



AFL WESTERN DISTRICT – HFNL AND WDFNL JUNIOR EQUALISATION POLICY AND ON-FIELD NUMBER REGULATIONS

The policy is committed to ensuring participation in our sport is fun and enjoyable. If players and administrators experience a positive environment, then the recruitment and retention of players as well as the sustainability of our clubs is more effectively achieved. Keeping people, old and young, in the game is what creates sustainable futures for our clubs. The equalisation policy and on-field number regulations are introduced as a guide to game day cooperation between opposing teams. Intra-league sharing is emphasised to increase fun, development and participation while young players are maturing.

Aim: To ensure a game is played according to the fixture, even if the prescribed number of players are not available; to encourage sharing of players between opposing clubs, cooperation within the same league; for even playing numbers on the field at the commencement of the match and at all times during the game (other than send offs).

Bench minimums allow for player safety, welfare and player self-care. The emphasis is game time over the duration of their playing career, rather than any one game. Rotations are a normal part of our game. Players can be rotated on & off to allow rest and for trainers to check players. Players are able to practice self-care, and are able to come off if they feel they need to.

The aim is to give flexibility on game day throughout the season, allowing for fluctuation in numbers and to promote support between opposing teams within each league. These measures also allow for changes in numbers across time. A culture of participation, fun and enjoyment for young players developing their skills while emphasising respect for opposition and umpires is one that will retain participants in our game.

Policy:

1. There must be a minimum of 10 age registered players to enact this policy. Other players may be filled from lower ages.
2. Teams must loan players to the team that has insufficient numbers.
3. Opposing teams must field the same number of players on the field at the commencement of the match and at all times during the game (other than send offs).
4. Bench must be a minimum of 2 players per the On Field Policy. Other than send offs, and uneven numbers, the bench between both teams must also be aligned. If there is an uneven number of players, the team with the highest numbers may have plus one on the bench, provided it falls within the league by-laws.
5. Central umpires must be notified of this number. Umpires must be notified of shared players. The player(s) that are shared from the opposing club must be clearly marked on the team sheets.
6. Clubs must communicate with each other any shortfall of numbers. If requested by the opposition team, the team with more players must share age players to the club with the least.
7. When borrowed players are rotated to the opposition during the game, the umpires must be made aware at an appropriate break during play of which player is playing for the opposition, during that quarter and the number the player is wearing. This is for best and fairest vote allocation and for reporting purposes.
8. All games, votes and personal statistics of the shared player(s) will be counted towards the home club for club and league honours and awards.



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The following conditions apply:

1. Lower age group players cannot be shared under this policy.
2. If the club with the higher number of players either refuses to or is unable to share players, they will be deemed to have played ineligible players and will be subject to penalties under AFL VC Rule 1.3 (ineligible players).
3. It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure all coaches and team managers have read and adhere to this policy.
4. The policy is in place for the Home and Away Season Only

On-Field Number Regulations:

- Minimum Bench is two at the start of the game. Maximum bench is per the age group and league by-laws.
- Teams may play with 18, 16, 15, 14 or 12 players, as long as there are 2 on the bench.
- If a match will be played with 16 players on each team, it is the wing positions lost.
- Coaches of opposing teams can negotiate the positions lost when on-field players are 15 and below.

Interpretation:

Scenario 1: One team has 10 age players on game day.

1. A team with 10 age players could request a loan of players from the opposing team to make an official match. The other team must loan players, if they have them available, so that an official match can occur. The team may also top up with their own under-age players. In this situation, the match is official and premiership points, percentage, umpire votes and goal kickers apply.

Scenario 2: Team A has 16 players and Team B has 17 players.

1. There is no need to loan players in this scenario. The teams play 14 on the ground, coaches negotiate what positions are lost and Team B has 3 on the bench.

Scenario 3: Team A has 15 players and Team B has 21 players:

1. Team A requests a loan of players from the opposing team. Both teams lose the wing positions, and play 16 on the ground with 2 on the bench.

Scenario 4: Both Teams have 19 players:

1. Both Teams lose wing positions, and start with 16 on the ground and 3 on the bench.