed by the Board of the Association at a properly constituted meeting.

18. Each member or authorised proxy of a member of the Association appointed by a club of the Association shall attend a meeting of the members of the Association which shall be conducted as determined by the Board of the Association.

19. Prior to any meeting of the Association at which it is intended that a proxy shall attend in place of a member of the Association nominated by a Club of the Association such Club shall lodge in writing the name and address of such proxy with the Chief Executive Officer of the Association.

20. A Club which expels a member shall advise the Chief Executive Officer of the Association of the name and address of such member within fourteen days of the imposition of the penalty.

21. *left blank*

## CLUB ADMINISTRATION

22. A Club shall be deemed to have received notice of any matter discussed or announced at a meeting of the Association at which the member or proxy of the member nominated by such Club is in attendance.

23. Each Club must ensure that all match day obligations are planned and prepared for and fulfilled as per the VAFA Match Day Requirements.

24. Prior to the 20th of March in each year, each club shall lodge with the Football Operations Coordinator the location and ground dimensions (fence to fence length and width) of each venue to be used by teams of the club for the conduct of matches.

25. Prior to the 1st day of March in each year, each Club shall lodge in writing with the Football Operations Coordinator of the Association a list containing the names and contact details of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, all other members of the Committee, and the Coach and Assistant Coaches and Sports Trainers of each team of the Club and shall advise of any changes in such list within fourteen (14) days of such change being effected.

26. Prior to the 31st day of January in each year each Club shall lodge in writing with the Finance Coordinator of the Association a statement of the receipts and expenditure of such Club during the previous year. In the event that a Club fails to provide their financial information by the due date, the Club shall be fined as prescribed in the Schedule of Fines contained in Rule 129.

## FINANCIAL

27. Each Club shall make a good faith deposit of $2,000.00 with the Association within fourteen (14) days of the first admission of a representative of such Club to the Association and the Association may at any time appropriate the whole or any part thereof for the payment of any outstanding liability of such Club to the Association.

28. Team Entries

(i) For all MPC, MDC, MRC, and William Buck Premier Women's competitions, Prior to the 31st day of October in each year, each Club shall submit to the VAFA Football Operations a written application for each team by which such Club desired to be represented in those competitions of the Association.

(ii) For all Women's Premier B, WDC and Under 19 Men's, Prior to the 1st day of March in each year, each Club shall submit to the VAFA Football Operations a written application for each team by which such Club desired to be represented in those competitions of the Association.

(iii) For all MTC and Under 19 Women's competitions, 21 days prior to round 1 for those competitions, each Club shall submit to the VAFA Football Operations a written application for each team by which such Club desired to be represented in those competitions of the Association.

29. Team Withdrawals

(i) In the event that a Club withdraws a team after the 15th day of March the Club shall be fined as prescribed in the Schedule of Fines contained in **Rule 129**.

(ii) In the event that a Club withdraws a team after the commencement of the home and away season, the Club shall be fined as prescribed in the Schedule of Fines contained in **Rule 129** and will remain liable to pay the affiliation fee for the season associated with the team that has withdrawn.

(iii) A Club that withdraws a team after the commencement of the home and away season that has more than one team entered in a competition will have the lowest-ranked team removed from the competition.

30. Each Club shall pay an affiliation fee for each team by which such Club is represented in the premiership competitions of the Association and such affiliation fees shall be determined by the Association at its Annual General Meeting and may vary from one Section to another as may be deemed equitable.

(i) In the event a team is regraded after Round 4 into a division with a higher or lower affiliation fee, the Club will be either invoiced or refunded the difference pro- rata of the remaining rounds.

31. Each Club shall pay the balance of the affiliation fees in three equal instalments not later than the first day of May, June, July in each year or in fewer instalments or in full provided that the balance of the affiliation fees outstanding at any time shall not exceed that which would be outstanding if such balance is paid in three equal instalments as permitted by this Rule.

32. When the outstanding liability of a Club to the Association has exceeded $200.00 for more than thirty consecutive days the Treasurer of the Association shall give written notice to such Club of the amount of the outstanding liability and that payment is required to be made within seven (7) days.

In the event of a Club failing to make payment of any outstanding liabilities as required, the Board may suspend the right of such Club to participate in the competitions of the Association.

33. When a call for additional funds is levied in response to a resolution passed at a properly constituted meeting of the Association the Treasurer shall give written notice to each Club of the amount of such call and the payment shall be made within thirty (30) days.

34. The annual fee for a Club not currently entering teams in the competition is $50.00

35. Upon the withdrawal of any Club from participation in the premiership competitions of the Association the good faith deposit or any remaining part thereof after the deduction of any outstanding liability to the Association shall be refunded to such club provided such withdrawal is made with the consent of the Board.

## PERMIT COMMITTEE AND PLAYER PERMITS

36. The quorum for all meetings of the Permit Committee shall be two members.

37. The Permit Committee shall be responsible to grant or refuse all applications for registration with the Association and permits to represent Clubs in matches under the control of the Association.

37A. With respect to players transferring between Clubs within the Association in any one year:

(i) No more than three players in the Men's competitions of the VAFA will be permitted to be transferred unless both Clubs consent to this number being exceeded

(ii) No more than three players in the Women's competitions of the VAFA will be permitted to be transferred unless both Clubs consent to this number being exceeded

Should a dispute arise between Clubs within the Association as a result of VAFA Rule 37A (i) and (ii), either Club can request mediation with the Association to resolve at its discretion.

38. The Permit Committee shall be responsible to prescribe the form in which applications shall be made to the Association for registration with the Association and for a permit to represent a Club.

39. The Permit Committee may cancel the permit of any player.

39 A

(i). Club's must notify VAFA if any player is charged with a serious criminal offence

(ii) If a player is charged with a serious criminal offence, then the player's permit/application will be reviewed by the Permit Committee.

(iii) A Permit Committee review, may lead to the cancellation of the playing permit of the player

40. The Permit Committee is empowered to cancel the permit of any player who has infringed their Amateur Status retrospectively to the date of their infringement or the commencement of the current season whichever date is the more recent notwithstanding the permit held by the player having been granted by the Permit Committee.

41. No player shall be eligible to represent a Club in premiership matches of the Association unless they obtain a permit to play with such Club and are thereupon registered as a player with the Association.

42. Applications for a permit to play with a Club and registration with the Association shall be made in such form as the Permit Committee shall prescribe from time to time and shall be submitted by the Secretary of such Club, or their authorised deputy, together with a request on behalf of the Club that the registration be effected.

42A. A club's application to the Association shall be accompanied by an application fee of $350 to cover administration costs.

42B. The Permit Committee shall have the authority to:

(i) conduct interviews and investigations in respect of applications for a Permit;

(ii) conduct any investigations in such a manner as it sees fit;

(iii) co-opt the services of other persons to provide advice and assistance on specific matters;

(iv) inform itself of any matter it sees fit;

(v) require and obtain production and take possession of all documents, records, articles or things in the possession or control of a Club or Person that are relevant to any Permit application;

(vi) require a Club or Person to answer questions and provide information in connection with any Permit application.

42C. Any decision of the Permit Committee may be appealed to the Board. An appeal shall be a hearing de novo and the Board shall be able to substitute its decision for the decision being appealed.

42D. The determination of the Board will be final and bindings on the parties to the appeal.

43. Applications for registration and a permit received by the Association after 30th June in each year shall not be granted.

44. Notwithstanding anything contained in these Rules the Permit Committee shall be empowered after the 30th of June in any year to register and grant a Permit to:

(i) An applicant who is a member of the armed forces who is otherwise eligible for a permit to play in the Association and who is transferred after that date.

(ii) An applicant who is a registered Amateur player in another State or Territory.

(iii) An applicant who is eligible to obtain a permit to play in an Under 19 Men's Section pursuant to the provisions of **Rule 51 or 52** hereof, provided that the application for such permit is lodged on or prior to the 31st July in each year.

(iv) An Applicant who is not currently registered to play in any Australian Rules football competition, and the last Club with which they were registered is the VAFA Club to which they are currently seeking registration.

45. If an applicant for a permit to play with a Club during the previous three seasons played or received a permit to play with another Club which is still a member of the Association such applicant must obtain a clearance from such other Club with which they had been granted the permit to play. Provided that a Club may refuse to grant such clearance if the applicant has not been a registered player with the Club for a period during which the Club has participated in not less than 22 MPC or MDC VAFA matches. Provided further that if such clearance be not granted within fourteen (14) days of the date of application the applicant may appeal to the Permit Committee which is empowered in its discretion to grant the new application for a permit without a clearance.

46. The Permit of any player to represent a Club in a premiership match of the Association during the season shall be cancelled and that player deemed an ineligible player pursuant to Rule 50 if:

(i) The Permit Committee decides accordingly.

(ii) The player forfeits their Amateur Status.

(iii) The player, who was registered as a VAFA player after 30 June of the previous season, or is a newly registered player in the current season, plays a premiership match after 1st March in the current season in a team representing another club that is not a member of the Association excluding subclauses:

(A) **For men** (VFL or Coates Talent League Boys listed players transferring between their Club and their nominated VAFA interchange Club): The Player is required to be released by his VFL or Coates Talent League Boys Club before being able to play for his nominated VAFA interchange Club otherwise he/they will be declared an ineligible player.

(A.1) **For women** (VFLW, Coates Talent League Girls or other club listed players transferring between their Club and their nominated VAFA interchange Club): The Player is required to be released by her/their VFL Club or other Club before being able to play for her/their nominated VAFA interchange Club otherwise she/they will be declared an ineligible player.

(B) The player plays in a team representing another club that is not a member of the Association pursuant to the rules and conditions of any applicable Interchange Agreement entered into between the VAFA and the AFL Victoria Affiliate League.

(iv) In order to have the playing permit reinstated for a breach of Rule 46 (iii), a VAFA Rule 46 Statutory Declaration must be submitted and signed by both the player and a club representative declaring Amateur Status was retained while playing outside of the VAFA.

47. The registration of a player with the Association shall be cancelled automatically when the permit of a player to represent a Club is cancelled, provided that automatic re-registration of such player shall be affected when the cancellation of the permit has been effected to enable the player to receive a permit to represent another Club.

48. Any registered player who fails to make themselves available for selection in a VAFA representative match without establishing an adequate reason to the satisfaction of the Board, shall be ineligible to play for such period as is determined by the Board.

49. Notwithstanding anything herein contained in these Rules a player shall not be eligible to play:

(i) In any Section whilst under suspension by the Independent Tribunal.

(ii) In any Section pending investigation by the Independent Tribunal of any charge against such player unless the Independent Tribunal otherwise orders.

(iii) Where the Board has determined that such player is ineligible pursuant to **Rule 47** hereof.

50. A Club which includes a player who is not eligible in a team by which it is represented in a premiership match shall be fined as prescribed in the Schedule of Fines contained in **Rule 129** and shall forfeit all matches in which such player played together with all scores registered by such Club in such matches. Each such match shall be awarded to the opposing Club which shall have the option of including both scores in its percentage or of not including either, but if such option be not exercised within seven (7) days of notice to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association of the offence, both scores shall be included.

50A. The AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy, the provisions of which are reproduced in Schedule G to these Rules, apply to the MPC or MDC, and WPC conducted by the VAFA.

50B. Specific criteria for VAFA Player Points

For any season, for which the VAFA Player Points budget is to be amended, the Board will advise all clubs by no later than August 31 of the previous year.

In addition to the Player Point Categories set out in clause 5 of the current AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy, there are specific categories unique to the VAFA as follows:

School Clubs

For a player to qualify for a school club as 1 point, he/they must have attended the aligned school from year 7 onwards for a minimum of 3 years.

| **VAFA Club** | **Aligned School** |
|---|---|
| Aquinas | Aquinas Old Collegians |
| Caulfield Grammarians | Caulfield Grammar School |
| Collegians | Wesley College |
| De La Salle | De La Salle |
| Marcellin | Marcellin College |
| Mazenod | Mazenod College |
| MHSOB | Melbourne High School |
| Old Brighton | Brighton Grammar School |
| Old Camberwell | Camberwell Grammar |
| Old Carey | Carey Baptist Grammar School |
| Old Geelong | Geelong Grammar School & Geelong College |
| Old Haileybury | Haileybury |
| Old Ivanhoe | Ivanhoe Grammar School |
| Old Melburnians | Melbourne Grammar School |
| Old Peninsula | Peninsula Grammar |
| Old Scotch | Scotch College |
| Old Trinity | Trinity Grammar School |
| Old Xaverians | Xavier College |
| Old Yarra Cobras | Yarra Valley Grammar School |
| PEGS | Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School |
| St Bedes/Mentone Tigers | St Bede's College |
| St Bernards | St Bernard's College |
| St Kevin's OB | St Kevin's College |
| St Mary's Salesian | Salesian College |
| Therry Penola | Penola Catholic College |
| UHS-VU | University High School |

| | |
|---|---|
| Westbourne Grammarians | Westbourne Grammar School |
| Whitefriars | Whitefriars College |

University Clubs

For a player to qualify for a university club as 1 point, he/they must be currently enrolled and studying full time or is a graduated alumnus at the aligned institute.

| **VAFA Club** | **Aligned Institute** |
|---|---|
| University Blacks | Melbourne University |
| University Blues | Melbourne University |
| La Trobe University | La Trobe University |
| UHS-VU | Victoria University |
| Monash Blues | Monash University |
| Swinburne University | Swinburne University |

Aligned Junior Clubs

For a player to qualify for an aligned junior club as 1 point, the club must have a current MoU with the aligned junior club approved by VAFA and AFL Victoria.

| **VAFA Club** | **Aligned Junior Club** |
|---|---|
| AJAX | AJAX JFC |
| Beaumaris | Beaumaris JFC |
| Brunswick | Brunswick JFC |
| Fitzroy | Fitzroy JFC |
| Hampton Rovers | Hampton Rovers JFC |
| Kew | Kew Comets JFC |
| Oakleigh | Oakleigh Youth FC |
| Old Scotch (Women's) | Camberwell Sharks JFC |
| Ormond | Ormond JFC |
| Parkdale Vultures | Mordialloc / Braeside JFC |
| Parkside | Parkside JFC |
| Prahran | Prahran JFC |
| Preston | Preston JFC |
| South Melbourne Districts | South Melbourne Districts JFC |

| | |
|---|---|
| St Bedes / Mentone Tigers | St Bedes / Mentone Tigers JFC |
| Williamstown CYMS | Williamstown JFC |

(i) In addition to the Season of Service deduction specified at Section 7.1 of the AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy, where a player transfers to a VAFA Club from an AFL Victoria Country Club, and is eligible for VAFA Under 19 Men's football at his Club, that player may receive a Season of Service point deduction where that player plays a minimum of 8 Under 19 Men's matches in each two (2) consecutive seasons.

For clarity, a player playing the below number of matches would be eligible for a Season of Service point reduction:

Season 2022 - 9 x Under 19 Men's matches
Season 2023 - 14 x Under 19 Men's matches

Reassessment

As the VAFA is unique and has alignments that are different to any other football league in Australia, clubs have the ability to apply in writing via a form prescribed by the VAFA, to seek re-assessment of an individual player points value consistent with clause 7.3 of the AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy. The reassessment request may be referred to the Permit Committee for determination.

50C. Penalties

Any club that breaches and/or provides inaccurate or misleading information to the VAFA regarding the **Player Points System Policy** that does not breach the team player points budget will be fined up to $1000.00 per player.

Any club that breaches and/or provides inaccurate or misleading information to the VAFA regarding the **Player Points System Policy** that does breach the team player points budget, that player will be deemed an ineligible player pursuant to **Rule 50** and the club will be fined up to $1000.00 per player.

## PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

51. The home and away matches of the Under 19 Men's Section shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 19 years or under as at the 1st day of July in each year or where in the opinion of the VAFA special circumstances exist, such other age and/or qualifying criteria as the VAFA determines from time to time.

52. *left blank*

53. The home and away matches of the MPC, MDC, MRC, MTC and VAFA Masters Sections shall be open to all eligible and registered players to represent the Club with which they have been granted a permit

53A. The home and away matches of the VAFA Masters shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 34 years or over as at the 1st day of January in each year or where in the opinion of the Board special circumstances exist, such other age and/or qualifying criteria as the Board determines from time to time.

54. The home and away matches of the WPC, WRC, WDC and WTC shall be open to all eligible and registered players to represent the Club with which they have been granted a permit.

55. *left blank.*

55A. The following definitions apply for the purposes of **Rules 55B – 55D**:

(i) 'Games' refers to VAFA, VFL, VFLW or Coates Talent League Boys home and away games during the season for which the player has been included on an official team sheet that has been signed by the Senior Coach and Team Manager and has entered the field of play. In the event of a "one-off" forfeit, the team forfeited to, may still complete and lodge a team sheet which shall count towards finals eligibility and shall count as a match served as part of a suspension.

(ii) 'Weekend' refers to matches scheduled for a particular home and away round, regardless of the day played.

(iii) 'Ranked' refers to the ranking of Sections stated in **Rule 55B** and the ranking of Sections as is determined by the Board each year.

55B. The ranking of Sections for Men is MPC, MDC, Under 19 Men's Premier, MRC, Under 19 Men's Divisional, MTC and VAFA Masters; and the ranking of Sections for Women's is WPC, WDC and WRC, and WTC and Under 19's Women's.

55C. To be eligible for finals (and subject to the operation of Rule 55D) a player must be eligible and registered to represent the club; meet any applicable age requirement; and meet the games qualification in the current season as stated below:

(i) MPC and MDC – a minimum of 2 games qualification for the Club they wish to represent in finals - except for VFL or Coates Talent League Boys listed players as per **Rule 55D.1 (i).**

(ii) All Women's Competitions- where a Club has multiple teams, a player cannot play more than a total of 8 games in any higher rank teams, in order to qualify for finals eligibility in a lower ranked team. In addition to the above, a player must play a minimum of 3 games in a team to be eligible to play finals for that team. except for AFLW, VFLW or Coates Talent League Girls listed players as per Rule 55D.1 (ii).

(iii) Under 19 – a minimum of 4 games for the Club in any Section PROVIDED THAT a player who has played in 6 or more higher ranked games must have played a minimum of 6 Under 19 games.

(iv) MRC – a minimum of 4 MRC or lower ranked games and a maximum of 10 higher ranked games.

(v) MTC – a minimum of 3 MTC games and a maximum of 8 higher ranked games.

55D. Rule 55C must be read subject to the following special finals eligibility Rules:

55D.1 AFL, AFLW, VFL, VFLW, Coates Talent League Boys or Coates Talent League Girls listed players

For the purpose of this rule, a listed player is defined as any player included, or was included, on an AFL, AFLW, VFL, VFLW, Coates Talent League Boys or Coates Talent League Girls playing list (other than those AFLW or VFLW players who are classified as inactive) in the current calendar year.

(i) For Men's Competitions of the VAFA. The qualification is a minimum of 5 games in the home and away season for the team a player wishes to represent in finals, 2 of which must be after 30th June (or after 1st July when 30th June falls on a Saturday) or in the alternative, a minimum of 8 games in total during the season without any temporal limitation PROVIDED THAT the player has not played more than 12 games in AFL, VFL, Coates Talent League Boys. An Under 19 Men's player may combine MPC and MDC and Under 19 Men's games in order to meet the 5 or 8 game qualification for MPC and MDC finals.

(A) Any listed AFL player, or a player placed on an AFL supplementary or rookie list in the current calendar year, is not permitted to play in any VAFA Competitions in the current season, excluding AFL Category B Rookie players.

(ii) For the Women's Premier Competition, and a Club's highest ranked team in Women's Divisional Competition of the VAFA. The qualification for an 18-round home and away season is a minimum of 5 games in the home and away season for the team a player wishes to represent in finals, 1 of which must be on or before 30th June. The qualification for a 16-round home and away season is a minimum of 4 games in the home and away season for the team a player wishes to represent in finals, 1 of which must be on or before 30th June, PROVIDED THAT the player has not played more than 12 games in, AFLW, VFLW, Coates Talent League Girls

(A) Any listed AFLW player, or a player placed on an AFLW supplementary or rookie list in the current calendar year is not permitted to play in any VAFA Competitions in the current season.

55D.2 Hybrid teams

The finals qualification for a hybrid team comprising a combination of players from more than one Club (including a Club from another competition as referred to in **Rule 46(b)** is a minimum of 5 games for that team.

55D.3 Playing more than one game on a weekend

(i) If a player plays in more than one VAFA game on the same weekend, only the highest ranked game counts for finals eligibility purposes.

(ii) If a player plays in a VFL, VFLW, Coates Talent League Boys or Coates Talent League Girls game and a VAFA game on the same weekend, the VAFA game does not count for finals eligibility purposes.

55D.4 Clubs fielding more than one team in any competition

To be eligible to play finals for the lower-ranked team, a player must not have played more games in the higher-ranked team.

(i) Should a Club have more than one team participating in finals on the same weekend in the same competition, the Rule does not apply to the immediate lower-ranked team.

(ii) applications may be made to the Chief Executive Officer to review individual cases in the event of avoiding a forfeit

55D.5 More than one team playing finals on the same weekend

Where a club has more than one Women's team playing finals on the same calendar weekend the following special games qualifications apply except for players defined in **55D.1 (i) and (ii):**

(i) [MPC or MDC and MRC playing] – the qualification for MRC is a minimum of 2 games in the MPC or MDC or MRC or MTC Section.

(ii) [MRC and MTC playing] – the qualification for MTC is a minimum of 3 games in the MRC or MTC Section, and a maximum of 8 higher ranked games.

(iii) [MPC or MDC and Under 19 Men's team playing] – the qualification for the Under 19 Men's team does not include the 6 game provision in **Rule 55C (iii).**

(iv) [MRC or MTC and Under 19 Men's team playing] – the qualification for the Under 19 Men's team does not include the 6 game provision in **Rule 55C (iii)** provided the player has otherwise met the games qualification for the MRC or MTC Section, as the case may be.

(v) The qualification for Women's teams is a minimum of 3 games for the club.

(vi) WDC higher ranked team and WDC lower ranked team – the qualification for either team is a minimum of 2 games for the club.

(ix) [WPC or WDC and Under 19 Women's team playing] – the qualification for the Under 19 Women's team does not include the 6 game provision in **Rule 55C (iii).**

55D.6 Over-Age players in Under 19 Men's Sections

Under 19 Men's Over-Age players must adhere to the Under 19 Men's Over-Age Player Policy as approved by the Board.

55D.7 Enduring Finals Eligibility

(i) If a player qualifies to play finals under **Rules 55C and 55D;** where a club has Seniors and Reserves playing in the same calendar week of a finals series, the finals eligibility established during this period will continue providing that the Senior team is still participating in finals.

(ii) This rule will similarly apply where a club has Reserves and Thirds teams representing a club in finals. It shall not apply where a club has Seniors and Thirds only participating in finals.

55D.8 Byes effecting lower ranked teams

In the event a team has a fixtured Bye, any player that played in that team in the previous round shall not play more than one team lower in rank in the weekend of the fixtured bye.

(i) Applications may be made to the Chief Executive Officer to review individual cases in the event of a forfeit.

55D.9 Best and Fairest Eligibility

A player who has been suspended during the current Home and Away Season is ineligible to win any VAFA league awarded Best and Fairest medal.

**PREMIERSHIP COMPETITIONS**

56. The Board shall schedule a competition for the premiership of each Section (all Men's and Women's Competitions).

57. Without prejudice to these Rules the Board shall be at liberty at any time to reschedule the premiership competition of any Section or Competition and to cancel any prior premiership match and may order such match to be re-played at such time and place as it deems fit provided that the eligibility of the player concerned in any re-played match shall relate to the date of the cancelled match.

58. Each premiership competition shall be conducted as home and away matches and finals matches.

59. In home and away matches each team shall be scheduled to play every other team twice provided that this may be varied by the Board to meet the contingencies of the number of Clubs represented in a Section or Competition.

60. The Board shall be at liberty on the written request of both Clubs represented in a home and away match to vary the scheduled time and or date and or location of such match provided that no inconvenience is occasioned to any other person or body and that the eligibility of the players concerned shall relate to the date the match was first scheduled.

61. In each home and away match four premiership points shall be awarded to the winning team or two to each team if the result is a draw unless the Board determines otherwise.

62. In the event of a match being abandoned by the Field Umpire the Board may, as it sees fit, decide whether any premiership points should be awarded to the participating teams and the manner of allocation of any points so awarded and may impose such penalty on either participating team as it considers appropriate having regard to the circumstances of the abandonment.

63. At the conclusion of the home and away matches the ladder shall be determined by totalling the premiership points of each team provided that where two or more teams have the same number of premiership points the order shall be determined by the percentages of the aggregate scores retained by each team for and against during the home and away matches unless the Board determines otherwise.

64. Finals matches under the Final 4 system shall comprise the first semi-final match, second semi-final match, preliminary final match and grand final match in each Section provided that this may be varied by the Board to meet the contingencies of the number of Clubs represented in a Section or Competition.

(i) Finals matches under the Final 5 system, shall comprise the elimination final match, qualifying final match, first semi-final match, second semi-final match, preliminary final match and grand final match in each Section provided that this may be varied by the Board to meet the contingencies of the number of Clubs represented in a Section or Competition.

64A. Extra time shall be played in any drawn finals match. When the final siren sounds, the players shall remain on the field while the Goal Umpires meet and confirm that the match is in fact a draw. While the Goal Umpires are conferring, the coaches may address the players, and the Captains shall toss for the choice of ends in extra time. Once the Goal Umpires have confirmed that the match is a draw, extra time shall commence within five minutes of the final siren sounding. Extra time shall comprise 5 minutes plus time-on, after which the siren shall be sounded. The teams will then change ends over without an address from the coach, and shall play another five minutes plus time-on. If the scores remain level after that period of time, the timekeepers shall not sound the siren until one team has scored. The team that scores shall be the winner of the match.

65. The first semi-final match shall be between the team of the Club standing third on the ladder and the team of the Club standing fourth on the ladder.

66. The second semi-final match shall be between the team of the Club standing first on the ladder and the team of the Club standing second on the ladder.

67. The preliminary final match shall be between the loser of the second semi-final match and the winner of the first semi-final match.

68. The grand final match shall be between the winner of the second semi-final match and the winner of the preliminary final match.

69. The premiership shall be awarded to the winner of the grand final match.

70. All matches played under the control of the Association shall be played under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football as adopted by the Association, together with the power to the Field Umpire to order from the field for such time as the Umpire thinks fit, any player who has been reported by the Umpire for an offence under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football, and may be replaced under the VAFA Yellow, Red and Black Card System. In the event of such player refusing to leave the field the match shall be awarded to the opposing side, and such conduct shall constitute a reportable offence on the part of such player.

70A. If a player is ordered off by reason of an audible obscenity offence and replaced by another player, the name of the offending player shall be recorded by the Field Umpire on an Incident Report Sheet to be forwarded to the Association. If a player commits a second such offence, the Association shall advise the player's Club in writing of such fact and of the fact that if the player commits a further such offence in the same season, the player shall be suspended for 2 matches. If the player commits a third such offence in the same season, they shall automatically be suspended for 2 matches.

71. Four (4) interchange players shall be permitted in MPC, MDC, and MRC Sections; six (6) in WDC, WTC, Premier B Women's, MTC, VAFA Masters and Under 19 Sections matches; and five (5) interchange players in WPC and WRC Sections matches in home and away and finals.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLUBS IN PREMIERSHIP MATCHES

72. Each Club represented in each premiership match of the men's competitions and women's competitions of the VAFA shall be responsible to:

(i) Ensure the team to take the field to represent the Club consists of at least fourteen players, with the exception of the WRC, WDC and WTC as set out in Schedule F of these Rules.

(ii) Ensure each player in the team representing the Club shall wear the uniform of the Club as approved by the Board from time to time together with a number which shall differ from all numbers worn by other members of the team in the same match. Uniforms shall be of a make prescribed by the Board. Any Club which desires to alter its uniform shall make application to the Board for approval of such alteration.

(iii) Ensure that in the event of there being a clash of uniforms (per the VAFA Clash Jumper Policy as determined by the CEO of the Association) between two competing teams, the team of the visiting Club shall wear a distinctively different uniform approved by the Chief Executive Officer of the Association.

(iv) For the purpose of sub-rule (iii), in the finals matches, the visiting team shall be:

(A) in the grand final, the team which did not win the second semi-final;

(B) in all other finals matches, the club finishing lower on the ladder at the end of the home and away matches.

(v) Ensure that each player in the team representing the Club shall wear approved colour shorts when the Club is drawn to play at home and approved white shorts when the Club is drawn to play away (except in the WPC, WRC, WDC, Under 19 Women's, and WTC where the wearing of white shorts is not required). If there is not a clash, the Board may on application in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, permit a club to wear its approved colour home shorts when drawn to play away.

(A) For MDRC and MTC matches, the Field Umpire will action a boundary ball up. Boundary throw ins/boundary umpires will not be required in these competitions.

(vi) Ensure that each interchange player in the team representing the Club is prepared in all respects before taking the field to replace a player.

(vii) Ensure it has operating and active officials comprising Team Manager, Timekeeper, Runner, Goal and Boundary Umpires, Level 1 accredited Sports Trainer or equivalent, and Water Carriers who can execute the tasks to the required standard. In the case of Reserve and Third Sections matches the Runner, Timekeeper, Level 1 accredited Sports Trainer or equivalent, and Goal and Boundary Umpires shall not be drawn from a selected player from the Reserve or Third side, on the day of the match..

(viii) Ensure that at least 5 minutes before the start of all games, the listed officials are presented and introduced to the Field Umpire of the day.

(ix) Ensure that the Boundary and Goal Umpires enter the playing arena with the Field Umpire and walk to the centre of the Oval, and from there take up their respective position, both prior to the commencement of play and following the half time interval.

(x) Provide an efficient boundary umpire dressed in VAFA approved shorts, VAFA approved shirt, and VAFA approved socks. Where no Boundary Umpire is appointed by the Umpire Manager or is in attendance at the time appointed for the match to commence, provided that the Field Umpire shall adjudge the efficiency of the umpire so appointed and may order a replacement.

(xi) Provide an efficient Goal Umpire dressed in a white coat, if no Goal Umpire is appointed by the Umpire Committee or is in attendance at the time appointed for the match to commence, provided that the Field Umpire shall adjudge the efficiency of the umpire so appointed and may order a

replacement. The Goal Umpire shall keep a record of all goals and behinds kicked in the match in the manner and on the form prescribed by the Board from time to time.

(xii) Ensure that the timekeeper appointed under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football shall keep a record of all goals and behinds kicked in the match in the manner and on the form prescribed by the Board from time to time.

(xiii) Ensure the Runner, Level 1 accredited Sports Trainer or equivalent and all First Aid officials wear the approved uniform. Ensure the team representing the Club shall take no more time between the end of the first quarter and the start of the second quarter than is prescribed from time to time by the Board.

(xiv) Ensure the playing members of the team representing the Club are on the field and prepared in all respects to commence the match at the time appointed by the Board.

(xv) Ensure the playing members of the team are on the field and prepared in all respects to re-commence the match immediately after the intervals set by the Board to be taken between the end of the second quarter and the start of the third quarter and the end of the third quarter and the start of the fourth quarter.

(xvi) Give to the Field Umpire prior to the game the completed Team Sheet as per the VAFA match Day Requirements prescribed by the Board from time to time. Any amendments to players or officials, or playing numbers after the Team Sheets are submitted, need to be communicated to the Umpires.

(xvii) Provide an official of the club to wait on the Field Umpire at the conclusion of the match for the purpose:

(A) Giving to the Field Umpire the record of the scores kept by the timekeeper and the Goal Umpire if the Goal Umpire has been appointed by the Club.

(B) Acknowledging any report concerning any player of either team made by a competent person

(xviii) Ensure the results, statistics and team sheets of the match are presented in accordance with the requirements to Schedule "C" to these Rules.

(xix) If agreed by both clubs in advance, and VAFA has been notified before the day of the match by the home team, the home team may supply supporting match day roles such as timekeeper, umpire escort, boundary umpires, field, and goal umpires for the away team. In such instances, no applicable fines will be issued to the away team.

73. The home Club in each home and away match shall be responsible to:

(i) Ensure the boundary, kick off lines, centre square and interchange area are clearly defined. At a ground where there is no fence to enclose the ground or any part of the ground, there must be a second line marked four metres outside the marked boundary line save behind the goals, where the second line shall be not less than five metres from the goal line. At a ground that is fully enclosed by a fence, the distance between the marked boundary line and the fence at all points must be at least three metres.

(ii) Provide a training table, for the sole use of the visiting Club.

(iii) Provide six goal flags of white material each not less than 50 centimetres square and to fit the right goal post with suitable brackets to hold two such flags and to fit the left goal post with a suitable bracket to hold one such flag.

(iv) Provide two balls in a suitable condition (Size 4 Sherrin Match Balls in good condition, or like balls of a make approved by the Board, for matches in women's competitions; and Size 5 Sherrin Match Balls in good condition, or like balls of a make approved by the Board, for matches in men's competitions), both of which shall be of a make approved by the Board, to be submitted for the choice of the visiting team provided that at the discretion of the field umpire and both captains if the chosen

ball is likely to be unduly affected by the ground or weather conditions a fresh ball in a suitable condition may be used in each subsequent quarter to the first, or, alternatively, the chosen ball in the first and third quarters and another used ball in suitable condition in the second and fourth quarters and further provided that:

(A) New balls shall be submitted for choice at the MPC, MDC, WPC and WDC matches;

(B) Used balls may be submitted for choice at Under 19 Men's, MRC, MTC, and VAFA Masters Section matches provided they are in suitable condition; and

(C) Used balls may be submitted for choice at matches in the WRC, WDC, Under 19 Women's, and the WTC provided they are in a suitable condition.

(v) Provide a suitable scoreboard.

(vi) Ensure the correct scores are displayed on the scoreboard throughout the match.

(vii) Provide a suitable and audible device to enable the timekeepers to indicate clearly to the Field Umpire the commencement and conclusion of each quarter.

(viii) Provide a suitable ball to replace a ball which is lost or becomes unfit for use during a match.

(ix) Provide a first-aid stretcher available for use if required

(x) Provide appropriate and suitable seating for the coach, interchange players and their support staff, such support staff not to exceed four (4) in number.

(xi) Display a "No Alcohol" sign, the materials, dimensions and contents of which shall be as prescribed by the Board.

74. Each Club represented in a finals match shall be responsible to:

Provide one new ball (Size 4 Sherrin Match Balls, or like balls of a make approved by the Board, for women's matches; and Size 5 Sherrin Match Balls, or like balls of a make approved by the Board, for men's matches).

(i) Provide a suitable and laundered white coat for use by the Goal Umpire.

(ii) Provide a stretcher suitable for carrying a player from the field.

75. In each finals match, other than a grand final, the Club finishing in the higher position on the premiership ladder at the conclusion of the home and away matches, and in a grand final, the winner of the second semi-final, shall:

(i) Have first choice of change rooms.

(ii) Provide six goal flags of white material not less than fifty (50) centimetres square.

(iii) Provide suitable numbers for use on the scoreboard throughout the match.

(iv) Ensure the correct scores are displayed on the scoreboard throughout the match.

(v) Provide a suitable and audible device to enable the timekeepers to indicate clearly to the field umpire the commencement and conclusion of each quarter.

76. At the conclusion of each finals match the winning club shall have the right to select which of the two balls provided it shall retain.

77. At the conclusion of each finals match which is required to be replayed each club shall retain the ball provided by such Club.

78. The efficiency of a Boundary Umpire or a Goal Umpire appointed by a club represented in a premiership match may be disputed by only the Captain of either team represented in such match.

79. The disputed efficiency of a Boundary Umpire or Goal Umpire in a premiership match shall be adjudged by the Field Umpire of the match who may order such umpire to be removed and/or replaced and shall report the dispute and their ruling on the back of either team sheet.

80. The suitability of any item to be provided by either club represented in a premiership match may be disputed by only the Captain of either team represented in such match.

81. The disputed suitability of any item in a premiership match shall be adjudged by the Field Umpire who shall report the dispute and any ruling they may deliver on the back of either team sheet.

82. The Field Umpire shall be at liberty to declare unsuitable any item provided by either Club in a premiership match and shall report any ruling they may deliver on the back of either team sheet.

83. Ensure that no more than ten (10) coaches and/or support staff are present on the coaches' bench at any one time.

## GROUNDS AND NIGHT MATCHES

83. A home Club failing to secure the ground originally scheduled for the date and time of the match shall in lieu thereof procure another suitable ground and shall notify the Chief Executive Officer of the Association and the opposing Club not later than 5.00pm on the Wednesday prior to the match of the location of such ground. In the event of the Club failing to secure a ground for the originally scheduled date and time of the match such match shall be forfeited to the opposing Club subject to the discretion of the Association.

84. If either Captain considers that a ground is unfit for play, and if the Field Umpire is in agreement, the Home Club shall be requested by the Umpire to rectify the issue, if the issue is unable to rectified up to the captain's standard within 30 minutes of the scheduled commencement time, the game shall be abandoned. The Field Umpires shall report the circumstances in which the game has been abandoned to the Chief Executive Officer.

If, within 30 minutes of the time prescribed for the commencement of the match and the Captains are in agreement, the match may be played on an alternative ground. The Captains, in consultation with the Field Umpires, shall decide the suitability of such alternative.

85. If a match is abandoned in accordance with **Rule 84**, the Board shall determine how the premiership points for the game shall be allocated.

## CONDUCT OF NIGHT MATCHES

86. Intentionally left blank.

86A. The VAFA may fixture night matches.

86B. A Club wishing to conduct a night match must:

(i) comply with the VAFA's Night Match Policy as well as the Australian Standard – Sports Lighting (AS 2560.2.3-2007) for football (all codes); and

(ii) demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that the lights at the proposed venue have an average minimum lux level of 100 lux.

86C. Where a light tower ceases to operate in the course of a night match:

(i) The Field Umpires shall stop the match and direct the timekeepers to apply time on and record the time the match ceased;

(ii) All umpires and players are permitted to leave the playing surface.

(iii) The Field Umpires, a home team representative and the team Captains shall meet. The home team representative will advise as to the ability to re-commence play.

86D. If the match does not recommence within the thirty minutes from the recorded time the match ceased, the Field Umpires shall terminate the match.

86E. Where a match is unable to commence or is terminated before the scheduled end due to light failure, the Board in its absolute discretion may determine the result or order the match be replayed at such time and place as it sees fit.

86F. If the match is to recommence within the thirty-minute period:

(i) the Field Umpires shall direct both teams to enter the playing surface whereby a ten-minute warm up period is permitted.

(ii) Play will recommence from the time when the match ceased.

86G. Where the light continues to fail or is poor after the match has re-commenced this procedure will be repeated.

## FORFEITURES

87. A Club which forfeits a premiership match on the day in which it is due to be represented by a MPC or MDC team Senior Section team shall be deemed to have forfeited any MRC Reserve Section premiership match such Club has played or shall be due to play on the same weekend day provided that such Club shall have the right to appeal to the Board within two (2) fourteen (14) days of such MRC Reserve Section match against such penalty forfeiture. .

(i) A Club which forfeits a premiership match on the day in which it is due to be represented by it's highest ranked Women's team shall be deemed to have forfeited any next lowest ranked Women's premiership match due to play on the same weekend. Such Club shall have the right to appeal to the Board within two (2) days of lower ranked match against such penalty forfeiture.

(ii) A Club which forfeits a premiership match on the day in which it is due to be represented by an WDC, Under 19 Men's, or MTC team shall be deemed to have forfeited any lower-ranked premiership match such Club has played or shall be due to play on the same weekend in that Competition. Such Club shall have the right to appeal to the Board within two (2) days of such Under 19 Men's or MTC match against such penalty forfeiture.

88. The Board shall be permitted on appeal to rule that the results and scores of a lower-ranked Reserve Section premiership match forfeited under penalty as aforesaid are to stand when reasonable evidence can be shown that the forfeiture of the higher-ranked Senior Section premiership match was due to unforeseen circumstances.

89. A Club which has forfeited a premiership match in any competition under penalty shall be fined as prescribed in the Schedule of Fines contained in **Rule 129** hereof and the score registered by such Club in such match shall be voided. Such match shall be awarded to the opposing Club which shall have the option of including both scores in its percentage or of not including either but if such option is not exercised within seven (7) days of notice to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association, both scores shall be included.

90. A Club which forfeits a premiership match in any competition shall be fined as prescribed in **Rule 129** hereof.

91. In the event of a forfeit in any Section:

(i) the percentage of each team in respect of the forfeited match shall be determined as follows:

(ii) the team forfeiting shall receive the average score of the winning sides of that Section in the round in which the forfeiture occurs as their points against and no points for;

(iii) the team forfeited to, shall receive the average score of the winning sides of that Section in the round in which the forfeiture occurs as their points for and the average score of the losing teams for their points against. This will include zero points for the team that forfeited.

(iv) The team forfeited to, shall receive four premiership points.

(v) The team forfeited to, may still complete and lodge a team sheet which shall count towards finals eligibility and shall count as a match served as part of a suspension.

(vi) If a team be removed or withdraws from a Section causing an uneven number of byes for competing teams, the ladder shall be determined by a match ratio calculation which reflects the number of wins by each team against the number of matches played by each team.

92. In the event that any team of a Club forfeits three times in any Section in any one season, the Club shall be required to attend before the Board of the Association to show cause why its participation in that Section should not be terminated.

## UMPIRING & FOOTBALL SUB-COMMITTEE

93. The quorum for all meetings of the Football Sub-Committee shall be two members.

94The Umpire Operations Manager shall be responsible to the Association to appoint all Field Umpires for all matches under the control of the Association and such Boundary or Goal Umpires as the number of available persons permits.

95. The Umpire Operations Manager shall be responsible to prescribe the form in which each Club may report the standard of management by the Field Umpire of each premiership match in which such Club is represented.

96. *left blank*

97. The field umpire appointed for a premiership match shall be responsible to

(i) Report to the Association all known or apparent offences by any player or persons or Club against these Rules and/or the AFL's Laws of Australian Football as adopted by the Association from time to time.

(ii) Make available the report or reports required by the Association made in accordance with Clause (i) of this Rule to the official from each Club who should wait on the umpire in accordance with the requirements of these Rules.

(iii) Have available team sheets of the competing teams for inspection by officials representing such competing teams.

98. The scores of each premiership match shall be recorded by both Goal Umpires and both Timekeepers and the official scores of such match shall be those of the Goal Umpires provided that such scores are in agreement, or that of the majority of such officials when there is a discrepancy in the scores recorded by the Goal Umpires.

99. No Boundary or Goal Umpire shall be permitted to coach or advise a team by signal or word of mouth.

## INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL

100. **General power to lay reports**: The President, Vice Presidents, and Chief Executive Officer of the Association together with all Umpires appointed and paid by or on behalf of the Association shall

be competent to report players of any team for offences against the AFL's Laws of Australian Football if they believe in good faith that the player has committed such a reportable offence or offences. The Independent Video Review Officer (VRO) shall on behalf of the Association recommend to the VAFA to report a player if they believe in good faith that the player has committed a reportable offence or offences against the AFL's Laws of Australian Football provided that any report which such competent persons may make of an offence or offences by any player or players shall be in writing and where appropriate given to the Field Umpire to obtain acknowledgement by the official of each club as required by these Rules. Where the umpires have laid a report on match day, it is a requirement that both Team Managers attend the umpire's room within 15 minutes of the completion of the match to ascertain if any reports have occurred during the match.

100A. **Video reports initiated by the Independent Video Review Officer (VRO)**: A video report shall be in writing and made to Clubs not later than 2.00pm under normal operating circumstances on the Monday following completion of the match.

100B. **Video reports initiated by Clubs:** A recommendation by the Independent VRO of the Association as referred to in **Rule 100** may also be made following a written request from one of the competing Clubs to review a video or other recording of the match or part thereof, if the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative considers the recording and any other evidence presented warrants a report of any player being made. In making their decision, the Independent VRO may make or cause to be made such other enquiries as they consider fit. A Club's request must be made to the Association by not later than 12:00pm on the Monday following completion of the match and shall be accompanied by a prescribed video review fee of $350. This is to cover administration costs associated with the seriousness of such reports made by Clubs. The Club shall at the same time also provide the other competing Club with a copy of its request and the recording. The Independent VRO will consider the request as expeditiously as possible, but without being bound by any specific time limit for making any report. The administration fee of $350 shall be refunded in full if the player is found guilty of committing a reportable offence in accordance with the AFL's Laws of Australian Football.

100C. Any player reported on match day has until 12:00pm on the Monday following the match to advise the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative of their request to contest the charge or accept an early plea. For all video reports, clubs must inform the VAFA by no later than 12:00pm on the Tuesday following the match of their request to contest the charge or accept an early plea. Failure to notify the VAFA by the applicable deadline will result in the prescribed penalty being applied.

100D. Any Club (whether a player or other member of the Club is implicated in a report or not) which possesses, or has access to, video or other footage of the incident or conduct the subject of a report or proposed report must provide to the VAFA, upon request and within the time specified, such video or footage to be used by the Independent VRO and/or at the Independent Tribunal hearing. If a Club fails to comply with this Rule 100D:

(i) the Club will be fined the sum as prescribed in Rule 129 hereof; and

(ii) the relevant video or other footage cannot be presented by any Club at the Independent Tribunal hearing.

For the purposes of this Rule 100D, but without limiting Rule 100D, a Club will be deemed to be in possession of, or having access to, the relevant video or other footage if:

(iii) any of its players, coaches, office bearers or members has possession of, or access to, the video or footage; or

(iv) the Club (or any person mentioned in sub-paragraph 100D (iii)) has organised for, paid for, or otherwise facilitated the video or footage being taken.

For the avoidance of doubt, the provision of the relevant video or other footage under this Rule 100D is subject to any legal reason preventing its provision to VAFA.

101. Valid reports by competent persons of an offence or offences against the AFL's Laws of Australian Football by any player or players in any team in any premiership match shall be heard by the Independent Tribunal, together with all matters referred to the Independent Tribunal following an investigation pursuant to Rule 125.

102. The Independent Tribunal shall so far as practicable adopt the procedures set out in Schedule A to these Rules but where such procedure and practice is not practicable in the circumstances the Independent Tribunal shall regulate its own procedure and no decision of the Independent Tribunal shall be invalidated by reason of a procedure not being followed.

103. The Independent Tribunal shall be permitted to adjourn any hearings of any charges from time to time and deal as it deems fit with any player found guilty of such charges and with any player found guilty of deliberately giving false or misleading evidence relating thereto or any player failing without reasonable excuse to attend at any hearing of the Independent Tribunal.

104. The Independent Tribunal on imposing any penalty for an offence or offences against the AFL's Laws of Australian Football shall impose a penalty which is not less than the penalty prescribed by **Rule 107** of these rules.

(i) a guilty verdict in cases in which a concussion has occurred a period of suspension cannot be less than 3-matches.

105. A player of a Club reported for an offence or offences in respect of which a penalty is prescribed pursuant to **Rule 107** hereof may request to the Association that a prescribed penalty be imposed upon them without the necessity of a Tribunal hearing.

105A. If a reported player:

(i) requests in accordance with **Rule 105** to the imposition of the prescribed penalty, and so advises the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative by 12.00pm on the Monday following the match (for match day reports) or 12.00pm on the Tuesday following the match (for any video report) in which a player was reported, the penalty shall be one week less than the prescribed penalty;

(ii) is required to attend the Tribunal because the reportable offence for which they were reported is within the charges in Part (ii) "Charges MUST be heard by Independent Tribunal" of Schedule "D", the minimum penalty that may be imposed on such player shall be one week less than the prescribed penalty for such offence if they plead guilty.

(iii) has any Tribunal suspension history from the previous year or season cannot in accordance with **Rule 105** request to having a prescribed penalty pursuant to **Rule 107** imposed upon them and is required to attend the Independent Tribunal.

105B. Any player that has been suspended in the previous year or season and attends an Independent Tribunal hearing, if pleading guilty or found guilty, cannot be offered the prescribed penalty reduction.

106. Notwithstanding the request of a reported player to the imposition of a prescribed penalty upon them as aforesaid, the person making the report, or the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Amateur Football Association or their authorised representative shall be entitled in their absolute discretion to require that the report be heard and determined before the Independent Tribunal.

107. The penalties prescribed for reportable offences against the AFL's Laws of Australian Football as adopted by the Association from time to time shall be those set out in Schedule D.

107A. If the offended player or club of a report considers the reportable offence serious enough to require the matter be heard and determined at an Independent Tribunal hearing, they must notify the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative in writing by 12.00pm on the Monday following the match (for match day reports) and 12.00pm on the Tuesday following the match (for all

video reports) accompanied by a bond of $350 (such bond to be refunded at the discretion of the Chair of the Independent Tribunal).

108. The report completed electronically and pursuant to the provisions of **Rule 100** hereof shall be in the form of Schedule D to these Rules.

109. The alleged reportable offence or offences shall be indicated via the electronic system by the reporting umpire completing all relevant fields detailing the alleged reportable offence or offences.

110. A player reported by a competent person for a reportable offence or offences in a premiership match who is not able to be present or available online via phone call at the time appointed for an Independent Tribunal hearing may submit a request to the VAFA:

(i) The player's consent to stand down from representing their Club in a playing and/or official capacity until such time as they are able to appear before the Independent Tribunal at a subsequent hearing.

(ii) The player's consent for such Independent Tribunal to hear and determine the reportable offence or offences in their absence.

(iii) Such relevant information as in the opinion of such player would be of benefit to such Independent Tribunal to reach a decision.

110A. If the reporting umpire is not able to be present or available online via phone call at the time appointed for the Independent Tribunal hearing the hearing shall be postponed until such umpire is able to attend.

110B. In the event the other person named (alleged victim) is not able to be present or available online or via phone call at the time appointed for the Independent Tribunal and does not provide a medical certificate, the club shall be fined as per rule 129(i).

PROVIDED

(i) If the umpire is unable to so attend, the reported player shall be eligible to represent their club until the hearing is conducted;

(ii) The hearing shall not be postponed for a period longer than the second Wednesday provided that there are concurrent matches and no bye in the period after the date after the date upon the game in which the report was made.

111. A player reported by a competent person for a reportable offence or offences in a premiership match not being present at the time appointed for the Independent Tribunal hearing and failing to submit a request as per Rule 110 relating to the absence as required by these Rules shall be considered in contempt of the Independent Tribunal which shall be at liberty to hear and determine the reportable offence or offences in the absence of such player and deal as it deems fit with the contempt and the reported offence or offences provided that the Independent Tribunal may exercise its discretion to adjourn such hearings when force majeure can be reasonably shown to have prevented the attendance or the submission of a request as per rule 110 by such player.

112. Each player granted an adjournment of a hearing by the Independent Tribunal through force majeure (not their fault) shall not be permitted to represent a Club in any capacity during the period of the adjournment and shall either:

(i) Give to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative at least four clear days' notice of the date of a subsequent meeting hearing of the Tribunal Independent Tribunal which such player is able to attend.

(ii) Submit a Statutory Declaration setting out the reasons for their non-attendance which declaration shall include:

(A) the player's consent for the Independent Tribunal to hear and determine the reportable offence or offences in their absence;

(B) such relevant information as in the opinion of such player would be of benefit to such Independent Tribunal to reach a decision.

113. If a player or a Club reported for a reportable offence or offences requests pursuant to the provisions of **Rule 104** hereof for the imposition of a prescribed penalty pursuant to **Rule 105** hereof, the Secretary of the reported player's Club shall notify the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative by not later than **12.00pm on the Monday following the match (for match day reports) and 12.00pm on the Tuesday following the match (for all video reports)** in which the report was made, that the said player requests the imposition of the said prescribed penalty, at which time the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative shall either (1) confirm that the Independent Tribunal will meet to impose the prescribed penalty without a formal hearing or (2) advise that pursuant to **Rule 105** a formal hearing will take place before the Independent Tribunal notwithstanding the request of the reported player to a prescribed penalty being imposed upon them.

114. If the reported player requests the imposition of a prescribed penalty and provided that the person making the report or the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative does not decide pursuant to **Rule 104** that it is appropriate in all the circumstances that a formal hearing take place before the Independent Tribunal, the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative will record in its Minutes of Proceedings full details of the report and the prescribed penalty imposed in accordance with **Rule 105** of these Rules.

115. If the reported player does not request the imposition of a prescribed penalty pursuant to **Rule 104** then a formal hearing of the reportable offence or offences will take place before the Independent Tribunal accordance with these Rules unless the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative is satisfied that a formal hearing would not be appropriate.

116. The Umpire/s making the report is/are required to attend the Independent Tribunal hearing unless contacted by the VAFA Administration and advised the reported player has requested and been granted the prescribed penalty. Where the Independent Investigation Officer or the Independent Video Review Officer (VRO) recommends that the VAFA lay any charge, the VAFA may appoint an advocate to attend the Independent Tribunal hearing unless the reported player has requested and been granted the prescribed penalty.

117. The period of suspension of a player by the Independent Tribunal or in accordance with **Rule 104** shall correspond with the number of home and away and/or finals matches played by the team in which the player was playing at the time when they were reported.

118. A player during suspension by an Independent Tribunal shall not be permitted to represent a Club in any on-field capacity.

119. Decision of the Independent Tribunal shall be determined according to the opinion of a majority of the sitting Independent Tribunal. The decisions and findings of a Independent Tribunal shall be final and binding. The Independent Tribunal is not obliged to give reasons for any decision made.

120. Any person other than a player who is found guilty by the Independent Tribunal of deliberately giving false or misleading evidence relating to any report being heard by such Independent Tribunal shall be penalised or suspended by the Independent Tribunal who shall assess and impose such penalty as deemed fit.120A. An appeal from a decision of the Independent Tribunal shall be permitted:

(i) (A) if the charge against the player is for a reportable offence or offences within Category (ii) of Schedule D of the VAFA Rules under the heading “Charges MUST be heard by Independent Tribunal”;

OR

(B) if any suspension arising from a charge in the final three rounds of the home and away season or in a finals match which would prevent the player from participating in a finals match;

OR

(C) if any suspension would cause the player to have suspensions (whether in the VAFA and/or other competitions) totalling 16 or more matches.

OR

(D) if permitted by The President, Vice Presidents, and Chief Executive Officer of the Association.

(ii) if the appeal is notified to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative not later than 3.00 pm on the day after the Independent Tribunal hearing. The notification of the appeal must be accompanied by the prescribed appeal fee of $750. If the appeal is successful, $500 of the fee will be refunded.

Provided that, if the appeal is brought pursuant to sub-paragraph 120A (i) (A) the prescribed appeal fee shall be $1000, and if such appeal be successful, the amount of $750 shall be refunded.

120B. An appeal from a decision of the Independent Tribunal shall be heard by an Appeal Tribunal comprising the Chair of the Appeal Tribunal and/or other members of the Independent Tribunal who did not participate in the initial hearing of the charge or charges the subject matter of the appeal.

120C. (i) An appeal from the decision of the Independent Tribunal shall be heard as expeditiously as possible at a date and time notified to the parties by the Association.

(ii) If the hearing of the appeal is not held before the next round of matches is played, the reported player shall be ineligible to play until the appeal hearing is conducted, but any matches missed by the player shall be included in any penalty ultimately imposed.

(iii) At the hearing of an appeal from a decision of the Independent Tribunal, evidence not called at the original hearing shall not be permitted unless the Chair or presiding Member of the Appeal Tribunal is satisfied that good reason has been shown as to why such evidence was not called at the original hearing.

(iv) The appeal hearing will otherwise be conducted in the same manner as an Independent Tribunal hearing at the first instance.

(v) Decision of the Appeal Tribunal shall be determined according to the opinion of a majority of the sitting Appeal Tribunal. Any decision of the Appeal Tribunal is final and binding. The Appeal Tribunal is not obliged to give reasons for any decision made.

## ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE VAFA

121. (i) Application in writing for membership of the Association shall be lodged with the Association on or before the 30th day of September.

(ii) The Board shall take into account the following matters when considering an application for membership of the Association:

(A) Financial stability of the applicant club over the preceding three years.

(B) The attendance of the applicant before the Football Sub-Committee of the Board of the Association.

(C) The submission of completed documents as determined by the Football Sub-Committee, such documents to include:

(1) Declaration of player payments as per the Schedule H appended to the rules of the Victorian Amateur Football Association.

(2) Audited financial statements of the applicant club for the preceding three years (or such shorter time as the Football Sub-Committee determines).

(3) A list setting out the names and addresses of five Club Office bearers at the time of the making of the application.

(4) Such other documents as may be required from time to time by the Football Sub-Committee.

Provided that such documents shall be lodged with the Association at least seven days prior to the first interview with the Football Sub-Committee.

122. No Applicant for Membership of the Association shall be admitted to membership of the Association without having first served an appropriate period of probation as determined by the Board of the Association (being three (3) completed seasons).

123. The election for admission to Membership of the Association shall take place at a General Meeting held in accordance with the Articles of Association, after the Board has determined that the Applicant has satisfactorily concluded its period of probation.

## GENERAL

124. Permission from the Board shall be obtained by a Club which wishes to participate in a match on the same day that a team representing the Association is to participate in a match.

125. (i) Any protest, complaint, incident or charge that a person, player or Club wishes to be investigated by an Independent Investigation Officer appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative against any other person or player or Club shall be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative not later than 12 noon on the Monday following the match in which the protest, complaint, incident or charge is alleged to have arisen. In exceptional circumstances the Chief Executive Officer may extend the date for submission of any request for investigation to 12 noon on the Wednesday following the match.

(ii) The protest, complaint, incident or charge shall be accompanied by all relevant documents and/or a detailed description and an administrative fee of $350 to be applied to the cost of engagement of an Independent Investigation Officer and administration costs associated with the seriousness of such reports made by clubs, or if it arises out of more than one incident, such higher fee (not exceeding $350 per incident) as the Chief Executive Officer of the Association in consultation with their authorised representative shall determine. The administration fee of $350 shall be refunded in full if the person, player or Club is found guilty of committing a reportable offence in accordance with the AFL's Laws of Australian Football or in accordance with **Rules 125(iv)(A)** or **125(iv)(B)**, and the club to which the guilty party belongs will be charged $200 to be applied to the cost of the engagement of an Independent Investigation Officer.

(iii) The person, player or Club making the request for investigation shall at the same time as making the request also provide the other competing Club with a copy of its request and relevant documents and detailed description provided to the Association.

(iv) Where the Association is requested by a Club to investigate any protest, complaint, incident or charge, the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative may cause a preliminary investigation to be conducted by an Independent Investigation Officer appointed by the Chief Executive Officer. The Independent Investigation Officer shall on behalf of the Association investigate the protest, complaint, incident or charge and recommend to the VAFA to report a player if they believe in good faith that the player has committed a reportable offence or offences in accordance with the AFL's Laws of Australian Football or if they believe a player, Club or representative or official of a Club:

(A) has engaged in conduct unbecoming a member of the Association or Club of the Association or representative or official of a Club, or of conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association;

(B) has engaged in conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association.

(C) has engaged in a melee.

(v) Any resultant hearing of a protest, complaint or charge shall take place before the Independent Tribunal at a time and venue as notified by the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative. Wherever possible, hearings must be held prior to the next round of matches. A hearing may be adjourned or deferred only if in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer or the body hearing the matter the circumstances giving rise to the request for adjournment or deferral are exceptional.

(vi) Where the Independent Investigation Officer recommends to the Association to lay any charge a player may request the imposition of a prescribed penalty in accordance with the procedure in **Rules 105 - 107** where the charge is for an offence for which a prescribed penalty is available. If the player advises the Chief Executive Officer or their authorised representative not less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled hearing time of their acceptance of the prescribed penalty, the penalty shall be one week less than the prescribed penalty.

125A. A VAFA Independent Investigation Officer shall have the authority to:

(i) conduct interviews and investigations in respect of any protest, complaint, incident or charge that a person, player or Club wishes to be investigated;

(ii) conduct any investigations in such a manner as it sees fit;

(iii) inform itself of any matter it sees fit;

(v) require and obtain production and take possession of all documents, records, articles or things in the possession or control of a person, player or Club that are relevant to any investigation;

(vi) require a person, player or Club to answer questions and provide information in connection with any investigation.

125B. No person, player or Club is to provide false or misleading information during the course of an investigation.

## FINES

126. A Club breaching or failing to comply with the requirements of **Rules 72, 73 and 74** shall be notified of the offence by the Secretary of the Association and automatically penalised in accordance with the Schedule of Fines appended hereto to these Rules provided that such Club shall have the right of appeal against such penalty to the Board which shall have the power to remit the whole or any portion of such penalty.

127. An appeal against any automatic penalty shall be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association within fourteen (14) days of the notification of the offence and such appeals shall be considered by the Board as it deems fit.

128. A person who fails to appear when required before a properly constituted enquiry by the Board or by the Association may be reprimanded or penalised as such body shall deem fit.

129. (i) The fines to be imposed on clubs under the provisions of Rules 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, 50, 72, 73, 74, 89 and 90 shall be not more than the amounts specified hereunder:

| Rule | First Offence | Second Offence | Third Offence | Further Offences |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 |
| 18 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 |
| 19 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 |
| 20 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 |
| 23 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 |
| 24 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 | $10.00 |
| 25 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 |
| 26 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 | $25.00 |
| 29 | $1,500.00 | $1500.00 | $1500.00 | $1500.00 |
| 32 | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues |
| 33 | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues | $2.00 per day for each day during which the default continues |
| 50 | $100.00 per player | $250.00 per player | $500.00 per player | $500.00 per player<br>$550.00 per player in Finals |
| 72 (ii), (v) | Written warning | $100.00 | $200.00 | $300.00<br>$350.00 in Finals |
| 72 (x), (xi), (xvii), | Written warning | $200.00 per official | $300.00 per official | $300.00 per official<br>$350.00 per official in Finals |
| 72 (iii) & (iv) | Written warning<br>$100.00 in Finals | $100.00 | $200.00 | $300.00<br>$350.00 in Finals |
| 72 (xii) | Written warning | $200.00 per official | $300.00 per official | $300.00 per official<br>$350.00 per official in Finals |
| 72 (xiii) | Written warning | $50.00 per official | $75.00 per official | $100.00 per official |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | $150.00 per official in Finals |
| 72 (xvi) & (xviii) | Written warning | $50.00 | $75.00 | $100.00<br>$150.00 in Finals |
| 72 (xv) | Written warning | Written warning | $100.00 | $100.00<br>$150.00 in Finals |
| 73 (i)-(xi) inclusive | Written warning | $50.00 | $75.00 | $75.00<br>$100.00 in Finals |
| 73 (xii) | Written warning | $50.00 | $100.00 | $100.00<br>$150.00 in Finals (higher-ranked hosted only) |
| 75 (iv) | Written warning | $50.00 (higher ranked team) | $75.00 (higher ranked team) | $100.00 (higher ranked team) |
| 89 | Written warning | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 |
| 90 | Written warning | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 |

(ii) Provided the amounts specified above shall be increased to the nearest dollar on the 31st day of March by the percentage increase in the All Groups Consumer Price Index Six Capitals as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in respect of the latest concluded quarter immediately preceding the said 31st day of March.

(iii) Provided further that in each year following the amounts so specified (as increased pursuant to sub-paragraph (ii) hereof) shall be increased to the nearest dollar on the 31st day of March in each following year by the percentage increase in the All Groups Consumer Price Index Six Capitals as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in respect of the latest concluded quarter immediately preceding the said 31st day of March in each following year.

130. The penalties set out in Rules shall be applied automatically for breaching or failing to comply with such Rule referred to in the appended schedule provided that the party penalised shall have the right of appeal against such penalty to the Board which shall have the power to remit the whole or any part thereof.

131. Any party fined as aforesaid shall be notified in writing of such offence and fine by the Chief Executive Officer of the Association and any appeal against such penalty shall be lodged in writing with the Board through the Chief Executive Officer of the Association within fourteen (14) days of the date of such notification.

## PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF AMATEUR STATUS

131A. If a Club or player is found by the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel (as defined below) (or by the Board following an appeal to it from a decision of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel) to have breached the conditions relating to Amateur Status, the penalty to be imposed shall be determined by the decision-maker in question (i.e. the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel or the Board). Such penalty may comprise any or all of the following:

(i) In relation to a club:

(A) Loss of premiership points earned in the games played while the Club was so in breach;

(B) Demotion of the Club up to two sections;

(C) Loss of premiership points for the following season;

(D) A fine not exceeding $5,000; or

(E) Suspension from any or all home and away and finals matches in a season or seasons.

(ii) In relation to a player, suspension for such period as the Board deems appropriate.

Provided that, if a club or player voluntarily admits prior to 1 July 2021 that it or they have breached such conditions, the decision-maker in question (i.e. Independent Integrity Hearing Panel or the Board) may, in its discretion, determine that no penalty be imposed.

## INDEPENDENT INTEGRITY DIVISION

132. The Board shall from time to time determine and fix player eligibility conditions and policies, which shall be defined as those conditions relating to Amateur Status.

133. The Board shall appoint no later than March 31st each year an Independent Integrity Division whose role it is to investigate and report on any matter that may undermine the integrity of the competition such as the following: Amateur Status; drugs in sport; gambling; the behaviour of a player, coach, official, Director or any support Personnel associated with any Club; and the behaviour of officers, employees and agents of the VAFA.

134. The Independent Integrity Division shall be made up of persons appointed in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Victorian Amateur Football Association insofar as the Articles of Association relate to the appointment of members of the Independent Tribunal, and such persons shall not be an officer of any Club, a Player, a VAFA employee or a VAFA officer (including VAFA board member).

135. The Independent Integrity Division shall have the authority to:

(i) conduct investigations in respect of alleged breaches of Amateur Status.

(ii) A player is only permitted to participate in the VAFA as an Amateur.

(iii) The VAFA defines an Amateur as one who does not receive or agree to receive, either directly or indirectly, any remuneration or reward whatsoever (whether by match payments or expenses or otherwise) in respect to their participation as a player in the VAFA.

(iv) In circumstances where a player's Amateur Status is in question, consideration will be had to the matters set out in the Amateur Status Guidelines contained in Schedule H (as published by the VAFA from time to time).

(v) conduct such investigations in such a manner as it thinks fit;

(vi) appoint independent investigators to conduct such investigations on its behalf;

(vii) co-opt the services of other persons to provide advice and assistance on specific matters;

(viii) inform itself of any matter it sees fit;

(ix) require and obtain production and take possession of all documents, records, articles or things in the possession or control of a Club or Person that are relevant to any investigation;

(x) require a Club or Person to answer questions and provide information in connection with an investigation;

(xi) refer a matter to the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel for a formal hearing, subject to the terms of **Rule 139;**

(xii) develop recommendations concerning integrity issues affecting, or having the potential to affect, the VAFA, including its operations and competitions; and

(xiii) report any such recommendations to the Board and/or the Chief Executive Officer of the VAFA.

Conduct of Investigations

136. In respect of investigations conducted by or on behalf of the Independent Integrity Division:

(i) a Club is required to co-operate fully with the investigator(s) for the purposes of any investigation;

(ii) a Club is required to produce documents, records, articles or things in that its possession or control that are relevant to any investigation;

(iii) subject to the privilege against self-incrimination, a Person is required to co-operate fully with the investigator(s) for the purposes of any investigation; and

(iv) subject to the privilege against self-incrimination, a Person is required to produce documents, records, articles or things in the Person's possession or control that are relevant to any investigation.

137. No Club or Person is to provide false or misleading information during the course of an investigation.

138. A failure to comply with **Rule 136** or **Rule 137** may constitute a breach of the Rules for the purposes of **Rule 139** below.

Referral of Matter

139. If, after an investigation, the Independent Integrity Division is comfortably satisfied that a Club or Person may have breached the Amateur Status Guidelines, then the Independent Integrity Division shall refer the matter to the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel for formal hearing.

140. Any decision of the Independent Integrity Division to refer a matter pursuant to **Rule 139** shall be final, and without a right of appeal.

Independent Integrity Hearing Panel

141. The Board shall appoint no later than March 31st each year an independent integrity Tribunal known as the Integrity Hearing Panel whose role it is to hear and adjudicate on any matter referred to it pursuant to **Rule 139.**

142. The Independent Integrity Hearing Panel shall be made up of persons appointed in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Victorian Amateur Football Association insofar as the Articles of Association relate to the appointment of members of the Independent Tribunal.

143. As to composition of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel:

(i) It shall comprise six appointed persons who shall not be an officer of any Club, a Player, a VAFA employee or a VAFA officer (including VAFA board member);

(ii) The Independent Integrity Panel, when in session, shall comprise of a Chair and two other persons; and

(iii) The Board shall appoint the Chair.

144. The Independent Integrity Hearing Panel shall have the authority to:

(i) hear and determine any matter referred to it pursuant to **Rule 139;**

(ii) hear and determine any matter referred to it by the Board; and

(iii) report any determinations, adjudications and recommendations to the Board.

145. Hearings before the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel are to be heard by three (3) members of that body, which shall not include any member of the Independent Integrity Division.

146. Upon receiving a referral from the Independent Integrity Division pursuant to **Rule 139,** the Chair of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel shall send a written notice to the relevant Club or Person(s) setting out the following:

(i) The alleged breaches of the Amateur Status the subject of the referral;

(ii) The consequences that may arise if it is found that a breach has occurred;

(iii) The entitlement of the Club or Person(s) to have the matter determined in their presence by the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel; and

(iv) The obligation of the Club or Person(s) to provide a written response within 5 working days as to whether they wish to have the matter determined by the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel in their presence.

147. If a Club or a Person does not provide a written response as set out in **Rule 146(iv)** or does not wish the matter to be heard in their presence by the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel, then the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel shall make a determination within a further period of seven (7) days.

148. In the event that the Club or Person(s) wishes to have the matter determined in their presence by the Integrity Hearing Panel, the matter will proceed to a hearing at a time and date determined by the Integrity Hearing Panel.

149. In conducting a hearing in the presence of the Club or Person(s), the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel:

(i) must determine the matter without bias;

(ii) must give the Club or Person(s) appearing before the hearing a fair hearing and otherwise observe the rules of procedural fairness;

(iii) is not bound by rules of evidence;

(iv) may inform itself of any matter it sees fit;

(v) shall determine the procedure of the hearing; and

(vi) is to conduct the hearing with as little formality and technicality as possible, having regard to these rules and the matters before the Integrity Hearing Panel.

150. A Club or any Person appearing before the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel may be legally represented.

151. The Independent Integrity Hearing Panel is not required to provide reasons for its decision.

152. The Independent Integrity Hearing Panel shall be permitted to adjourn the hearing of any matter from time to time and deal as it deems fit with any player or club found by the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel to have given false or misleading evidence to it thereto or any Club or Player failing without reasonable excuse to attend at any hearing of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel.

153. Nothing in these Rules precludes the ability of the Board to refer a matter directly to the Independent Integrity Division for investigation or to the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel for adjudication and/or determination.

Appeals

154. Any decision of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel may be appealed to the Chief Executive Officer who will refer to the Integrity Division who will convene an Appeal Hearing. Notice of an intention to appeal a decision of the Independent Integrity Hearing Panel must be in writing and be received by the Chief Executive Officer not later than 4.00pm on the 5th working day after the decision of the Integrity Hearing Panel is notified to the Club or Person. Any appeal shall be a hearing de novo, heard by different Integrity Hearing Panel members, and the Integrity Hearing Appeal Panel shall be able to substitute its decision for the decision being appealed.

155. The determination of the Integrity Hearing Appeal Panel will be final and binding on the parties to the appeal.

## SCHEDULE "A"

## RULES OF PROCEDURE AT TRIBUNAL HEARINGS

## (EXCLUDING THE INTEGRITY HEARING PANEL)

1. The Independent Tribunal panel shall consist of at least two persons whom shall be members of the Independent Tribunal appointed in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Victorian Amateur Football Association.

2. A brief written report of the offence or offences shall be in the hands of the Chief Executive Officer of the Association or their authorised representative by midnight on the second clear day after the match otherwise the charge or charges shall lapse.

3. In the event of either or both Clubs participating in the match failing to provide an official to acknowledge the existence of the report the charge or charges may only be declared void at the discretion of the Independent Tribunal.

4. The Independent Tribunal shall elect a Tribunal Chair from amongst those of its members present.

5. Upon assembly of the Independent Tribunal hearing the person who made the report and all persons named in the brief written report shall be summoned before the Independent Tribunal.

6. The brief written report shall be read aloud by the Chair of the Independent Tribunal who shall be in possession of the team sheets and any other relevant documents.

7. The Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall ask the reported player if they wore Number ... of the ... Football Club on the day stated and shall ask similarly of the other person or persons named in the brief written report. All except the person who made the report and the reported player shall retire until recalled.

8. After reading the report the Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall ask the reported player to plead "guilty" or "not guilty" to the offence or offences.

9. Upon a plea of not guilty the Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall ask the person who made the report to amplify their written words after which they may be questioned by the reported player and the Independent Tribunal.

10. The person who made the report may now call such witnesses as they may wish who may be questioned by that person, the reported player and the Independent Tribunal.

11. The reported player shall remain present until all evidence has been presented to the Independent Tribunal.

12. Any other person or persons mentioned in the report may be called in turn and asked to give their versions of the incident and may be questioned by the person making the report, the reported player and the Independent Tribunal.

13. The Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall then ask the reported player to give their version of the incident after which they may be questioned by the person making the report and the Independent Tribunal.

14. The reported player may now call such witnesses as they may wish who may be questioned by the reported player, the person making the report and the Independent Tribunal.

15. After the person making the report, the reported player, all other persons mentioned in the report and all witnesses have provided their evidence, the person making the report and the reported player shall be given the opportunity to summarise their cases and when the Independent Tribunal is

satisfied that it has all the evidence it can reasonably obtain to reach a decision, the Independent Tribunal shall consider the case (without the presence of all parties) and record its findings and such penalty or penalties if any are to be imposed.

16. When the Independent Tribunal has determined its findings, all persons concerned shall re-assemble and the Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall state the Independent Tribunal's findings and advise the reported player of such penalty or penalties if any are to be imposed.

17. If the reported player gives consent to the Independent Tribunal to investigate their alleged offence or offences in their absence and submits a statutory declaration of their case the following additional rules shall be observed as and where applicable:

(a) The Chair of the Independent Tribunal shall pronounce a plea on behalf of the player according to the details contained in the statutory declaration by the reported player of their case.

(b) The statutory declaration of the player shall be read by the Chair of the Independent Tribunal.

(c) Such persons who are mentioned by the player whom they would have called to give evidence on their behalf shall be called and may be questioned by the person making the report and the Independent Tribunal.

18. A reported player may appear before the Independent Tribunal either on their own behalf or with a person who may act as their advocate. Such player's advocate shall be the Secretary of the reported player's Club or a person duly appointed in writing by the Secretary.

(a) An umpire may appear before the Independent Tribunal either on their own behalf or with a person who may act as their advocate

(b) Where a report has been laid by the VAFA following a recommendation by the Video Review Officer or an Independent Investigation Officer, the VAFA will appoint an advocate to prosecute the report for the Association.

(c) Where the reported player or umpire appears with an advocate and/or where the VAFA has appointed an advocate, the advocate:

(i) may ask questions on behalf of the reported player of any witness called before the Independent Tribunal;

(ii) may ask questions of the reported player;

(iii) may make oral submissions subject to the direction of the Chair of the Independent Tribunal to the Independent Tribunal on behalf of the reported player, the umpire and/or the VAFA.

(d) No person shall act as a player's advocate or a VAFA advocate who is a witness in the hearing, is a member of a police force, who is the holder of a degree in Law or who is a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of any State of the Commonwealth of Australia.19. Subject to any direction of the Chair of the Independent Tribunal, the reporting umpire and witnesses are required to remain at the Independent Tribunal hearing until the completion of the evidence.

20. An umpire's advocate shall be a member of the VAFA Umpires Association who is not a member of a police force, who is not the holder of a degree in law, and who is not a Barrister or Solicitor of the Supreme Court of any State or Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia.

21. At the hearing of a complaint by the Independent Tribunal other than a report by an umpire, the player charged and the player allegedly offended against shall be entitled to an advocate who shall not be:

(a) a witness in the complaint;

(b) a member of a police force, the holder of a degree in law or a Barrister or Solicitor of any State or Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia.

22. Any recording of a VAFA game made by or at the direction of the Association shall be available for use by both the reporting umpire or umpires and by the reported player and the VAFA advocate and shall be admissible in evidence at the hearing of a charge or complaint by the Independent Tribunal.

23. At the commencement of a Independent Tribunal hearing, the reported player, the reporting umpire or the VAFA advocate may make a submission to the Chair of the Independent Tribunal and request to have the charge or charges;

(a) Downgraded or Upgraded, subject to the reported player and reporting umpire or VAFA advocate being in agreement and/or

(b) A request to change a charge, subject to the reported player and reporting umpire or VAFA advocate being in agreement.

(c) Once all evidence has been heard by the Independent Tribunal, the reported player, the reporting umpire or the VAFA advocate may make a submission to the Chair of the Independent Tribunal and request to have the charge or charges Downgraded or Upgraded which request is to be determined immediately by the Independent Tribunal and the Independent Tribunal shall determine the Downgraded or Upgraded charge on the evidence already heard.

24. If the Independent Tribunal is of the view that the circumstances surrounding the charge warrant a penalty reduction, a penalty of no more than 1 match, for any given charge in both Category (i) & (ii) may be applied. This is not applicable if the player has any Tribunal suspension history.

25. A player or club official who has been reported by an approved representative outlined in **Rule 100** must appear before the independent Tribunal or be available via phone call on the Tuesday night following the match at the time nominated by the VAFA, unless granted adjournment as per **Rule 103.** A reported player or club official who does not attend or provide a statutory declaration may be found in contempt of the Independent Tribunal in accordance with Rule 111.

## SCHEDULE "B"

## (RULE 72 (ii) (iii) & (iv)

Register of colours of Member Clubs.

## SCHEDULE "C"

## (RULE 72 & RULE 130)

a) Failure to submit final scores, best players and goal kickers by 5.30pm on the day of the match in the Competition Management Platform

- FIRST OFFENCE – WRITTEN WARNING

-SECOND OFFENCE - $50.00

- THIRD OFFENCE - $75.00

FURTHER OFFENCES - $100.00

b) Failure of the home club to enter Live Scores during an MPC, MDC, WPC and WDC match

- FIRST OFFENCE – WRITTEN WARNING

-SECOND OFFENCE - $50.00

- THIRD OFFENCE - $75.00

FURTHER OFFENCES - $100.00

c) Failure to confirm the final list of players and officials representing the club on the Team Sheet by 10.00am on the Monday following completion of the match

- FIRST OFFENCE – WRITTEN WARNING

-SECOND OFFENCE - $50.00

- THIRD OFFENCE - $75.00

FURTHER OFFENCES - $100.00

d) Failure to submit Club's Concussion Reporting Form by 12:00pm on the Wednesday following the completion of a match

- FIRST OFFENCE – WRITTEN WARNING

-SECOND OFFENCE - $50.00

- THIRD OFFENCE - $100.00 and visit VAFA HQ for explanation and action plan

FURTHER OFFENCES - at the discretion of the VAFA

## SCHEDULE "D"

(Incorporating AFL's Laws of Australian Football and VAFA **Rule 107**)

**Category (i) – MAY be heard by Independent Tribunal**
**NB – 1 match deduction if Prescribed Penalty is accepted**

| RULE | REPORTABLE OFFENCE | PRESCRIBED PENALTY |
|---|---|---|
| 22.2.2 (a) (i) | *Striking another person | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (ii) | *Kicking another person | 5 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (iii) | *Kneeing another person | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (iv) | Charging an opponent | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (v) | *Engaging in rough conduct against an opponent | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (vi) | *Bumping or making forceful contact with an opponent from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (vii) | *Head-butting or making contact with another person using the head | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (viii) | Making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with the eye region of another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (ix) | Making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with the face of another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (x) | Scratching another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (xi) | *Tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (b) | *Eye-gouging another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (c) | Stomping on another person | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (f) | *Spitting on or at an Umpire | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (g) | *Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an Umpire | 3 matches |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 22.2.2 (h) | *Using abusive, insulting or obscene language towards or in relation to an Umpire | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (i) | *Unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an Umpire | 4 matches |
| 22.2.2 (j) | *Carelessly making contact with an Umpire | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (k) | Disputing a decision of an Umpire | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (l) | *Spitting on or at another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (m) | Attempting to strike another person | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (n) | Attempting to kick another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (o) | *Attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (p) | Making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured player | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (s) | Wrestling another person | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (t) | Pinching another person | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (v) | Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language | 3 matches |
| 22.2.2 (w) | Use of an obscene gesture | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (x) | Engaging in time-wasting | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (y) | Interfering with a Player Kicking for Goal | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (z) | Intentionally shaking a goal or behind post | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (aa) | Failing to leave the Playing surface when directed to do so by an Umpire | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (bb) | Wearing boots, jewellery and equipment prohibited under Law 9 | 2 matches |
| 22.2.2 (cc) | Engaging in any other act of misconduct or serious misconduct | 3 matches |

**Category (ii) – MUST be heard by Independent Tribunal**

| RULE | REPORTABLE OFFENCE | PRESCRIBED PENALTY |
|---|---|---|
| 22.2.2 (a) (i) | Striking another person | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (ii) | Kicking another person | 8 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (iii) | Kneeing another person | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (v) | Engaging in rough conduct against an opponent | 5 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (vi) | Bumping or making forceful contact with an opponent from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football | 6 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (vii) | Head-butting or making contact with another person using the head | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (a) (xi) | Tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg | 6 matches |
| 22.2.2 (b) | Eye-gouging another person | 6 matches |
| 22.2.2 (d) | Intentionally making contact with, or striking an umpire | 9 matches |
| 22.2.2 (e) | Attempting to strike an umpire | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (f) | Spitting on or at an Umpire | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (g) | Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire | No minimum |
| 22.2.2 (h) | Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire | No minimum |
| 22.2.2 (i) | Unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an umpire | 7 matches |
| 22.2.2 (j) | Carelessly making contact with an umpire | 6 matches |
| 22.2.2 (l) | Spitting on or at another person | 6 matches |
| 22.2.2 (m) | Engaging in any other act of serious misconduct | 6 matches |

*** NOTE:** it is at the sole discretion of the umpire, Independent Video Review Officer and Independent Investigation Officer to determine if reportable offences are category (i) or category (ii).

## SCHEDULE "E"

## WOMEN'S PREMIER COMPETITION

A. The Competition

1. The VAFA shall establish a competition called the Women's Premier Competition (WPC), and the WPC shall comprise one or more Sections (WPC Sections), and the WPC shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 17 years or older as at the 31st day of December in the year the competition is held.

2. Prior to the start of each season of the WPC, the VAFA may in its absolute discretion implement a WPC promotion and relegation competition based on the Rules identified below.

3. If the VAFA decides to implement a WPC promotion and relegation competition at the start of the season as the basis of the WPC, it shall rank the WPC Sections to establish a hierarchy of such sections (in its absolute discretion), and it shall determine the number and identity of the teams allocated to each WPC Section so ranked (in its absolute discretion).

4. At the end of the season, the team winning the premiership in any WPC Section may be promoted to the next higher WPC Section, and the team finishing on the bottom of the ladder in any WPC Section may be relegated to the next lower WPC Section.

5. If the VAFA forms the view in its absolute discretion that promotion or relegation of a team could be detrimental to the WPC competition, it may decide in its absolute discretion:

(i) against the promotion of a premiership team; or

(ii) against the relegation of a team that finished on the bottom of the ladder.

6. If the VAFA does not establish a promotion and relegation competition at the start of the season, or if the VAFA decides to terminate a promotion and relegation competition, the WPC shall operate as a Section-based competition (based on the Rules set out in this Schedule), although no team shall join any WPC Section after the commencement of home and away matches for that Section.

B. General Rules applicable in any event

7. Each team in a WPC Section shall have a maximum of 21 players with a maximum of 16 players being permitted on the field for a competition match at any time during a quarter, unless the Board determines otherwise. Quarters shall run for 20 minutes without time-on (time-on may be added in the event the umpire determines a serious injury has occurred), except in finals matches when quarters shall run for 15 minutes with time-on.

8. All teams shall have a minimum of 14 players before play can commence in any WPC match.

9. Five (5) interchange players shall be permitted in any WPC match including finals matches.

10. The VAFA shall be responsible for the organisation of matches in each WPC Section by preparing fixtures for each team in each Section for each season. The VAFA may amend a fixture in its absolute discretion.

11. The Board shall be at liberty on the written request of both Clubs represented in any home and away match to vary the scheduled time and or date and or location of such match provided that no inconvenience is occasioned to any other person or body and that the eligibility of the players concerned shall relate to the date the match was first scheduled.

12. Without prejudice to these Rules the Board shall be at liberty at any time to reschedule any WPC premiership match, including a Finals match, and to cancel any prior premiership match; and it may order such match to be re-played at such time and place as it deems fit provided that the

eligibility of the player concerned in any re-played match shall relate to the date of the cancelled match.

13. All matches played under the control of the VAFA shall be played under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football as adopted by the VAFA, together with the power to the Field Umpire to order from the field for such time as the Umpire thinks fit, any player who has been reported by the Umpire for an offence under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football, and no such player shall be replaced during the period for which she/they is ordered from the field. In the event of such player refusing to leave the field the match shall be awarded to the opposing side, and such conduct shall constitute a reportable offence on the part of such player.

14. If a player is ordered off by reason of an audible obscenity offence and replaced by another player, the name of the offending player shall be recorded by the field umpire on an Incident Report Sheet to be forwarded to the VAFA. If a player commits a second such offence, the VAFA shall advise the player's club in writing of such fact and of the fact that if the player commits a further such offence in the same season, the player shall be suspended for 2 matches. If the player commits a third such offence in the same season, she/they shall automatically be suspended for 2 matches.

15. The following other general rules shall apply to the WPC:

(a) in all WPC matches, all players in each team must wear short socks or long socks; and

(b) during any WPC match, in addition to items prohibited under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football (as adopted by the VAFA):

(i) a player shall not wear or maintain sharp and/or long fingernails, including fingernails made of any artificial substance; and

(ii) a player shall not wear jewellery of any kind.

16. Team Entries.

A maximum of one team per Club is eligible to be entered into the WPC.

## SCHEDULE "F"

## WOMEN'S DIVISIONAL COMPETITION (incorporating WOMEN'S PREMIER B COMPETITION), WOMEN'S RESERVES COMPETITION, WOMEN'S UNDER 19 COMPETITION, AND WOMEN'S THIRDS COMPETITION

A. The Competitions

1. The VAFA shall establish a competition called the Women's Divisional Competition **(WDC)**, and the WDC shall comprise one or more Sections (**WDC Sections**), and the WDC shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 16 years or older as at the 31st day of December in the year the competition is held.

2. The VAFA shall establish a competition called the Women's Reserves Competition **(WRC)** and the WRC shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 16 years or older as at the 31st day of December in the year the competition is held.

2A. The VAFA shall establish a competition called the Women's Thirds Competition **(WTC)** and the WTC shall be open to all eligible and registered players who are aged 16 years or older as at the 31st day of December in the year the competition is held.

B. General Rules applicable to the WDC and the WRC

3. Each team in the WDC Sections shall have a maximum of 24 players with a maximum of 18 players being permitted on the field for a competition match at any time during a quarter, unless the Board determines otherwise. Quarters shall run for 20 minutes without time-on (time-on may be added in the event the umpire determines a serious injury has occurred), except in finals matches when quarters shall run for 15 minutes with time-on.

3A. Each team in the WRC Sections shall have a maximum of 21 players with a maximum of 16 players being permitted on the field for a competition match at any time during a quarter, unless the Board determines otherwise. Quarters shall run for 20 minutes without time-on (time-on may be added in the event the umpire determines a serious injury has occurred), except in finals matches when quarters shall run for 15 minutes with time-on.

4. Six (6) interchange players shall be permitted in WDC Section matches and five (5) interchange players shall be permitted in WRC Section matches, including Finals matches.

5. If the VAFA establishes more than one Divisional Section, participating Clubs must field teams in the Section or Sections as determined by the VAFA in its absolute discretion.

6. The VAFA shall be responsible for the organisation of matches in each Divisional Section by preparing fixtures for each team in each Section for each season. The VAFA may amend a fixture in its absolute discretion.

7. Without prejudice to these Rules the Board shall be at liberty at any time to reschedule a WDC or WRC match, including a Finals match, and to cancel any prior premiership match; and it may order such match to be re-played at such time and place as it deems fit provided that the eligibility of the player concerned in any re-played match shall relate to the date of the cancelled match.

8. All matches played under the control of the VAFA shall be played under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football as adopted by the Association, together with the power to the Field Umpire to order from the field for such time as the Umpire thinks fit, any player who has been reported by the Umpire for an offence under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football, and no such player shall be replaced during the period for which she/they is ordered from the field. In the event of such player refusing to leave the field the match shall be awarded to the opposing side, and such conduct shall constitute a reportable offence on the part of such player.

9. If a player is ordered off by reason of an audible obscenity offence and replaced by another player, the name of the offending player shall be recorded by the field umpire on an Incident Report

Sheet to be forwarded to the Association. If a player commits a second such offence, the Association shall advise the player's club in writing of such fact and of the fact that if the player commits a further such offence in the same season, the player shall be suspended for 2 matches. If the player commits a third such offence in the same season, she/they shall automatically be suspended for 2 matches.

10. **Evening Up rules (see paragraphs 11 to 22 of this Schedule)**: The VAFA expects all team officials to understand and adhere to the 'spirit' of these rules, which is, the team that has the greater number of players available shall lend as many players as possible to equalise numbers with the other team so that all players available to participate in that match shall have the opportunity to play in as much of that match as possible. In the event both teams have full sides, the Evening Up rule shall not apply.

11. Where one team has more than 12 players but not enough for a full side and the second team has more players than the first team, both teams shall field the same number of players, therefore an equal number of players shall take the field. Exceptions to this rule apply in certain circumstances. See rule 15 below.

12. If a team begins with less than 12 players the match will be forfeited, however a match must still occur as a scratch match.

13. If during a match, a team's playing numbers drop to below 12 players a forfeit will occur and the match must continue with an equal number of players on the field for both sides.

14. If players are not offered to the team with more than 12 players but not enough for a full side, then playing numbers must be reduced so that both teams field the same number of players. If players are offered, but not accepted, then the team with the greater number of players is not required to reduce playing numbers, i.e. the evening up rule does not apply.

15. If players are not offered, the team refusing to offer players will have their interchange bench capped at 3 players. The players on the field and the 3 interchange are the only players permitted to participate in the match.

16. Clubs, particularly from the Team that requires the evening-up rule to apply, must notify the opposition team in writing not later than 5.00pm on the Friday prior to the match for the evening up rule to apply.

17. **Late Arrivals** - Should a player arrive late, that player may take the field at any time provided the following procedure is adhered to:

(a) The Team Manager shall inform the Officials of the other Team.

(b) The opposition team is to be informed when the players are ready to take the field that the playing numbers of each side are to be increased.

(c) Addition to the playing numbers on the field can only be made providing the numbers on the field remain equal for both teams.

(d) Where a head count is conducted and uneven playing numbers are evident the scores at the time of the head count shall be noted and the matter referred to the League for determination of the result of the match.

18. **Loss of players during the match due to injury or illness** - Should a player be removed from the field due to injury or illness and the team has no interchange players, as soon as practicable but no later than at the next quarter break teams should even the playing numbers. In this circumstance a player should be offered to the opposition to top up, if the team has players on the interchange or a player can be removed and the rule 16 above does not apply.

19. **Daily loan of players** - When players are loaned, the Team Manager of both teams shall note on the Team Sheet the number of players loaned. Players may be loaned on a quarter by quarter rotating basis or for the whole match as appropriate.

20. The Evening up Rule is not to be applied in Finals matches.

20A. The Evening up Rule is not to be applied in the Women's Reserves Competition in the event the club has more than four (4) players on the bench in the Women's Premier Competition.

21. Where a player is ordered off the field by the Field Umpire, and there is no replacement available, there is no requirement to even-up the playing numbers on the field.

22. Any dispute regarding the Evening Up rules will be referred to the board of the VAFA which shall determine in its absolute discretion how the premiership points shall be allocated, or order the match to be replayed at such time and place as it sees fit.

23. The following other general rules shall apply to WDC, WRC, Under 19 Women's, and WTC matches:

(a) in all WDC, WRC, Under 19 Women's, and WTC matches, all players in each team must wear short socks or long socks; and

(b) during any WDC, WRC, Under 19 Women's, and WTC matches, in addition to items prohibited under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football (as adopted by the VAFA):

(i) a player shall not wear or maintain sharp and/or long fingernails, including fingernails made of any artificial substance; and

(ii) a player shall not wear jewellery of any kind.

24. Team Entries.

(a) A maximum number of 3 senior and 1 Under 19s Women's teams, are permitted for each club to be entered into Women's VAFA Competitions.

(b) A maximum of two teams per Club is eligible to be entered into the WDC.

(c) A maximum of one team per Club is eligible to be entered into the Under 19 Women's Competition

## SCHEDULE "G"

## AFL VICTORIA PLAYER POINTS SYSTEM (PPS) POLICY

The VAFA Rules incorporate clauses 2 to 12 of the following policy:

AFL Victoria Player Points System Policy – VAFA Portal

Can be downloaded off VAFA Portal.

## SCHEDULE "H"

## AMATEUR STATUS

| | Permissible | Not Permissible |
|---|---|---|
| **Employment** | Clubs, or any person or entity associated with a club, may assist with and/or facilitate a full time or part time employment opportunity for a player, provided the terms and conditions of such employment are consistent with market rates for a comparable position. | Employment cannot be linked to the operations of the club e.g. physiotherapy, fitness/conditioning or working behind the bar or canteen.<br><br>This applies in a direct or indirect sense as defined above. |
| **Awards** | Players may receive awards from clubs and/or sponsors relevant to the following:<br>match day performance;<br>end of season eg. Best & Fairest Awards; and/or<br>service to the club.<br><br>Awards must be non-monetary and;<br>in the case of match day performance awards, not exceed the value of $100 and be shared;<br>with respect to end of season and service awards, not exceed the value of $200. | |
| **Paid non-Playing coaches and paid non-Playing Assistant coaches** | Clubs may pay non-Playing coaches and non-Playing Assistant coaches at market rates for a comparable coaching position in the VAFA. | Any paid coach is not permitted to play for any team of the Club (e.g. a paid coach of the MPC team cannot play in the MRC or MTC, or vice versa).<br>Any paid coach is ineligible to play for that club at any stage of that same season. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Playing Head Senior, Reserves and Thirds coaches** | Playing Head coach of the senior teams of each club may not be paid but may be reimbursed by the Club for out of pocket expenses actually incurred in connection with the coaching services (not exceeding a total of $2,500 per season) upon production of documentation evidencing the expenses incurred.<br><br>Playing Head coach of the Reserves and Thirds teams of each Club may be reimbursed by the Club for out of pocket expenses to a maximum of $1,000.<br><br>Where dual Coaches are employed, the reimbursement of expenses is an aggregate sum to be shared between them. | Playing coaches cannot be offered or receive any remuneration or reward for coaching or playing in the VAFA.<br><br>(For the avoidance of doubt, "remuneration" in this Guideline refers to any fee or payment in addition to the permitted reimbursement of out of pocket expenses). |
| **Playing Assistant coaches (of a team in any VAFA Grade**) | Assistant coaches may play for any team provided they do so as an "Amateur" (refer to VAFA definition above). | Playing Assistant coaches cannot be offered or receive any remuneration, reward OR reimbursement of expenses. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Interchange Players** | Tier 1 players (e.g. VFL, Coates Talent League Boys and other State Leagues) who are also registered players with a VAFA club and have nominated that club as their interchange club by no later than July 30 each year are eligible to play for that nominated club when released from their Tier 1 club, subject to Amateur Status in the VAFA being observed (refer to VAFA definition above). | Once a Tier 1 player has nominated a VAFA Club as their interchange club (which must be done no later than July 30), they are not permitted to transfer to another VAFA Club in that same season.<br><br>Any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses from the Tier 1 club which is linked to participation as a player in the VAFA competition (e.g. match payments when playing on interchange in the VAFA) shall be deemed to be a breach of the player's Amateur Status.<br><br>VAFA clubs may not contribute, directly or indirectly, to funding an interchange player's contract with the Tier 1 club (whether as a player, coach or any other role). |
| **Expenses** | Costs directly associated with playing for the club e.g. club related uniforms (excluding boots), insurance, membership, any VAFA player registration fees or out of pocket costs incurred as a result of football injuries sustained whilst representing the club, provided this benefit is available to all players .<br><br>Meals after training may be paid for by the club provided they are provided to all players and not to individuals or a specific group of players.<br><br>Expenses to the value set by the VAFA associated with a player's selection to represent the VAFA on its Tour of Ireland may be covered or raised by the Club. | Any expenses not directly associated with playing for the club. This includes the provision of services in- kind e.g. building, landscaping, professional services, fuel, other travel related expenses or accommodation. They are all examples of expenses that are not permitted. |
| **Player Sponsorships** | Players are able to source player sponsorships to offset their annual membership provided all funds are to be paid directly to the club. | |
| **Education fees** | | Education fees cannot be paid for or subsidised either directly or indirectly as per above description of the word "Amateur".<br><br>Scholarships cannot be provided. |
| **Juniors Coaching** | Registered VAFA players are able to coach football at their aligned junior club or school for a fee provided that fee is at market rates for a comparable position in a similar competition. | Appointment cannot be dependent on playing for the senior club. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Motor vehicle or other transport vehicles** | | A player cannot be provided with a motor vehicle or other transport vehicle as remuneration or reward for their participation as a player. |
| **Other football related roles** | Subject to prior written approval of the VAFA, registered VAFA players are permitted to undertake certain non-coaching football related roles at their football club and/or their aligned junior club or school., Upon production of documentation evidencing any out of pocket expenses actually incurred in carrying out this role, the Club may reimburse the player for such expenses, not more than $2,500 per season. The VAFA may request evidence that the expenses have actually been incurred by the player from the Club or player, at any time. | |

## SCHEDULE "I"

## ON-FIELD RULES ADOPTED BY THE VAFA

### 25 METRE PENALTY – Women's Competition

After a mark or free kick has been awarded to a player in any women's competition, a 25 metre penalty will be awarded against the opposing team that unduly delays or impedes the play or behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner. This was previously set at 50 metres.

### BOUNDARY THROW-IN – Women's competition

- Boundary umpires in women's competition matches may step inside the boundary line before the throw-in to ensure they are able to reach the 25 metre drop position from where the football went out of play.

- **STARTING POSITIONS**A maximum of four players from each team are permitted inside the centre square at a centre bounce.

- The AFL 6,6,6 starting position rule is not applied in the VAFA. There is no limit on the number of players required to be in each area defined by the boundary line and the 50m metre arc (or equivalent marking) at the time the field umpire throws up the football to start a quarter or recommence play after a goal has been scored.

### STANDING THE MARK

- The VAFA does not adopt the AFL Stand Rule.

- A player standing the mark when the opposition player is awarded a mark or a free kick may still move laterally or backwards, however is not permitted to move forwards until the umpires calls 'play on'.

### BOUNDARY UMPIRES - Men's Thirds & Men's Divisional Reserves Competitions

- 'Throw Ups' will replace boundary throw ins, in all Men's Thirds and Men's Division Reserves home and away and Finals matches.
- Boundary Umpires if available may be utilised to adjudicate whether or not the ball is out of play, however the Field Umpire will throw the ball up at all times.
- Boundary Umpires may be used, however there is no obligation on Clubs to provide Boundary Umpires, nor any applicable fines to Clubs for not supplying Boundary Umpires.
- Field Umpires are to throw the ball up 10 meters inside the boundary line from the point where the ball has left play.
- In the event that VAFA Boundary Umpires are appointed, i.e. Finals, the above rule will remain and the Boundary Umpires will only adjudicate if the ball has left the field of play, for the Field Umpire to then throw the ball up.

### EVENING UP RULE - WDC Competition

- The Evening Up Rule will apply to all WDC Competition matches as per paragraphs 10-22 of Schedule F

**LAST DISPOSAL – ALL COMPETITIONS**

- Introduce a Free Kick for the last disposal Out of Bounds in between the 50m arcs.

**CENTRE BALL UP CONTESTS**

- At all centre ball-ups, a competing Ruck cannot cross the Centre Circle line and engage with the opposition Ruck, prior to contesting the football.

**SHRUGGING IN THE TACKLE**

- A shrug (in a tackle) will be deemed Prior Opportunity (i.e.as an attempt to evade or fend an opponent).

**REMOVE THE CENTRE BOUNCE**

- The Centre Bounce has been removed from the Rule 13.2, umpires will throw the ball up. Noting it was rare that an umpire would centre bounce at community level.

**RUCK NOMINATIONS**

- Around the ground, the Umpire may restart play without a nominated Ruck present. The aim to get play starting again as soon as possible once the area is clear.

**INCOMPLETE MATCHES**

- AFL Law 11.3.2 Following Delay is not adopted by the VAFA.

- The below VAFA Rule will apply in conjunction with AFL Law 11.3.1 for Incomplete Matches. For clarity, this continues the long standing 30-minute delay period procedure.

- If a Match is unable to commence or continue within the time scheduled for the Match for reasons beyond the control of either Team (including circumstances where it is unsafe for the Match to proceed), the following shall apply:

    a. Match not commenced: The result of a Match which is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either Team shall be determined by the Controlling Body.

    b. Prior to half time: If a Match has commenced but is not able to proceed at any time prior to half time, the Teams shall depart from the Arena. If the Match is unable to recommence within a 30 minute period, 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.

    c. Half time & beyond: If the half time interval has been reached and the Match is unable to proceed at any time, the Teams shall leave the Arena, or in the case of half time, not return to the Arena. 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.

d. Recommencing of Play: Where a Team is directed to recommence play by a field Umpire and the Team fails, refuses or neglects to recommence play, the Team shall be deemed to have forfeited the Match, in which case Law 11.2 shall apply, unless otherwise determined by the Controlling Body for exceptional circumstances.

e. The Controlling Body may vary the length and scheduling of the intervals to suit practical circumstances.

## SCHEDULE "J"

## ATTENDANCE AT VAFA EVENTS

Each Club must have in attendance the below number of Club representatives for each event listed below.

Season Launch - 2
Awards Night – 2
Annual General Meeting – 1 (online option)
Members Meeting – 1
Club Conference - 1

In the event a Club representative fails to attend events the Club shall be fined $200 per event

## SCHEDULE "K"

## AFL AND AFL VICTORIA POLICIES

The VAFA has adopted the AFL and AFL Victoria policies included within the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook ('the Handbook') (as updated from time to time) as policies of the Association, unless the Board determines otherwise.

Sections of 'the Handbook' that VAFA Rules may be applied in place of include:
5. Player Declaration
22. Reportable Offences
24. Disciplinary Officer
25. Tribunal
26. Appeal Board Appendix