

# VICTORIAN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL LEAGUE

## REGULATIONS



*as at 12 April 2012*

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## **1. DEFINITIONS**

In these Regulations, unless there is something in the subject or context inconsistent therewith, the following expressions have the following meanings:-

<b>Act:</b>	means the <i>Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic)</i> , the Regulations and all amendments thereto from time to time.
<b>AFL :</b>	Australian Football League.
<b>AFL Victoria:</b>	Football Victoria Ltd. trading as AFL Victoria.
<b>Auditor:</b>	means the Auditor appointed by the League to audit the League's accounts.
<b>Club:</b>	means a football club affiliated with the League whose application for membership has been approved in accordance with Rule 3 herein.
<b>Delegate:</b>	means a person nominated by a club under Rule 3.
<b>Executive :</b>	means the Board of the League referred to in Rule 9 herein.
<b>Executive Member:</b>	means a Member of the Executive.
<b>Financial Year:</b>	means the year ending on 31 October.
<b>Football Operations Coordinator :</b>	means the Football Operations Coordinator of the League appointed in accordance with Rule 15 herein.
<b>Laws of Australian Football:</b>	means the laws of the game of Australian Football adopted by the Australian Football League as modified for the League, set out in Schedule 1.
<b>League:</b>	means the Victorian Women's Football League Incorporated.
<b>Member:</b>	means a member of the League.
<b>Official:</b>	includes any person acting on behalf of a club in relation to any match approved or controlled by the League or any elected office bearer of a club.
<b>Player:</b>	means a person registered by the League to play in the competitions conducted by it.
<b>Regulations:</b>	means the by-laws of the League.
<b>Statement of Purposes:</b>	means the Statement of Purposes of the League.
<b>Statement of Rules:</b>	means the Statement of Rules of the League.
<b>Tribunal:</b>	the Tribunal appointed pursuant to Rule 16.
<b>Umpires' Coordinator</b>	means the Umpires' Coordinator of the League appointed in accordance with Rule 18 herein.
<b>VWFL:</b>	means the Victorian Women's Football League Incorporated. In these Regulations referred to as "VWFL" or "League".

The appendices and schedules attached should be read in conjunction with and form part of the Regulations of the Victorian Women's Football League.

**2. LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL**

- 2.1 All games shall be played in strict accordance with the "Laws of Australian Football" as determined by the AFL, as adopted in Schedule 1 by the League.
- 2.2 Schedule 1 shall be read in conjunction with the VWFL Regulations. If a match rule is not covered in the League Regulations, the AFL Laws shall be adopted.

**3. AFFILIATION FEE**

- 3.1 Each club shall pay as an annual affiliation fee of the sum prescribed by the Executive from time to time.
- 3.2 An invoice will be issued by the Executive to clubs following the submission of initial nomination forms. The full amount of each statement is to be paid in full no later than the prescribed date on the statement. In the case of clubs failing to make such payments, unless acceptable alternative arrangements are made with the Director of Finance, no team of that club will be eligible for match points until the account is remitted in full. Percentages for any game played while ineligible for match points will be calculated on final scores submitted for each game and awarded as per Regulation 11.

**4. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- 4.1 Players of the Victorian Women's Football League must be of the female gender.
- 4.2 Players of the Victorian Women's Football League must be over the age of 16 at the time of registering to play their first game across all divisions.
- 4.3 Players aged under 16 years of age who played one or more games in 2009 may be deemed as an exception and be able to play. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Executive.
- 4.4 If a player is under the age of 16 they must wear:
  - (a) a correctly fitted dental mouthguard;
  - (b) an approved sporting helmet; and
  - (c) shin guards.Fine for breach: \$50.00
- 4.5 A player shall be eligible to play in official matches for the VWFL after the completion and approval of the official VWFL Registration form supplied by the League.
- 4.6 The VWFL Registration Form must be received by the Football Operations Coordinator no later than 4.00pm on the Friday prior to the players' first game.
- 4.7 Players under the age of 18 must complete the official VWFL Parental/Guardian Consent form supplied by the League. The VWFL Parental/Guardian Consent form must be received by the Football Operations Coordinator no later than 4.00pm on the Friday prior to the players' first game.
- 4.8 Players who are clearing from another club must first receive official authorisation from the Football Operations Coordinator prior to playing in games of the League.
- 4.9 A player that has registered with a club will be regarded as a registered player of the League in the forthcoming season until such time that the Executive determines otherwise.
- 4.10 Registered players must seek a clearance from their club to play at a different club regardless if that club nominates for the ensuing season. If the club is not contactable then the clearance will be referred to the Executive.

- 4.11 If an existing club does not nominate for the ensuing season, all clearances from that club will be administered through the Executive. If a special clearance situation arises, fee's and clearance limits may be waived at the discretion of the Executive.
- 4.12 Any player found to have participated in a match authorised or conducted by the League without the appropriate permit granted pursuant to Regulation 4 may be dealt with by the Executive in accordance with Regulation 4.14 and the club whom fielded that player may be dealt with by the Executive in accordance with Regulation 4.14.
- 4.13 No permit to play will be accepted prior to 1 February in each season; and no permit to play will be issued to any player for any season for a nominated club unless a valid application for registration and clearance is lodged with the Football Operations Coordinator prior to 5.00pm on 30 June.
- 4.14 Any club that allows a player to play in any home and away games or finals series where that player is:
- (a) not registered with the League; or
  - (b) not permitted to play with that club; or
  - (c) is under suspension; or
  - (d) is not qualified under Regulation 25
- shall be liable to:
- (i) a fine for breach not exceeding \$250.00; and/or
  - (ii) disqualification from the competition; and
  - (iii) loss of 4 premiership points for each match in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams;
- as the Executive thinks fit. The Executive may also deal with the player concerned as it deems fit.
- 4.15 Each club shall pay a player administration levy of \$20.00 per player that has played three or more games and \$5.00 per player who has played less than three games as at 30 June in each season.
- 4.16 No person shall be qualified to play for a club in any match played under the auspices of the League:
- (a) who is not for the time being a duly registered playing member of such club and the holder of a permit to play;
  - (b) who is under any disqualification or who has not paid any fine for breach imposed by any competent authority. A record of such disqualification or fine for breach (as far as known) shall be kept by the League and shall be available for inspection by all officials at any time.
  - (c) unless she is the holder of all required clearances and permits.
- 4.17 A reported player may continue to play with her club until her case is heard by the Tribunal and any suspension that may be given shall date from the date of the Tribunal's decision and the player shall be suspended in the grade in which she was reported (for the purpose of best and fairest awards). The suspended player is not permitted to play in any division of the VWFL competition whilst under suspension.

4.18 Any player or club representative who makes any mis-statement or mis-representation in applying for:

- (a) registration;
- (b) a clearance approval

may be dealt with by the Executive by way of:

- (i) a fine for breach not exceeding \$250.00; and/or
- (ii) disqualification from the competition; and/or
- (iii) loss of 4 premiership points for each match in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams;

## 5. **CLEARANCES**

- 5.1 If a club chooses to grant a clearance to one of its players then all the Regulations below may be disregarded, with the exception of 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9. Each clearance is judged individually and on its own merits. Premier division and Premier Reserves division is considered as one division.
- 5.2 No more than two player clearances shall be granted from one club across a playing division to another club(s) in any one playing season.
- 5.3 No more than four clearances will be granted from one club to another club if they are playing in a higher division in any one playing season.
- 5.4 No clearances shall be granted to players moving down a playing division.
- 5.5 In the event that a clearance is refused the player cannot play for a period of 12 months from the date of the clearance.
- 5.6 A clearance will be refused automatically if the player is unfinancial; unfinancial is defined as owing money, equipment, uniform or any other items specified by the club. The club must have receipts or proof of the player being unfinancial.
- 5.7 No club can receive more than three clearances from their current division.
- 5.8 Clubs can only receive a further three clearances from a lower division.
- 5.9 Player clearances from clubs that are promoted to a higher division in the relevant year are by Special Clearance application only (ie. from North West or South East to Premier Division).
- 5.10 Beyond the above rulings a player may apply for a Special Clearance which is to be completed and sent to the Football Operations Coordinator stating legitimate reasons why a player should be cleared from one club to another outside of the above rules. This will be considered and decided upon by the Executive on an individual case basis. Mediation may also be considered to try to meet a satisfactory agreement between the player and the club in some circumstances. A fee of \$100.00 must accompany the Special Clearance application, of which \$50.00 shall be returned if the Special Clearance is granted. Special Clearances will not be considered without payment.

## 6. **PERMITS**

- 6.1 Youth Girl players wanting to play in the VWFL must apply for a 'Local Interchange Permit'; this allows the permitted player to play for both clubs for the duration of the permit. (Maximum 5 VWFL games before a Youth Girl is ineligible for Youth Girl Finals) Permits must be approved by four parties; Youth Girl Club, VWFL Club, AFL Vic and VWFL.

Youth Girl players must not apply for:

- (a) Match Day Permits
- (b) Temporary Transfers

- 6.2 VWFL players wanting to play in another state out of the official VWFL season must apply for a 'Temporary Transfer'; this allows a permit to another club for an agreed period of time. Temporary Transfers must be approved by four parties; VWFL Club, VWFL, Interstate Club, Interstate Women's Football League.
- 6.3 Interstate players wanting to play in the VWFL out of their registered states official season must also apply for a 'Temporary Transfer' as per Regulation 6.2.
- 6.4 Players graduating from the Youth Girls Competition to the VWFL must apply for a 'Clearance' as per Regulation 5.

## 7. **SEASON**

The football season shall commence and conclude on such dates in each year and matches shall be played on such days as the Executive shall decide.

## 8. **FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS**

- 8.1 Where possible, clubs shall be organised into competitions of no less than six teams. Where this is not practical, the allocation of clubs into appropriate divisions shall be determined by the Executive.
- 8.2 Divisions will be known as "Premier", "Premier Reserves", "North West Conference" and "South East Conference". The Executive can change the names of divisions and add or delete divisions from time to time at their discretion if any or all this Regulation compromises the quality or survival of the VWFL competition.
- 8.3 Premier and Premier Reserve teams shall consist of a maximum of 22 players with a maximum of 18 players from one team being permitted on the field at any time during a quarter. North West and South East Conference teams shall consist of a maximum of 25 players with a maximum of 18 players from one team being permitted on the field at any time during a quarter.
- 8.4 A team must consist of a minimum of 14 players before play can commence.
- 8.5 *Promotion and Relegation*
  - (a) The team winning the premiership in any division may be promoted to the next higher division.
  - (b) The team finishing on the bottom of the ladder in any division may be relegated to the next lower division.
  - (c) The Executive may decide not to promote a premiership team, or not to relegate a team that finished on the bottom of the ladder if the number of teams in that division would fall below six, or if it is decided that it would be detrimental to the VWFL competition for that team to be promoted or relegated.
  - (d) The promotion or relegation of a team that was not the premiership team or did not finish on the bottom of the division will be by mutual agreement of the club and Executive.
  - (f) Rule 9.2 overrides Regulation 8.5 if any or all of these Regulations compromise the quality or survival of the VWFL competition.
- 8.6 A club joining the League shall be entitled to participate only in the division determined by the Executive with appropriate consequent promotions or relegations being made to other clubs.

8.7 To enable the Executive to ascertain the most appropriate division structure for the League, all clubs shall advise the Football Operations Coordinator no later than at the League Annual General Meeting in each year, the number of teams it intends to field in the following season.

8.8 Not later than 31 December each year, all clubs must lodge with the League (on the prescribed form), a list of all club office bearers. Fine for breach: \$100.00

## **9. FIXTURES**

9.1 The Executive shall be responsible for the organisation of matches in each division by preparing fixtures for each team in each division for each season. The Executive may amend a fixture as required.

9.2 The League shall conduct a series of 14 (or such number as the Executive shall from time to time determine) home and away matches for each division to determine which of the clubs shall be entitled to compete in the Finals Series to be arranged to decide the premierships.

9.3 Should any club fail to fulfill its engagement to play in any premiership match, the League may disqualify the club from further premiership matches or otherwise deal with such clubs as it deems fit.

9.4 Any club failing to fulfill its engagement to play shall pay all umpires expenses relative to the said fixture plus an additional fine for breach of \$50.00 as set by the Executive.

9.5 *Alterations*

Clubs desiring to conduct matches on a day or time other than that published by the League in the official fixture may do so providing the following requirements have been satisfied:

(a) a Fixture Change Request form is forwarded to the League office 5 days prior to the fixtured match indicating any alterations to time of commencement, venues or day of the published fixture;

(b) request for matches to be fixtured at night are forwarded to the League office accompanied with verification the lights at the proposed venue have a minimum lux reading of 100.

9.6 At the discretion of the Executive a fixture for Final Series matches will be developed and published prior to the start of each season.

## **10. GROUNDS**

10.1 Each club shall have a ground approved by the Executive. The Executive shall have power to compel any club to bring its ground up to the required standard set out in the Laws of Australian Football.

10.2 Any club failing to secure the ground originally arranged for a match, shall in lieu thereof, procure another ground ("the emergency ground") and notify the Football Operations Coordinator and the opposing club not later than 8.00pm on the Thursday immediately preceding the match, as to the situation of the ground.

10.3 Should a club fail to give notice under Regulation 10.2 it shall forfeit the match.

## **11. LADDERS**

11.1 *Point Allocation and Match Ratio Calculations*

- (a) In the home and away fixture, four points will be allotted for a win, four points for a team in whose favour a forfeit or walkover is ruled, two points for a draw and zero points for a loss or bye. Where a club deemed to be not financial competes in a home and away match, four points will be awarded to the opposition club.

In competitions involving an uneven number of byes for competing teams, the League shall also prepare a match ratio which reflects the number of wins by each team against the number of matches played by each team.

- (b) The League shall prepare a weekly ladder for each division and in addition to awarding points for each win, forfeit, walkover, draw, loss or bye it shall also prepare a percentage table comparing the total points scored by each team against the total points scored against each team and in the event that selection for the Finals Series is between teams with the same number of points, the team with the highest percentage points will be entitled to participate in the Finals Series ahead of a team with lower percentage points.

In the event of clubs finishing level on points for first, second, third or fourth position on the list at the end of the home and away fixture and also having the same proportion of points scored for and against, an additional match or matches shall be played prior to the commencement of the Final Series to determine the positions the clubs concerned shall occupy on the premiership list. All decisions of the Executive in respect of the calculation of the points and percentages shall be final and binding.

11.2 The scores used by the League to calculate the points and percentages for each divisional ladder shall be based upon the scores contained in the goal umpires cards.

11.3 In the event of a game being forfeited, the defaulting team shall not include the game in club playing records. The team against whom the forfeiting team was to play shall be awarded match points and shall be entitled to include the game in the records of its players. Scores will be calculated by taking the average winning score and average losing score from matches played in that division during that round and be awarded accordingly.

11.4 *Non-Completion of Matches*

- (a) Failure by any club to play an arranged match as set out in the fixture of the League from time to time shall render the club liable for all umpires expenses relative to the said fixture and a fine for breach of \$400.00 unless a satisfactory reason is received by 5.00pm on the Monday following the failure to play the arranged match.

- (b) If any match which has been started and cannot be completed for reasons beyond the control of the club or clubs, or where a match has been cancelled at the direction of the officiating umpire, the following procedures shall apply:

- (i) Subject to clause (iii) below, if a game is concluded prior to half time and the match cannot proceed within the scheduled time, the teams shall depart the arena and the match will be declared a draw. Each team will be awarded two premiership points and the scores of the teams at the time the match was interrupted would be used to calculate the percentages.

- (ii) Subject to clause (iii) below, if a game has progressed beyond half time and is unable to proceed with the scheduled time for the match, the teams will depart the arena and the scores of the clubs at the time the match was interrupted shall be deemed to be final scores of the match and shall be used to calculate percentages. The team with the highest score will be declared the winner and awarded four premiership points.

- (iii) If a match has been started and cannot be completed within the time scheduled for reasons within the control of any club, such club will be dealt with by the Executive at its absolute discretion in any way it sees fit.
- (C) If a club with two teams has to forfeit one of their teams, the lower division or Reserves team must forfeit. A reserves or lower division team cannot play if their senior team has forfeited in the same week

## **12. FINALS**

### **12.1 *Arrangements***

- (a) On completion of the home and away fixture, the clubs gaining first, second, third and fourth positions on the premiership lists of each division shall form the Final Four, except where altered by the Executive, and shall compete to determine the premiership under the system adopted by the Executive.
- (b) All finals matches shall be played on all enclosed grounds to be decided by the Executive and where a charge for admittance can be made.
- (c) Participating clubs shall be supplied with 30 free tickets (Premier and Premier Reserves division), 35 tickets (North West and South East Conference) for free entry to the Final Series matches.
  - (i) It is the duty of the club to distribute its own tickets.
  - (ii) No refunds will be made on unpresented tickets.

### **12.2 *Draw***

- (a) In the event of a draw in any Final Series game, including Grand Finals, two further periods of five minutes each shall be played to achieve a result. There shall be no break for team instructions either between the completion of normal match time and the start of the first additional five minute period; nor between additional five minute periods. Teams will exchange scoring ends of the field following the first additional five minute period only.
- (b) In the event that scores remain tied at the end of the second additional five minute period, the game will continue without signal from the timekeepers until the next score is achieved by one team, whereon the timekeepers will immediately signal the completion of play.

12.3 The Executive shall exercise full control in relation to the arrangement of the times and places of the playing of all Final Series matches.

12.4 The Executive shall be responsible for the fixing and collection of all entrances fees at all Final Series matches. The Executive may delegate its authority for the collection of entrance fees from time to time.

### **12.5 *Finals Uniforms***

- (a) The team placed highest on the ladder prior to the commencement of the Finals Series shall wear their registered guernsey and home (coloured) shorts unless this is varied by the Executive or its appointee.

- (b) The team placed highest on the ladder prior to the commencement of the Final Series shall use the home team rooms unless this is varied by the Executive or its appointee.

12.6 *Finals Eligibility*

All clubs participating in Final Series matches must be financial with the League before the conclusion of the home and away matches. In the event that a participating club is not financial, the League may at its discretion, remove all or any of its teams from their position in the Final Series matches and promote the next entitled financial teams in their place to participate in the Finals Series.

12.7 *Finals Team Lists*

All clubs fielding teams in the Finals Series must lodge with the League a list as accurate as possible showing the number and name of all permitted players likely to participate in the finals match for inclusion in the record at least 6 days prior to the playing of the first finals series game. Fine for breach: \$100.00

**13. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS TO PLAY IN FINALS AND BETWEEN DIVISIONS**

- 13.1 For a player to be eligible to play in the finals of that particular division they must have played at least three (3) games for their club during the current home and away season.
- 13.2 Once a player has played two (2) games in a higher division they must have played at least six (6) games in a lower division to qualify for finals in a lower division.
- 13.3 Any player who competes in six (6) or more matches in a higher division is ineligible to qualify for finals in a lower division.
- 13.4 If a club has more than one team playing finals in the same round, they are free to select eligible players for either team, Regulation 13.2 and 13.3 do not apply.
- 13.5 In the event that a forfeit or bye occurs, no more than 5 players that played in the higher division in the previous week can play in a lower division for that round.
- 13.6 A player may apply for a special permit to play in finals if they have not met the criteria. A written submission must be submitted to the Football Operations Coordinator at least five days prior to the game/s they wish to play in. The Football Operations Coordinator will then contact the player and a determination will be made whether to grant or deny the permit.
- 13.7 Clubs that have one team must have a minimum of fourteen players for each VWFL round. Clubs that have two teams must have a minimum of twenty eight different players for each VWFL round.
- 13.8 Players that are playing a second game must be noted with an asterisk on the team sheet to denote that they are the double up players.

**14. CONDUCT OF MATCHES**

14.1 *Match Day Players and Officials*

- (a) Prior to the commencement of each match, each team of a club shall prepare a "team list" of all players, on-field officials, runners, drink carriers and trainers, who are actively involved with the team on that day. All players are to be in numerical order. This list must contain an accurate statement of the players and their numbers

allotted for that day. No two players are permitted to play in the same team wearing the same number. Each player, on-field officials, runners, drink carriers and trainers on the team list must sign their usual signature beside their name.

Drink carriers must be noted on the team sheet with the number allocated on their bib. The team list shall be produced through the VWFL SportingPulse system.

(b) At half time of each match, team managers must hand to the field umpire of the match the original copies of their team lists. Fine for breach: \$25.00

(c) A player whose name appears on the team sheet must take part as a player in the match, either on the ground or as an interchange player.

#### 14.2 *Entering Coaching Boxes (benches)*

No trainer, non-playing club official or unauthorized person shall enter the coaches box during a match, except:

(a) Trainers and other authorized club officials during  $\frac{1}{4}$  time and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time intervals;

(i) Approved trainers when and for so long as is necessary to attend an injured player or to replace such player when such approved trainer is wearing "League Trainers" attire;

(ii) Medical practitioners, members of St. John Ambulances or other approved first aid attendants when and for so long only as necessary to attend an injured player;

(b) Umpires shall report any infringement of this Regulation.

#### 14.3 *Centre Square*

(a) Coaches are not permitted to enter the centre square while the umpires are there for the direction of the game (unless going to their position for the game).

(b) Coaching huddles are not permitted inside the centre square during  $\frac{1}{4}$  time or  $\frac{3}{4}$  quarter time breaks.

### **15. MATCH TIME FRAMES**

15.1 Unless agreed by both teams, play must commence no later 30 minutes after the scheduled start time. If play has not commenced by this time, the team responsible for the delay shall forfeit the match.

15.2 Each match shall consist of four x 25 minute quarters for Premier division; and four x 20 minute quarters for all other divisions including Premier Reserves.

15.3 Time on shall be called for interruption of play due to injury as determined by the umpire.

15.4 The umpire may, at their discretion, indicate time on for any other reason.

### **16. EQUIPMENT**

16.1 The home team shall supply two official VWFL match balls, in good condition, of a size and type approved by the Executive.

16.2 The home team shall supply and have in position, suitable goal post padding on all goal and point posts before play can commence.

- 16.3 The home team shall clearly mark the ground to specifications as instructed by the Laws of Australian Football before play can commence. The substance used to mark grounds shall be one that meets health and safety requirements.
- 16.4 The home club shall be responsible for the provision of suitable bell or siren.
- 16.5 The home team must supply a serviceable stretcher that is in a suitable position beside the boundary for the duration of the match before play can commence.
- 16.6 The failing of the above requirements therein shall be reported and be subject to the same procedure and penalties as provided in the case of a club not ready to commence play.

**17. MATCH RESULTS**

Correctly completed team sheets, match day check lists, goal umpire cards, timekeeper cards, report of field umpires, field umpires match reports, vote cards, report sheets and incident report forms must be received at the address of the Football Operations Coordinator before 5.00pm on the Wednesday following the played match. All documentation must be received in the orange envelope provided by the League and signed by team managers of the competing clubs. Fine for breach: \$100.00

**18. CONTROL AT MATCHES**

- 18.1 Clubs shall be held responsible for the maintenance of order prior to, during and after matches (includes intervals in the match).
- 18.2 A registered official of a club disputing a decision of an umpire or using abusive language or threatening or insulting language before, during or after a match shall be dealt with as the Executive deems fit.

**19. LOSS OF POINTS**

A team shall be deemed to lose 4 premiership points if:

- 19.1 The home team fails to forward the match results to the Football Operations Coordinator by the required time on a third occasion throughout the season.
- 19.2 A player signs the team sheet and is not in uniform either on the ground or on interchange.
- 19.3 A player who is not correctly registered plays in a match.
- 19.4 A player receiving a clearance plays before receiving official notification from the Football Operations Coordinator stating that they are permitted to play.
- 19.5 A team fails to comply with the Leagues conditions and time frame for the payment of registration fees.
- 19.6 The team's late lodgement of on-line results on a third occasion: this includes entering goal kickers, scores and amending team sheets to reflect who actually played.

**20. MATCH CANCELLATION – ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS**

- 20.1 If the air temperature, as broadcast on ABC radio, is below 0 degrees Celsius, or in excess of 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official VWFL match at any division, no umpire is permitted to officiate in such match and the match shall be cancelled.
- 20.2 If the air temperature, as broadcast on ABC radio, is below 5 degrees Celsius or, in excess of 30 degrees Celsius, but less than 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official VWFL match at any division, the game will be cancelled unless, in the opinion of the captains of both clubs, the game should proceed.

- 20.3 In the event that any game is cancelled in accordance with these Regulations a match ratio shall be applied to the ladder for that division.
- 20.4 In the event that a game in any division has commenced, and in the opinion of both club captains the weather conditions have become too hazardous, the game will be abandoned and the provisions of Regulation 11.4(b) shall be applied.
- 20.5 If two or more games are cancelled or abandoned due to adverse weather in the same division, the round will be declared void and no premiership points, percentages or best and fairest votes will be awarded or applied for that round.
- 20.6 If the Executive of the League, or its representative, during the review of a match, are not convinced that match should have been cancelled or abandoned or the reason for the cancellation or abandonment was not in good faith, it reserves the right to award points or any penalty as it sees fit.
- 20.7 In the event a severe inclement weather occurring immediately prior to commencement or during a game, such as lightning, very heavy rain, hailstorm or fog, the game can be suspended by the agreement by the competing captains in consultation with the field umpire/s for such time as they considering appropriate, but not for a time exceeding 20 minutes.

**21. GROUND INSPECTIONS**

- 21.1 On the day of any official match arranged by the VWFL, all players and officials must make a full inspection of the ground on which the match will be played prior to the match commencing. A representative from each club shall complete the official JLT Match Day Checklist and a representative of each club shall sign the checklist which a copy is to be forwarded to the League no later than 5.00pm Wednesday following the match and a copy is to be retained by the home club for seven years. Fine for breach: \$25.00
- 21.2 Prior to any player or official signing the team sheet for a VWFL match, an official of the club must read to the players the following waiver:
 

*"By signing the clubs team sheet prior to the commencement of or during the course of a game, each player and official DOES HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE that:*

*He/she has inspected the playing surface of the venue where the game is to be played and all fixtures and fittings thereon including but not limited to change rooms and toilet facilities, goal and point posts (and padding thereon), sprinklers, fencing, score and line markings; and*

*Such playing surface, change rooms and toilet facilities and all other fixtures and fittings referred to above are in such a condition that it is safe and reasonable to allow the game to proceed; and*

*He/she will release the Victorian Women's Football League Inc, its servants or agents and voluntary workers, his club, its servants or agents and voluntary workers from all liability for any injury, loss or damage suffered by the player as a result of the use by the player of the venue, its facilities and fixtures."*
- 21.3 Immediately prior to signing the team sheet, an official of the club is required to notify the player or official of the presence of the above waiver on the team sheet.
- 21.4 If any player or official is of the opinion that the venue is unsafe for play for whatever reason, he/she should not sign the team sheet.
- 21.5 Any player or official, who does not sign the official team sheet, is ineligible to take part in the match for which the team sheet is required.

**22. UMPIRES**

22.1 *General*

- (a) At the completion of the match the team managers will lodge with the field umpire(s) the goal umpires' score cards (where club appointed goal umpires have officiated) and the timekeepers cards. Fine for breach: \$25.00
- (b) All clubs must lodge at the League offices a Report on Field Umpire form as supplied by the League for all official matches played by no later than 5.00pm on Wednesday following the weekend in which the match was played. Fine for breach: \$25.00
- (c) The League shall appoint the field umpire(s) for each home and away and finals match.
- (d) The League may appoint goal and/or boundary umpires for a home and away match.
- (e) The League shall appoint the goal and boundary umpires and an emergency umpire for finals matches.
  - (i) Field, goal and boundary umpire fees shall be set annually based on the Executives recommendation.
  - (ii) In the event of a match not taking place because of a forfeit or Adverse Weather Conditions, the club giving the forfeit must pay all of the umpire fees.
- (f) Where a person is involved in an incident which may constitute a Reportable Offence an umpire appointed by the League shall report that person and the matter will be referred to the Tribunal for hearing and determination.
- (g) Umpires shall wear the uniforms prescribed by the League. Umpires shall be on the playing field five minutes before the scheduled starting time of each match. The team manager of a club shall notify the Football Operations Coordinator of any infringement of this Regulation.
- (h) The field umpire shall report any breaches of the Rules or Regulations by a club or official of a club to the Football Operations Coordinator.
  - (i) Umpires shall be required to attend meetings when notified by the Umpires' Coordinator. Any umpire not present at roll call may be dealt with by the Umpires' Coordinator as they deem fit.

22.2 *Goal And Boundary Umpires And Scores*

- (a) Teams must supply a goal and boundary umpire for each match unless supplied by the league. Goal and boundary umpires must be 13 years of age or over.
- (b) If a team fails to supply a boundary umpire or goal umpire, the game shall not commence and the umpire shall direct the offending team's captain to appoint players from their team, who are on the ground, to fulfil these positions. Players who are instructed to fill the positions of goal or boundary umpire shall not take part in the match. If a team fails to comply with the request of the umpire to supply a goal or boundary umpire, that team shall forfeit the match.
- (c) The goal umpires shall record the scores on the cards provided by the League and check the scores on the cards between quarters and at the conclusion of the match. A fine for breach of \$25.00 shall be imposed by the League if the card supplied by the League is not used. Any discrepancy between the scores shall be rectified as soon as possible in consultation with the field umpire. The cards shall be properly completed and signed by the goal umpires. If the goal umpires disagree on the

score, but the home team managers score is the same as one of the goal umpires' scores, this score shall be recognized as the official score of the match. Failing which, any disputes shall be referred for hearing and determination by the Executive.

- (d) Club goal umpires shall be attired in white coats. Clubs are also responsible for supplying goal umpires with a set of flags and, a pen and goal umpire cards. Club boundary umpires shall, as a minimum, be attired in an orange tops, as supplied by the League, and as far as practicable, in black shorts or pants (no denim). Any club not having its umpires so attired shall be fined for breach: \$25.00
- (e) In all matches, the home club shall be responsible for a scoreboard which shall be in operation throughout the whole game. The scoreboard must be clearly visible to the goal umpires who shall check its accuracy at the conclusion of each quarter. Umpires shall report to the Football Operations Coordinator, via the Field Umpires Match Report, any occasion by which a club fails to operate a scoreboard and a fine for breach of \$25.00 shall be imposed by the League.
- (f) For all official games, the home club is required to lodge on-line with the League the amended team sheet, final scores, best players and goal kickers by not later than 6.00pm on the day of the match. Fine for breach: \$100.00
- (g) Any club who submits incorrect amended team sheets, final scores, best players and goal kickers to the League on-line may be liable to a fine for breach of \$25.00

#### 22.3 *Official Powers*

All umpires appointed by the Umpires' Coordinator shall have the power to report players, clubs and officials in accordance with such of the Laws of Australian Football, adopted by the League from time to time and for any breach of these Regulations.

#### 22.4 *Escorts*

- (a) At all matches both competing clubs shall supply an escort for umpires who shall:
  - (i) Escort the umpires onto the ground for commencement, from the ground at half time, onto the ground to commence the second half and at the completion of the game;
  - (ii) Where the club is the home club, offer umpires cool drinks between each quarter;
  - (iii) Remain in the centre of the ground with the umpires during quarter time and three quarter time breaks;
  - (iv) Show courtesy at all times;
  - (v) Be over the age of 18 years; and
  - (vi) Wear approved League orange escort bib at all times whilst officiating as an umpires escort.

Fine for breach: \$50.00

#### 22.5 *Penalty for Assaulting*

- (a) In the event of a player or official of any club being found guilty on a charge of assaulting any umpire appointed to officiate by the Umpires' Coordinator, the club to which she/he belongs may be dealt with by the Executive by way of:
  - (i) a fine for breach not exceeding \$500.00; and/or

- (ii) disqualification from the competition; and/or
- (iii) loss of all premiership points obtained in matches in which the player played and the awarding of those points to the appropriate opposing teams.

## 22.6 *Blood Rule*

- (a) Upon a player being noticed by an umpire with blood on her, the umpire must stop the game by blowing his/her whistle and cross his arms above his/her head to indicate that the player concerned must leave the ground to be attended to. This applies to a player with blood on her or her uniform, whether it is her blood or not. The player concerned shall be directed to leave the ground through the coaches' box.
- (b) A trainer may remove any player bleeding profusely at any part of the ground for treatment, and that player must be replaced from the coaches' bench and if the player removed is to return to the ground, she must go through the coach's bench to return to the ground.
- (c) The game shall not be restarted until a replacement player takes up a position in the region of where the other player was, and the other player is completely off the ground. The replacement player can come onto the ground before the other player is off the ground.
- (d) Should umpires have blood on themselves or their uniform, they must leave the ground to be attended to as provided for.
- (e) The attention required is for any bleeding to be stopped and/or until any blood visible on a person uniform is completely cleaned up and the uniform must be replaced or washed.
- (f) This rule applies to all persons, players, runners, water runners, umpires, trainers and any other person entitled to be on the ground during game times.

## 23. **SEND OFF RULE**

### 23.1 *Yellow Card*

A field umpire has the authority to order off the field any player or official who commits "a yellow card" offence (order off - cool off), for behaviour detrimental to football.

The "yellow card" offence will require the field umpire to order off the field an offending player or official for a period of 10 minutes playing time. No replacement is permitted.

In the event that:-

- (a) A player or official is issued with two "yellow card" offences in the one (1) game, then the offender shall be reported for misconduct and consequently be deemed to have committed a red card offence.
- (b) A player or official is ordered off for a "yellow card" offence and fails to immediately leave the field as directed by the field umpire, then the offender shall be reported for misconduct and consequently be deemed to have committed a "red card" offence.

### 23.2 *Red Card*

A field umpire has the authority to order off the field any player or official who commits a 'red card' offence (order off – stay off) for remainder of the match. No replacement is permitted.

The offending player or official shall take no further part in the match and will be reported for misconduct by the umpires.

### 23.3 Order Off Procedures

- (a) Any player or official ordered from the ground will move quickly to the nearest boundary line), depart the playing arena and report to the interchange steward, or if no interchange steward is in attendance, to the coach.
- (b) An ordered off player or official's penalty time will commence from both when the player has left the field and reports to the team manager. The team manager will inform the runner when the player or official is allowed to resume playing or officiating.
- (c) A player or official ordered off is not required to report to the field umpire prior to resuming play at the expiry of the penalty time.
- (d) Failure of an ordered off player or official to depart the playing arena quickly as possible may be interpreted by the field umpire as a deliberate waste of time. In such cases, the umpire may award a free quick against the offending player.
- (e) Umpires will indicate that a player or official has been ordered from the field by holding up a yellow or red card.
- (f) When a player is ordered from the field, the team manager shall:
  - Record the time that the player leaves the field;
  - Inform the offending players' runner when ten (10) minutes of playing time has passed; and
  - When the player is able to return to the field.
- (g) It is the responsibility of the offending player's runner to seek acknowledgment from the team manager as to when the player is able to return to the field.

### 23.4 Repeated Order Off Penalties in a Single Match or Across the Season

- (a) A player or official who is ordered from the field a second time in one match shall be reported by the field umpire.
- (b) The player or official must appear before the Tribunal if a set penalty is not offered or accepted.
- (c) The player or official will also incur an automatic suspension if they receive more than one red card during a season.
- (d) An automatic one-match suspension will be incurred by any player or official receiving:
  - A second red card in a season;
  - A yellow card after receiving a red card in a prior game; or,
  - A third yellow card in three separate games; and
  - Any subsequent order offs (yellow or red cards) will incur an automatic two-match suspension.
  - The penalty will then be double for each subsequent send off.

- (e) The penalties incurred by a player sent off more than once are added to any suspension incurred at the Tribunal or through a set penalty system.
- (f) The Football Operations Coordinator is to maintain a record of all players and officials ordered off and will notify the Umpires Coordinator details of the teams from which the player or official comes, and that the player or official is ineligible to play under this ruling.

**23.5      *Zero Tolerance of Abuse Towards Umpires***

Abuse from coach and/or officials listed on team sheet:

First Offence:

Stop play and note point where play stopped.

Go over and warn offending official.

Award a 25 metre penalty from the place where play was stopped.

Second offence:

Report official.

Penalty kick taken from the goal line.

Subsequent offences (coach):

Coach will be red carded and team will be asked to replace the coach with another accredited coach. If another accredited coach is not available the game will be forfeited.

**23.6      *25 Metre Penalty***

A 25 metre penalty shall replace the 50 metre penalty as referred to in section 18 of the Laws of Australian Football.

**24.      REPORTABLE INCIDENTS**

**24.1      *General***

- (a) At the time of making any such report of any player or club official, the League appointed field umpire and/or goal and boundary umpires shall take down the numbers of the players reported and the victim (if any) of the incident.
- (b) The reporting umpire shall ensure all details of the incident are contained in the authorised report sheet. It is the responsibility of the home team manager to forward the report sheet to the Football Operations Coordinator no later than 12.00pm the Monday following the match the report occurred in.

**24.2      *Procedures***

- (a) Both club team managers shall attend the umpires rooms, twenty (20) minutes after the conclusion of the game to determine whether any report(s) have been laid during the match. The field umpire(s) will then provide both team managers a copy of the report. Failure by a club official to obtain all clear will result in a fine for breach of \$25.00.
- (b) If the player/official has been reported for an offence under the Laws of Australian Football, 19.2.2 a, b, g (i), g (x) the case will automatically be heard by the Independent Tribunal.
- (c) For all other offences, if offered by the officiating umpire, the player has the choice of applying to accept the prescribed penalties.

- (d) Where the player has the option of choosing to accept the prescribed penalty, the club team manager, after receiving a copy of the report will then have fifteen (15) minutes in which to decide whether the player/club will accept the prescribed penalty or wish the report to be heard by the Tribunal. At the end of the fifteen (15) minutes, both team managers will again attend the umpire's room. If the player/club accepts the prescribed penalty and the reporting umpire concurs, the team manager representing the reported player and the reporting umpire(s) will then sign the report form where indicated.
- (e) Should any party not apply for the prescribed penalty, the umpire will note the dissenting party on the report sheet.
- (f) The Football Operations Coordinator or their appointee may refer any report to the Independent Tribunal.
- (g) Where a player does not accept a prescribed penalty the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal. The Tribunal has the unfettered discretion to impose a penalty in excess of the prescribed penalty.
- (h) Where a player/club is offered and accepts a prescribed penalty the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that division in which the club plays, unless notification is received by the club that the prescribed penalty has not been accepted and the report will be referred to the Independent Tribunal.
- (i) Where a player/club is reported and subsequently suspended by the Independent Tribunal, the suspension will commence immediately and will apply from the next official League match of that division in which the player was reported and the club competes.

**24.3 *Hearings***

All Tribunal hearings shall proceed in accordance with the Independent Tribunal Procedure (Schedule 3) to these Regulations.

**25. BEST AND FAIREST VOTES**

- 25.1 Official League field umpires shall lodge one set of best and fairest votes in all official League home and away matches. Where two League field umpires are officiating in a match, one set of best and fairest votes will be lodged on behalf of both umpires.
- 25.2 Three (3) votes will be awarded to the player deemed by the official League field umpires as best player in the match, two (2) votes for the second best player and one (1) vote for the third best player.
- 25.3 Any player who has been found guilty of a reportable offence in a home and away match will be ineligible to win a best and fairest award.
- 25.4 The player who received the highest number of votes at the conclusion of the home and away season in each division will win the best and fairest award. In the event of more than one player being on an equal number of votes, dual/multiple awards will be presented.

**26. TIMEKEEPERS**

All clubs are to supply a timekeeper, but only one timekeeping card as supplied by the League shall be used at each venue. The home club shall supply the timecard. Both timekeepers from each club shall sign the timekeepers card on completion of the game clearly showing the appropriate details and their signature and their clubs. No person shall be permitted to act as a timekeeper unless they have attained the age of 18 years. Timekeepers from the home team shall ensure that their team manager hand the timekeepers card to the field umpires on the completion of the last game on that day for submission to the League. Fine for breach: \$25.00

**27. RUNNERS**

- 27.1 Each team shall be permitted to use one runner. The runner shall be attired in a yellow shirt as supplied by the League, and as far as practicable, in shorts or pants (no denim). Fine for breach: \$25.00
- 27.2 The runner shall be allowed to transfer messages to the players from the coach. The runner shall not obstruct the play in any way. The runner must leave the field as soon as they have finished giving messages or instructions to a player.
- 27.3 No registered player signed on the said match day team sheet can be runner for that match.

**28. WATER CARRIERS**

- 28.1 Each team shall be permitted to supply up to 4 water carriers. Water carriers shall be attired in a green bib as supplied by the League, and as far as practicable, in shorts or pants (no denim). Fine for breach: \$25.00
- 28.2 Water carriers shall be permitted to offer players a drink. Water carriers shall not obstruct the play in any way. Water carriers must stay off the field of play whilst not doing their duties.

**29. TRAINERS**

- 29.1 Each team must supply at least one registered trainer per match, with no more than 2 registered trainers participating in any match. Trainers shall be attired in a white shirt as supplied by the League, and as far as practicable, in white pants (no denim). Fine for breach: \$25.00
- 29.2 The VWFL Trainer Registration form with supporting documentation must be received by the Football Operations Coordinator no later than 4.00pm on the Friday prior to the trainer's first game.
- 29.3 Trainers must have accreditation as specified by the Executive, and listed on the Trainers Registration form.
- 29.4 All umpires appointed by the Umpires' Coordinator shall have the power to request a trainer to supply an official League Trainers Registration Card. If a trainer fails to comply with the request of the umpire to supply the said card, that team shall forfeit the match.
- 29.5 Clubs are not limited to the amount of qualified trainer's per team; however no registered player signed on the said match day team sheet can be trainer for that match.
- 29.6 Trainers may assist players who are injured whilst on the ground. Trainers must stay off the field of play whilst not attending to their duties.

**30. COACH REQUIREMENTS**

- 30.1 No person may coach (playing or non-playing) in any matches authorised or conducted by the League, other than practice matches, unless that person has:
  - (a) a current accreditation with the Australian Football Coaching Association of Level One Senior standard or higher; and
  - (b) lodged a VWFL Coaches Nomination form with the League which includes agreeing to and signing a Coaches Code of Conduct.
- 30.2 A non-playing coach does not require a clearance application to coach any club.
- 30.3 A non-suspended and accredited coach must be in charge of the team at all times when the team is playing a match and training.

- 30.4 Any person who purports to coach in any matches authorised or conducted by the League without satisfying the requirements of this Regulation may be dealt with by the Executive as it thinks fit.
- 30.5 All clubs must complete and lodge an official Coaches Nomination form with the League by 31 March each season. Fine for breach: \$50.00

**31. UNIFORMS**

- 31.1 *General*
- (a) The colours of the League shall be Navy and White and are at the discretion of the Executive.
  - (b) Each club must register its colours and uniforms at the beginning of the season and they shall not be changed without the approval of the Executive.
  - (c) The teams of each club shall wear their registered club guernseys as approved by the Executive from time to time and at all games. All jumpers must bear the League logo on the front left hand side at all games. All uniforms shall be supplied by manufacturers as approved by the Executive from time to time. Should any club fail to fulfill this Regulation, the League may disqualify the club from further premiership matches or otherwise deal with such club as it deems fit.
  - (d) If two clubs compete in the same division and those clubs' colours are the same or similar and are drawn to compete against one another, the away club must change its jumper, upon instruction from the Football Operations Coordinator.
  - (e) In the event of teams whose colours are the same or similar meeting in finals, the club finishing higher on the ladder at the completion of the season will retain its jumper.
  - (f) All teams shall wear their registered club coloured shorts and socks at all games.
  - (g) All visual undergarments must be beige in colour.
  - (h) Metal boot studs, jewellery and piercings and not permitted to be worn at any time on the field of play.
  - (i) A player on the field of play who is not wearing the correct uniform as per the above Regulation shall be yellow carded by the field umpire and cannot return to the field for 10 minutes and ensuring they are wearing the correct uniform.
- 31.2 *Sponsor Logos*
- (a) Clubs must apply to the Executive for approval to incorporate sponsors' logos on their guernseys and shorts. When securing and/or exploring major sponsorship/partnership arrangements, it is vital clubs avoid the possibility of conflicting interests with the VWFL's sponsors, assist with possibly strengthening the League's current partnership and ensure from the onset that the organisation is a suitable partner to be associated with the club and the League.
  - (b) Such logos shall be located only on:
    - (i) the front right hand side of the jumper
    - (ii) under the number on the back of the jumper
    - (iii) on the front right hand side of shorts
  - (c) Logo's on the back of guernseys must not be higher than 2cm below the player number and have a maximum height of 10 cm.

- (d) No logos will be approved for addition to the back of playing shorts.
- (e) Application may be made by clubs for logos outside of the above listed Regulations, which may be approved at the absolute discretion of the Executive.

31.3 *Jumper Numbers*

- (a) No player will be permitted to compete in any official League match without a number on the back of the playing guernsey. No two players in the one team shall have the same number. Each number shall be a whole number greater than zero (0) with a maximum of two digits. Fine for breach: \$25.00 per jumper
- (b) Except with the prior permission of the League, clubs fielding Premier and Premier Reserves teams are to have one set of guernseys for both teams numbered in whole numbers greater than zero (0) with a maximum of two digits.

32. **REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES**

- 32.1 The Executive may select any players registered with the League from time to time to participate in representative matches to represent the League.
- 32.2 Any player selected to participate in representative matches must play for the League and any failure to do so shall be dealt with by the Executive as it sees fit.
- 32.3 If any person selected to play in representative matches fails to take the field in the match for which she was so selected, the matter shall be referred to the Independent Tribunal which may disqualify her from playing in premiership matches for such a period as may be determined.
- 32.4 In all cases under 32.3 of this Regulation shall be sufficient to answer:
  - (a) that the Football Operations Coordinator received from the player not less than two clear days before the date of the match a written explanation of her inability to play satisfactory to the Executive.
  - (b) that the Football Operations Coordinator received within two days after the date of the match a medical certificate that the player was unfit owing to illness or injury to play.
- 32.5 In the case of a registered playing coach of any club it shall not be sufficient explanation under 32.4 that business affairs prevented her from playing.
- 32.6 The Executive may continue with home and away fixtured matches notwithstanding any representative fixture on the same day. No player selected for a representative team shall take part in a home and away game on the same day.
- 32.7 No person shall be qualified to play in any representative team unless she is qualified to play for a League club in matches played under the auspices of the League.
- 32.8 *Appointment of Representative Match Staff*
  - (a) The Executive shall be responsible for the selection and appointment of coaches, trainers, runners and officials for representative matches. The positions of captain, vice captain and leadships groups maybe be made in consultation and by agreement with coaches.
  - (b) Representative match staff shall attend meetings as requested by the Executive.

33. **AWARDS**

- 33.1 League players and umpires who participate in 100 or more games shall be awarded a suitable award or certificate by the Executive.

33.2 The presentation of awards and trophies shall be decided by the Executive. The Executive may transfer the selection of the recipients of awards and trophies to others within the League.

**34. ALCOHOL AND SMOKING**

Clubs shall be responsible for the conduct of their members, supporters and followers at all matches. Any breach of Schedule 6 will be considered serious and may attract a monetary fine for breach and other penalties at the discretion of the Executive.

Participating players and/or match officials of any team having been found guilty of consuming alcohol in or around the playing ground, or in the dressing rooms prior to the conclusion of the match, will be dealt with by the Executive as they deem fit. The field umpire shall report to the Football Operations Coordinator any player and/or club official in breach of this Regulation.

**35. COMPLAINTS AND PROTESTS**

**35.1 *General***

In accordance with the Regulations, a registered player, club, League registered umpire, Umpires Coordinator or at the direction of the Executive, the Football Operations Coordinator, may raise a complaint with the office of the Football Operations Coordinator concerning the result of a match or any act, matter or thing involving any club, registered player or official ("Complaint").

**35.2 *Lodgment of Complaints and Protests***

The Complainant must lodge the Complaint with the office of the Football Operations Coordinator by no later than 4.00pm on Tuesday following the date when the incident giving rise to the Complaint is alleged to have occurred. The Complainant should provide copies of all relevant documents and/or a detailed description of the event and circumstances within the knowledge of the Complainant that gives rise to the complaint. The Complainant may request the Football Operations Coordinator to deal with the Complaint in a certain manner and the Football Operations Coordinator will give due accord to the request.

**35.3 *Complaints Procedures***

At their absolute discretion, the Football Operations Coordinator may refer the Complaint to the Investigation Officer in accordance with Regulation 37 before referring it to (i) the Complaints Committee to be dealt with under Regulation 33.6 or (ii) to the Independent Tribunal; or (iii) to mediation to be dealt with in accordance with Regulation 38.

**35.4 *Bond***

(a) In the case of a club, registered player, or club official, the Complainant must lodge a bond of \$250.00 with the office of the Football Operations Coordinator when lodging the Complaint. In the case of the Complainant being a League registered umpire or the Umpires Coordinator, the lodgment of a bond is not required. The bond may be returned to the Complainant upon resolution of the complaint in accordance with the Rules and Regulations except in the case where it is determined that the Complaint was frivolous or vexatious in which case the Football Operations Coordinator at their absolute discretion may retain whole or part of the bond, or the case was referred to the Investigations Officer for determination.

(b) An administration fee of \$50.00 will be withheld from the bond. In the case of a complaint being referred to the Independent Tribunal which results in a player/official

being found guilty, the club to which the guilty party belongs will also be charged the administration fee.

- (c) If the office of the Football Operations Coordinator receives more than one Complaint on substantially the same matter, the Football Operations Coordinator at their discretion may treat all subsequent Complaints in the same manner as the initial Complaint and shall inform the body to which the matters were referred of the new complaint.

**36. COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

- 36.1 Once a Complaint has been referred by the Football Operations Coordinator to the Complaints Committee, it shall be dealt with by the Complaints Committee in accordance with this Regulation ("Complaint").
- 36.2 The Football Operations Coordinator shall take all reasonable steps to bring the Complaint to the attention of the player, club and/or official, the subject of the Complaint ("the Respondent") within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the Complaint.
- 36.3 No later than ten (10) working days after receipt by the Football Operations Coordinator of the Complaint, the Football Operations Coordinator shall convene a hearing into the Complaint by the Complaints Committee, such hearing to take place at a time, date and location at the discretion of the Football Operations Coordinator. The Football Operations Coordinator will take all reasonable steps to notify the parties involved of the time, date and location of the meeting of the Complaints Committee.
- 36.4 The operation of the Complaints Committee shall be in accordance with the Complaints Committee Procedures annexed to these Regulations (Schedule 4)
- 36.5 After the consideration of the evidence put before it, the Complaints Committee shall give a decision to resolve the Complaint.
- 36.6 The Complaints Committee may:
  - (a) impose a fine for breach on the Respondent up to a maximum of \$250.00 for each matter complained of; and/or
  - (b) suspend the Respondent from participating in any match or event organised by the League; and/or
  - (c) recommend to the Executive that match points awarded to the Respondent in a relevant match, if a club, be deducted; and/or
  - (d) recommend to the Executive that the Respondent be suspended or expelled by the Executive from the League in accordance with the Statement of Rules.

**37. INVESTIGATION OFFICER**

- 37.1 Any Complaint received by the Football Operations Coordinator may be first referred to the Investigation Officer, before it is dealt with by the Independent Tribunal or the Complaints Committee, in accordance with these Regulations.
- 37.2 The Investigation Officer shall investigate any matter which has been deemed relevant by the Football Operations Coordinator to whether or not a person may have committed a reportable incident.
- 37.3 For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this Regulation, upon request by the Investigation Officer, any person shall:
  - (a) fully cooperate with the Investigation Officer;

- (b) truthfully answer any questions asked by the Investigation Officer;
  - (c) provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the Investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Investigation Officer.
- 37.4 A person who fails to observe and comply with Regulation 37.3 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Executive in its absolute discretion. The Investigation Officer must promptly notify the Football Operations Coordinator of the failure of any person to observe and comply with Regulation 37.3 above.
- 37.5 The Investigation Officer shall, as soon as practicable, but in any event no later than seven (7) working days after the Investigation commenced, compile a report of the Investigation, including transcripts of all interviews, and submit the report to the Football Operations Coordinator, to be table before the Complaints Committee or the Independent Tribunal.
- 37.6 After consideration of the report submitted by the Investigation Officer, at their discretion, the Football Operations Coordinator may refer the matter the subject of the Investigation to the Complaints Committee, or complete on behalf of the League an authorised report sheet of a reportable incident identified by the Investigation Officer, and refer the matter to the Independent Tribunal.
- 37.7 If a matter is referred to the Complaints Committee, then the Complaints Committee shall convene a hearing within ten (10) working days of the date of the referral to consider the complaint and/or the report of the Investigation Officer, together with all transcripts of all interviews conducted by the Investigation Officer in the course of the Investigation, and the Complaints Committee shall have full power to request the cooperation of any person in the conduct of its investigation.
- 37.8 If deemed necessary by the Football Operations Coordinator, a person may be requested to appear before the Complaints Committee at a specified time and venue to truthfully answer any questions asked by the Complaints Committee, and to provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the Investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Complaints Committee.
- 37.9 For the purpose of conducting an Investigation under this Regulation, upon request by the Complaints Committee, any person shall:
- (a) fully cooperate with the Complaints Committee;
  - (b) truthfully answer any questions asked by the Complaints Committee;
  - (c) provide any document in that person's possession, power or control relevant to the Investigation, whether requested to do so or not by the Complaints Committee.
- 37.10 A person who fails to observe and comply with Regulation 37.9 above or who provides any information or has acted in a manner in any respect is false or misleading or likely to mislead, shall be deemed to have been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interests of the League and shall be liable to a sanction as determined by the Executive in its absolute discretion. The Complaints Committee must promptly notify the Football Operations Coordinator of the failure of any person to observe and comply with Regulation 37.9 above.
- 38. MEDIATION**
- 38.1 The Football Operations Coordinator may refer any Complaint made pursuant to Regulation 35.3 for mediation to be dealt with in accordance with this Regulation.

- 38.2 Where a dispute has arisen between a club and one of its members, and the club has resolved to refer the matter to the League for resolution, the parties may agree upon a mediator to mediate the dispute, or otherwise permit the League to appoint a mediator to assist the parties in resolving the dispute.
- 38.3 If the dispute is between any member club, registered player or official and another member club, registered player or official or between any member club, registered player or official and the League, the parties may nominate a preferred mediator or permit the League in its absolute and unfettered discretion to appoint a mediator.
- 38.4 In the event of any reportable offence taking place during the progress of any official match or on the day of the match, the field umpire(s) in all sections and all official League goal and boundary and emergency umpires shall have the power to report players or officials in respect of the offence to the VWFL Tribunal.
  - (a) any alleged breach of these Regulations relating to the conduct of matches in the League; or
  - (b) any alleged breach of the Policies and Codes of Conduct published in the Schedule to the Regulations by the Executive from time to time.
- 38.5 The disputing parties and the appointed mediator shall read carefully the League's Mediation Agreement (a copy is annexed to these Regulations – (Schedule 5) and sign the Mediation Agreement. The conduct of the mediation shall proceed in accordance with the Mediation Agreement.
- 38.6 The outcome of the mediation shall be reported by the mediator to the Football Operations Coordinator, including as to whether the parties resolve the dispute, but not the terms of any settlement between the parties, except with the permission of the parties. Should mediation not be successful in resolving the dispute, the parties shall observe the terms of the Mediation Agreement, and any further direction given by the Football Operations Coordinator in accordance with Regulation 35.3 (save as to any further mediation of the dispute).

## **39. APPEALS FROM TRIBUNAL, EXECUTIVE OR INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATOR DECISION**

### **39.1 Persons May Appeal**

An aggrieved person may appeal to the Appeal Board in respect of a decision made by either the Executive (excluding any clearance appeal), the Tribunal or the Independent Investigator provided the appeal is brought no later than 2.00pm Eastern Standard Time, two working days after which the decision appealed against was made. The Football Operations Coordinator must be informed and the appeal form faxed or emailed to them in the above given time period.

### **39.2 Executive May Appeal**

The Executive may appeal to the Appeal Board in respect of a decision made by either the Tribunal or the Independent Investigator provided the appeal is brought no later than 2.00pm Eastern Standard Time, two working days after a meeting of the Executive first after which the decision appealed against was made and given to the League club (that is at 2.00pm on the second day after knowledge of the decision). The club or individual must be informed in the above time frame that an appeal is being lodged.

### **39.3 Notice of Appeal by Person**

An appeal shall be lodged with the Football Operations Coordinator in writing on a form clearly setting out the matter, the decision appealed against, and the grounds of the appeal. The written notice shall be accompanied with a payment to the League of the sum of \$200.00, which shall not be refundable; and a payment of a further \$400.00 which sum may be refundable within the Regulations herein set out.

39.4 *Refund of Payment*

Of the \$600.00 payment that must be lodged with an appeal, \$200.00 of this is non-refundable. The remaining \$400.00 will be refunded if the appeal is successful in either:

- (a) reversing the original decision and finding the charge not proven; or
- (b) gaining a reduction in the original sentence.

The remaining \$400.00 will not be refunded if:

- (a) the original decision is upheld: or
- (b) the penalty of the original decision is extended.

39.5 *Lodgement of Notice of Appeal*

Notice of Appeal shall be lodged by delivering it or transmitting by facsimile or email to the Football Operations Coordinator. The money required will be provided for by a cheque from the club or an individual.

39.6 *Hearing of Appeal Notification*

Upon receipt of a Notice of Appeal, the Football Operations Coordinator shall:

- (a) fix the date, time and place for the hearing of the appeal as soon as practicable; and
- (b) advise all parties interested in the appeal in writing of those particulars.

39.7 *Variation of Time or Place*

The Appeal Board may vary the time or place of hearing and upon doing so shall immediately provide all parties interested in the appeal written notice of any such variation.

39.8 *Attendance*

An appellant shall attend and appear before the Appeal Board at the date, time and place fixed for the hearing of the appeal. Where an appellant fails to attend before the Appeal Board, the Appeal Board may still hear and determine the appeal in the appellant's absence.

39.9 *Obligations of Appeal Board - Natural Justice and Other Obligations*

The Appeal Board shall:

- (a) provide any person whose interest will be directly and adversely affected by its decision a reasonable opportunity to be heard;
- (b) hear and determine the matter before it in an unbiased manner; and
- (c) make a decision that a reasonable body could honestly arrive at.

39.10 *Adjournment and Stay of Penalty - Person to Serve Penalty*

Where the Executive/Tribunal/Independent Investigator imposes a penalty that prevents the appellant from participating in a match, the appellant shall serve that penalty pending the determination of the appeal.

39.11 *Power to Adjourn*

The Appeal Board may of its own motion or upon application of any party to the appeal, order:

- (a) that an appeal be adjourned;
- (b) a stay of the execution of the penalty imposed by the Tribunal pending the determination of the appeal.

39.12 *Exceptional and Compelling Circumstances*

The Appeal Board shall make an order only where it is satisfied that there are exceptional and compelling circumstances that make it harsh and unconscionable if an appropriate order was not made. In determining that question, the Appeal Board shall without limitation have regard to:

- (a) the merits of the appeal and the appellant's prospects of success;
- (b) the interests of the other clubs and players;
- (c) the effect on the result of the League competition; and
- (d) the need to permit due and proper administration of the Rules and Regulations of the League.

39.13 *New Hearing*

- (a) The Appeal Board shall deal with the appeal as a new hearing.
- (b) The Appeal Board may have regard to the record of the proceeding before the Executive/Tribunal/Independent Investigator as previously constituted, including a record of any evidence taken in the hearing the appeal relates to.

39.14 *Procedure and Evidence Regulate Own Procedure*

The Appeal Board may regulate any proceedings brought before it in any such manner as it thinks fit.

39.15 *Conduct of Hearing*

The hearing before the Appeal Board shall be:

- (a) inquisitorial in nature; and
- (b) conducted with as little formality and technicality and with as much expedition as a proper consideration of the matters before it permits.

39.16 *Make Up of Appeal Board*

The Appeal Board will be made up by at least two but no more than five persons. Each member of the Appeal Board cannot be:

- (a) a member of the VWFL Executive;
- (b) a member or official of a VWFL club;
- (c) member of the original Tribunal panel that heard the case that is being appealed against; and
- (d) an Independent Investigator that has heard the case that is being appealed against.

**40. PRESENTATION NIGHT TICKETS**

Each team shall be allotted 5 tickets for the League Presentation Night in each season and shall be billed for those tickets in the annual affiliation fees at the prices prevailing from time to time.

**41. CLUB ACCOUNTS**

**41.1     *Lodgment of Annual Reports***

- (a) All clubs shall forward to the Football Operations Coordinator no later than 31 December each year, one copy of their Annual Report. Fine for breach: \$100.00
- (b) No later than 31 December, all clubs shall forward to the Football Operations Coordinator:
  - (i) a Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet for the immediate past year,
  - (ii) a list of all club office bearers for the coming season.

Fine for breach: \$100.00

**42. MEETINGS**

**42.1     *Compulsory***

The Executive may convene compulsory meeting(s) for club officials as stipulated by the Executive from time to time. These meetings shall include, but are not limited to: Delegates Meetings, Presidents/Coaches/Team Managers Forum, Annual General Meeting and Finals Participants Meetings.

Fine for breach:     First Offence - \$100.00  
                            Second Offence - \$200.00  
                            Third Offence - \$300.00 and report to the Executive

Written or verbal apologies for non-attendance at compulsory meetings of the League will not eliminate a fine for breach.

**42.2     *Time***

Unless otherwise specified, all Annual and Special Meetings of the League shall commence at 7.30pm and no new business will be introduced after 10.30pm.

**42.3     *Representatives***

- (a) One representative of each club must attend all Annual and Special Meetings of the League. Such representatives shall be the President and/or delegate and/or one other member of the club.
- (c) Any club calling a meeting of other clubs other than in accordance with the Rules of the League without the prior authority of the Executive shall be liable to:
  - (i) a fine for breach at the discretion of the League;
  - (ii) suspension from the League;
  - (iii) be expelled from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.

**43. UNAUTHORISED MEDIA STATEMENTS**

- 43.1 No club shall permit any of its officers or members to make any statement to the media (including radio, television and all newspapers) in connection with any policies or acts of the Executive without the prior approval of the Executive (Schedule 15). To do so shall render the club concerned liable to:
- (a) a fine for breach at the discretion of the League;
  - (b) suspension from the League;
  - (c) expulsion from the League in accordance with the Rules of the League.

**44. FINE FOR BREACHES**

- 44.1 Fines may be imposed by the Executive or the Football Operations Coordinator for non-compliance with or violation of these Regulations.
- (a) at the rates specified in Schedule 2; or
  - (b) if no rate is specified in Schedule 2, at the rate determined by the Executive.
- 44.2 The value of all penalties shall be determined by the Executive from time to time and may be adjusted by the Executive at any time.
- 44.3 Fines are to be paid before the clubs next scheduled game or within 7 days if they are not scheduled to play a game before then. If fines remain unpaid by the set date and no contact has been made with the VWFL Director of Finance, the club will be ineligible to compete in fixture matches.
- 44.4 No appeals against fine for breaches by a club shall be heard until the fine for breaches have been paid.

**45. POLICIES AND CODES OF CONDUCT**

All players and officials at all League matches shall be subject to the Policies and Codes of Conduct as issued by the Executive from time to time (refer to Schedules).

**46. AFL VICTORIA POLICIES**

- 46.1 The League and AFL Victoria are required to adopt complementary Rules and Regulations, in football competitions under their respective control and jurisdiction.
- 46.2 The League has adopted the following AFL Victoria policies as policies of the League:
- Infectious Diseases Policy;
  - No Smoking & Alcohol Management Policy;
  - Racial and Religious Tolerance Policy;
  - Anti-Doping Policy;
  - Codes of Conduct - Players, Coaches, & Parents;
  - Gender Policy;
  - De-Registration Policy ; and
  - Privacy Policy.

**47. CONDUCT UNBECOMING, PREJUDICIAL OR LIKELY TO BRING GAME INTO DISREPUTE**

- 47.1 Where the Executive is of the opinion that a club or any official, player or member thereof, or member or any other person has contravened the Statement of Purposes, Rules or Regulations of the League or has been involved in conduct which is unbecoming or likely to prejudice the reputation, or interests of the League, or to bring the game of Australian Football

into disrepute, the Executive may deal with any such manner as the Executive in their absolute discretion thinks fit and without limiting their power, they may;

- (a) appoint any person to enquire into any matter;
- (b) conduct their own enquiry into any matter;
- (c) refer any matter to the Tribunal;
- (d) impose any penalty that it deems fit including but not limited to, imposing a monetary penalty or bond, a suspension, a disqualification or providing for the loss of or forfeiture of or premiership points or other privileges, benefits or entitlements.

**48. ALTERATION TO REGULATIONS**

The Regulations may be amended by the Executive from time to time pursuant to the Rules.

**49. SUB COMMITTEES AND MOTIONS**

- 49.1 When a sub committee is formed by the VWFL Executive, recommendations made by at least 2/3 majority of that sub committee will be put to a delegates meeting for the club delegates to vote on.

**50. MISCELLANEOUS**

- 50.1 *Club Playing Outside League*

Clubs shall not participate in a match involving any football club that is not affiliated with the League outside the fixture arranged by the League during the football season. Clubs desiring to participate in matches involving a football club that is not affiliated with the League at times outside the football season shall first notify the Football Operations Coordinator of their intention and shall not participate in such a match without the prior written approval of the League.

- 50.2 *Communication to the League*

All letters and written communications to the League shall be directed to the Football Operations Coordinator.