



MODIFIED FOOTBALL PROGRAM (U8-U11) POLICY

1. The Hills Football League modified football competition consists of teams nominated from the Division 1 and Country competitions in the following age groups:
 - Under 8
 - Under 9
 - Under 10
 - Under 11
- 1.1 The maximum player age shall be adhered to as at 1st January.
- 1.2 Players playing below their chronological age bracket must be recorded on the [Playing Down form](#) and submitted to the HFL prior to the season start or prior to the player participating in their first match for the season.
- 1.3 Players playing above their chronological age bracket must do so with the permission of their parent/guardian and both the coach and the parent/guardian must ensure it will not be to the detriment of the player or put the player at unnecessary risk.
- 1.4 Players must be registered with their club through the Sports TG system.
2. Coaches and Umpires must work together prior to and throughout the match to benefit the learning experience of the players.
 - 2.1 The home team coach is strongly encouraged to contact the visiting coach to confirm match times and team numbers.
 - 2.2 The number of players on the field can be negotiated between the coaches. The fair play rule must be utilised where possible provided that the number of players on the field per team DOES NOT exceed the maximum number stated in the Match Rules.
 - 2.3 The umpire can hold the match until coaches assist in correcting player positions.
 - 2.4 The umpire can provide commentary to players to encourage and engage understanding of rules to players.
 - 2.5 Coaches and umpires are encouraged to approach each other during a break to discuss undue rough play, rulings outside of the age group or any other matter of concern. Both coaches are to be present during these discussions.
 - 2.6 For under 8 and under 9 teams – each team will be allowed one coach on the field during the match. He/she is NOT to carry a whiteboard or folder etc. The coach must wear a fluorescent vest to identify their role. No other support (including a runner) is allowed on the ground.
 - 2.7 For under 10 and under 11 teams – a runner only will be allowed on the field during play. He/she must wear a fluorescent vest to identify their role.
 - 2.8 Coaches must hold the appropriate level of accreditation through AFL Coach.
 - 2.9 Coaches and voluntary umpires are encouraged to attend education and information sessions provided by the HFL, the SANFL or AFL Coach.

3. Player safety is priority.
 - 3.1 Oval surface and equipment inspections must be undertaken by the home club prior to commencement of a match, or series of matches on the same day, to ensure the area is clean and free from hazards. [Hard copy Checklist](#) or available on the AFL Match Day App.
 - 3.2 Players must wear a mouthguard during a match.
 - 3.3 Protective headwear is allowed where it is fit for purpose and deemed as safe by the coach and/or umpire (good fit, no loose straps etc.)
 - 3.4 Gloves are only allowed where a medical certificate is provided and the umpire and/or coach deem them safe for use.
 - 3.5 At least one qualified First Aid Officer and/or Sports Trainer must be in attendance at all matches.
 - 3.6 Coaches must have a DCSI [Working with Children Check](#). Club Officials are also encouraged to have this clearance.
4. Good sportsmanship is to be modelled by all match officials as per the *HFL Modified Football Program Code of Conduct for Officials*.
 - 4.1 Team captains must shake hands/elbow with each other and the umpire prior to the match commencing and at the end of the match.
 - 4.2 Teams must line up and shake hands, high five or elbow with opponents after a match.
 - 4.3 Teams may choose to sing team songs but must do so with respect to the opposition team.
 - 4.4 Swearing, violence, arguing with an umpire or other unnecessary behaviour will not be tolerated. An umpire may send a player off the ground for up to one quarter of play. The umpire may extend this up to the remainder of the game for severe or repeated cases.
5. The Hills Football League will set the programme of matches and carnivals for the season.
6. Cancellation and/or forfeit of matches may occur from time to time for the following reasons.
 - 6.1 Where a team is unable to participate in a match with enough players (even with the assistance of the opposition team and the fair play rule).
 - 6.2 Where there is an emergency situation or unexpected event that impacts the team/s.
 - 6.3 Where inclement weather impacts the health and safety of the players.
 - 6.3.1 The home club is responsible for the decision to delay/cancel a match due to inclement weather.
 - 6.3.2 Clubs must take into account the [AFL National Extreme Weather Policy](#) and their relevant club policy.
 - 6.3.3 Clubs must take into account the impact of heavy rain, wind and hail exposure on young players.
 - 6.3.4 Clubs must be aware of weather conditions in their area and make contact with opposition teams as early as possible.
7. Recording of match details may occur and can be submitted to the HFL in the directed format. Records may include; match results, best players, goal kickers.
8. All disputes are to be received by the HFL in writing as soon as possible following the trigger for the dispute.



MODIFIED FOOTBALL PROGRAM (U8-U11) CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICIALS

The HFL Modified Football Program allows players to learn the game in a safe environment that introduces skills and game rules gradually as they progress through the age groups. It is the responsibility of officials and parents to support and ensure a safe environment for the players.

As such, the following is to be adopted by all clubs:

BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

The HFL supports the [Play by the Rules](#) guidelines. Officials must contribute to creating a positive sporting environment by being good role models. To do this, officials (coordinators, coaches, team managers, runners and umpires) must:

Place the safety and welfare of kids above all else

- Be aware of and support the return to play guidelines.
- Address behaviour that offends community standards or is against the law (for example, racial vilification, sexual harassment, common assault).

Encourage fair play

- Always be fair, impartial and consistent.
- Encourage and praise good sporting behaviour.
- Emphasise trying hard and having fun, not only winning.

Communicate well

- Communicate honestly, generously and fairly.
- Express decisions clearly.
- Keep your emotions in check and maintain composure.

Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake.

Uphold your club/association's code of conduct

- Understand, uphold and support your club/association's code of conduct.

Keep up to date and organised

- Know the rules and understand the spirit of the game.
- Be conscientious and punctual.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

“Positive attitudes and conduct make sport enjoyable for everyone. Some people can ruin the experience with poor behaviour.

This can include things like undue pressure, abuse, taunting, poor sportsmanship, foul language, harassment, bullying, victimisation and more. It can be verbal, written, physical or emotional.

Poor behaviour can occur in many places - during play, on the sidelines, at training, in the clubhouse or outside of the sporting arena.

It can be coaches, players, parents, spectators, officials or administrators that behave poorly. Any one of these people, children or adults, can be the victim of poor conduct too.

Poor behaviour stems from a lack of respect. Showing respect is so important, particularly for young people. It's important to teach respect for coaches, team mates, officials and anyone else involved in your sport.” [Play by the Rules.](#)

Please refer to the below resources to assist and guide incident management.

Informal processes must be managed as quickly as possible following the incident.

Formal submissions must be made to the HFL as soon as possible following the incident. Formal submissions will be assessed and managed on a case-by-case basis.

RESOURCES

[Dealing with a complaint](#)

[Informal process](#)

[Formal process](#)