



**MITCHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

**POLICY MANUAL**

**Produced November 2019**

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## **SECTION A – INTRODUCTION**

The Mitcham Junior Football Club (MJFC) provides an opportunity for boys and girls in the Mitcham area to play football in a safe and enjoyable environment. Our aim is to provide the best possible football experience for junior players, their families, and the extended community.

Our core values are of Fun, Fairness, Respect, Commitment, Inclusion, & Sportsmanship.

The MJFC will at all times endeavour to provide for the health, welfare and wellbeing of its players, administrators, volunteers, supporters and spectators.

We gauge our success by the following measures:

- We have encouraged participation when we see the enjoyment of all our teams throughout the season, and retention of players for subsequent seasons.
- Our governance is measured by member feedback surveys regarding how the MJFC is run. The surveys are being implemented annually and will be measurable from 2019 onwards.
- Our Community involvement is continually being discussed and we make specific note of feedback received from the parents, players and supporters, with regard to how MJFC is valued within the community.
- Continual emphasis on culture within the MJFC on and off the field and the positive impact it has on the growth and development of a child.

We are proud of MJFCs success to date and we want to ensure we remain a successful club, providing the best football experience for junior players, their families and the extended community.

The MJFC has developed a set of policies that are designed to support our core values and ensure that the MJFC continues to develop as one of the best clubs in the Eastern Football & Netball League.

Our policies are designed to ensure the MJFC deals with various matters in a fair and transparent manner.

By registering to play with the MJFC, the player, along with his or her parents, guardians and supporters agree to abide by the MJFCs Policies. In accepting their various positions, all coaches, team officials and MJFC officials agree to abide by these policies.

Any variation to the policies requires the approval of the Executive Committee.

While the policies provide a comprehensive management framework, it is possible that matters may arise which are not covered by existing policies. Such matters or any suggestions regarding our policies should be referred to our Club Secretary at [secretary.mitchamjfc@gmail.com.au](mailto:secretary.mitchamjfc@gmail.com.au)

Anthony Grace  
President  
Mitcham Junior Football Club

## **1. MITCHAM FOOTBALL CLUB OVERVIEW**

The Mitcham Junior Football Club (MJFC) seeks to provide an opportunity for the youth of our area to participate in Australian Rules Football in a safe and enjoyable environment.

### **1.1 MITCHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

The MJFC is part of the Mitcham Football Club.

The Mitcham Football Club was established in 1888 and is known as the Mitcham Tigers. We play out of Walker Park and was a founding member of the Eastern Football League in 1962.

### **1.2 MITCHAM JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB**

In recent years, the MJFC has grown from 4 teams, to 17 teams in 2019, inclusive of male and female teams, with over 370 registered players in 2019.

While the Junior Club operates autonomously under our own Committee, we enjoy a strong relationship with the Senior Football Club. In conjunction with the Senior Club, we hold several major events together.

Each of our junior teams has at least one Senior player appointed as a mentor to the team, known as the "Big Tiger-Little Tiger Program". These mentors provide support to our coaches by assisting with training sessions and attending junior games throughout the season. In turn, the MJFC encourages our junior players to support the Senior club through attendance on Saturdays, particularly at Walker Park home games.

The MJFC also boasts one of the most popular and highly regarded Auskick centres in the Eastern suburbs. Implemented by former MJFC President, Craig Giles, Auskick at Walker Park takes place on the hallowed turf of Walker Park on Friday nights through the football season.

The MJFC is a proud family-oriented club with a strong focus on participation and development.

The MJFC hosts a range of social activities throughout the season which include Family Day, Back to the Club nights and parent/guardian specific social nights. These provide a great opportunity for our players and parents to get together and have fun. It is a wonderful opportunity for new players and parents to get to know teammates and their families even better.

The MJFCs success can be attributed to the fantastic support we receive from our parents and, volunteers and supporters.

### **1.3 COMMITTEE**

The MJFC is managed by an Executive Committee consisting of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Football Operations Manager.

The Executive Committee are responsible for:

- a) the overall governance of the MJFC;
- b) setting MJFC policy;
- c) appointing coaches (with the Coaches Coordinator and with advice from the Football Sub-Committee);

- d) endorsing team selections;
- e) dealing with complaint matters that require consideration by the Executive Committee.

The 2020 MJFC Executive Committee consists of:

President:	Anthony Grace	president.mitchamjfc@gmail.com
Vice-President & Football Operations Manager:	Leigh Walters	footyops.mitchamjfc@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Paul Goldsmith	treasurer.mitchamjfc@gmail.com
Secretary:	Sharon Wilson	secretary.mitchamjfc@gmail.com

The Executive Committee is supported by a General Committee who are responsible for:

- (1) providing advice to the Executive Committee; and
- (2) undertaking operational activities.

The General Committee consists of the following positions:

- Coaches Coordinator
- Registrar
- Team Manager Coordinator
- Merchandise & Apparel
- Events Manager
- Accreditation Officer
- Grants Officer
- Welfare Officer
- Social Media & Communications
- Trainers Coordinator
- Female Football Coordinator

## 1.4 POLICIES

We have developed a set of policies and procedures that reflect our core values and help to ensure we can provide the best possible environment for juniors to play football and retain the wonderful culture of the MJFC.

Throughout this document you will find reference to the words 'must', 'shall', 'may' and 'should'. 'Must' and 'Shall' convey an obligation, with any variation from the Policy requiring the approval of the Executive Committee. The use of the words 'may' and 'should' convey an element of discretion.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the MJFC Secretary at [secretary.mitchamjfc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.mitchamjfc@gmail.com)

## **1.5 RULES**

All games of Australian Football must be played in strict accordance with the Australian Football League Rules February 2018 as determined by the AFL, unless otherwise advised by the EFNL. The MJFC must adhere to the rules set out within the Eastern Football & Netball League. Incorporated By-Laws (May 2018) (EFNL By-Laws).

Our female teams play within the Eastern Region Girls Football League (ERGFL) competition, which is a joint initiative between the EFNL and the AFL Yarra Ranges competitions. In the first instance our female teams must adhere to the Eastern Region Girls Football League By-Laws, as detailed within the EFNL By-Laws. These guidelines relate to specific scenarios unique to the Eastern Region Girls Football League competition. Where there is no guideline listed on an occasion, all female teams operate under the rules and by-laws of their home competition.

## **1.6 PLAYER WELFARE**

Irrespective of age or ability, player welfare is our number one priority. The MJFC requires players in U8s, U9s and U10s to wear helmets at all games. We support players who may wish to wear a helmet in the older age groups. Mouthguards are required to be worn by all players during games and at training.

The MJFC complies with the EFNL Code of Conduct which we expect all players, parents, administrators, volunteers and supporters, to comply with. [www.efnl.org.au](http://www.efnl.org.au)

Player welfare is of prime importance to the MJFC. Any concerns should first be raised with your team manager and/or coach. If they cannot be resolved at that level, they should be referred to the Executive Committee via email to the Club Secretary for consideration.

## **1.7 GRIEVANCES**

Any person who feels aggrieved by the interpretation of the policies or possible failure to comply with the policies, may refer the matter to the Executive Committee via email to the MJFC Secretary for consideration in accordance with the MJFC's Issue Resolution policy.

## **SECTION B - REGISTRATION, SELECTION, COACHING, TRAINING & GAME DAY**

### **2. PLAYER REGISTRATION POLICY**

The MJFC seeks to maintain a fair registration process for both existing and new players.

#### **2.1 REGISTRATION DAY**

The MJFC will schedule a registration day (which is traditionally at the end of November). Attendance at Registration Day is not required if players have completed their registration online, however there is an opportunity for players to meet their coach and to purchase merchandise.

#### **2.2 REGISTRATION PROCESS**

All current MJFC players will be notified of online registration being available and encouraged to register prior to Registration Day. Existing players will be able to take advantage of the Early Bird rate. Registrations will open to new players from Registration Day.

The Early Bird rate will cease at the end of November. Any registrations after this date will be set at the standard fee to be charged by the MJFC.

The MJFC will:

- open online registrations in November;
- hold a registration day (typically in November);
- set a final registration date (30 November), after which any registration/s received will be deemed a 'late registration';
- post the registration details on the MJFC website;
- advertise the registration arrangements at local schools via school newsletters;

To register on time, players will need to:

1. register and pay online before the final registration date (we no longer provide paper registrations) or
2. register and pay online at the MJFC's registration day (a laptop will be available).

#### **2.3 LATE REGISTRATIONS**

Registrations received after the registration deadline will be deemed late with the player/s placed on a waitlist (even if the player has previously played with MJFC) and will be processed in the order in which they were received after all registrations received on time, have been processed.

#### **2.4 NEW PLAYERS**

The MJFC actively encourages new players to join our club, regardless of experience or ability.

All EFNL clubs are subject to the National Player Transfer Regulations which outlines that team within the EFNL junior competition are only permitted to gain a maximum of three players from one EFNL junior club team to another, unless the club from which the players are transferring from allows

more than three.

No new players can register during the season after 30th June of that year.

## **2.5 MINIMUM AGE**

In accordance with the EFNL By-Laws, a player must attain at least the age of seven by 30 April in that person's first year of registration with the EFNL. No person may play in any matches authorised or conducted by the EFNL, other than practice matches, unless that person has attained the age of seven (7) years by 30 April during that person's first year of registration with the EFNL.

In accordance with the ERG By-Laws, female players must attain at least the age of seven by 1<sup>st</sup> January to be eligible to play in the Eastern Region Girls (ERGFL) Competition.

## **2.6 CORRECT AGE GROUPS**

For safety & developmental reasons, **all** players will be registered within their correct age group as detailed within the EFNL By-Laws.

Any player who has previously been allowed to play in an older age group will not automatically be permitted to play up in a subsequent year. Should a player wish to play out of their age group, they should submit an application via email to the Football Operations Manager. This request will then be assessed by the Football Operations Sub-Committee. The request should outline the reason/s for playing out of their age group.

A football operations sub-committee has been formed to make decisions regarding players being allowed to play out of their age group. These decisions will be based on ability and team numbers.

Players will only be allowed to play up in exceptional circumstances and at the approval of the Executive Committee.

## **2.7 GENDER**

The MJFC have teams in every age group for male and female players.

## **2.8 MIXED ABILITIES**

The MJFC actively encourages people of mixed abilities to play football where it is safe to do so.

## **2.9 TOO MANY PLAYERS PER AGE GROUP**

The MJFC aims to have two teams in each age group with a maximum of 26 players registered in each team, as per EFNL guidelines. Depending on the number of players who register in subsequent years it may be necessary to consolidate teams from previous seasons into a single team.

Should this be the case, the MJFC will endeavour to accommodate all players (e.g. it may invite players to play in the next age group). No new players will be accepted into the higher age group team until this process has been completed. If there are still too many players from the previous season, the players will be selected in the following order:

1. Players who have played the most consecutive years with the MJFC;
2. Players who have a sibling/parent registered to play with the MJFC;



3. Players whose parents have made a significant contribution to the MJFC in past years (i.e. coach, assistant coach, team manager, runner, trainer, committee member or other persons deemed by the Executive Committee to have made a significant contribution to the MJFC in past years);
4. If necessary, priority may be given to those players who have played the most games with the MJFC.

### **3. FINANCIAL MEMBERS**

Mitcham Junior Football Club expects all players to be financial members of the MJFC.

#### **3.1 PAYMENT**

Players must be financial members of the MJFC and pay their club fees prior to playing in their first game of each season. Players are also required at the time of Registration to pay a compulsory Insurance Fee set by the EFNL.

The MJFC may accept an alternative payment plan in exceptional circumstances. A request for an alternative payment plan should be sent to the Club Secretary via email, and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

#### **3.2 MJFC PLAYING (REGISTRATION) FEES**

The MJFC shall set the playing fees prior to opening registrations. The MJFC fee covers:

- MJFC operating costs and games costs (e.g. venue hire, umpires, training equipment, medical supplies, Council costs etc.);
- the provision of a playing jumper which is provided on loan and must be returned at the end of the season;

No additional game fees will be charged.

Fees for Season 2020 are as follows:

\$245 MJFC Club Registration Fee (inclusive of the \$18 EFNL insurance and Membership with the Mitcham Football Club, which entitles 1 adult to free entry to all home games at Walker Park)

\$145 Sibling Rate (playing in the same season)

\$225 Early Bird Registration Fee

\$125 Early Bird Sibling Rate

**Please note that all NEW player registrations will include provision of MJFC playing shorts, MJFC matchday socks and an MFC hoodie.**

#### **3.3 DISCOUNTS**

The MJFC may reduce or waive MJFC registrations fees in exceptional circumstances, such as genuine financial hardship. Applications for a reduction in fees must be made in writing, via email or post, to the Club Secretary.

The MJFC may offer a reduced fee to players who register late:

- Register prior to and including Round 8 - No discount
- Register after Round 8 - Equivalent to the sibling fee

Requests for a discount (other than the family discount) should be sent to the MJFC Secretary for consideration by the Executive Committee and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

### **3.4 REFUNDS**

The MJFC may provide a refund in exceptional circumstances only. A request for a refund should be sent to the MJFC Secretary via email or post, to be considered by the Executive Committee. Any refund will be subject to an administration fee to cover costs.

Refunds will not be provided to players who are rostered off or are not available to play.

### **3.5 MJFC EQUIPMENT**

The MJFC provides each player with a playing jumper. These items plus any other items borrowed from the MJFC, must be returned to the MJFC within one week of the player having played his/her last game for the season.

Damaged items or any items not returned to the Team Manager at the end of the season will be considered 'lost' and the player liable to pay for its replacement at the following rates:

- Jumpers - \$90
- Other items - at cost plus \$20

### **3.6 NON-FINANCIAL MEMBERS**

A player who has not paid his/her fees will be considered a non-financial member of the MJFC.

A player who has not paid outstanding fines imposed by the EFNL will be considered a non-financial member of the MJFC.

A player who has not returned MJFC equipment (e.g. jumper) at the end of the season or on notifying the MJFC of their resignation, will be considered a non-financial member of the MJFC.

Non-financial members will not be rostered on to play.

The MJFC will not provide a clearance to any player who has an outstanding debt to the MJFC or who has not returned MJFC property.

## **4. COACHING POLICY**

MJFC seeks to appoint the best available coaches to lead its teams.

### **4.1 COACHING APPOINTMENTS**

At the end of the season, the MJFC will declare all coaching positions vacant and encourage existing and new coaches to apply for coaching positions in the following year.

Coaching appointments will be advertised on the MJFC social media pages and emailed out to the previous years database. Coaching appointments may also be advertised on the EFNL website as deemed necessary.

Coaches must be able to demonstrate that they have the right attributes to coach relevant to the applicable age group and be prepared to undertake or renew their coaching accreditation as per EFNL standards.

#### **4.2 TENURE**

A coach shall be appointed for one season. He/she may be appointed to coach the same team for a second season if they are deemed the most suitable applicant for the position.

Should no suitable applicant be forthcoming for a third or greater consecutive season, the Executive Committee may consider approaching the incumbent coach.

#### **4.3 COACHING ATTRIBUTES**

Our coaches are expected to be qualified and in doing so:

- must have a Level 1 qualification or be in receipt of a Level 1 coaching qualification by May 31 in the year that they are coaching. (NB: the MJFC will reimburse the Coach for the registration fees for his/her Level 1 course);
- must have a valid working with children check prior to commencing pre-season training and for the duration of the season;
- must attend MJFC Coaches' Nights.

Act responsibly and in doing so:

- adhere at all times to the EFNLs Code of Conduct;
- adhere at all times to the MJFC policies;
- not speak to the media without the written consent of President or Vice President;
- not enter into any commercial arrangements or make purchases without the consent of the President, Vice President or Treasurer.

Display a sense of professionalism and in doing so:

- wear appropriate attire, including MJFC polo/hoodie/jacket to all games;
- promote the 'Mitcham' brand of football;
- make decisions which are in the best interests of our players and the MJFC.

Display fairness and in doing so:

- respect all players;
- adhere to the MJFC's policies;
- maintain records of the number of games played for each player and the amount of game time they receive.

Demonstrate commitment to their team and the MJFC and in doing so:

- arrive promptly and be well prepared for training and games;

- attend family nights and other key events such as our Season Launch, Family Day, Back to the Club Nights and Presentation Nights.

Show leadership and in doing so:

- display sincerity, integrity and honesty;
- base actions on reason, not emotions;
- set goals and share a vision with the team;
- display confidence and inspire players;
- be fair to all players and responsive to their sensitivities;
- seek out and listen to the opinions of others to help you succeed.

Build an appropriate support network and in doing so enlist a team manager, assistant coach and runner who are responsible and who are prepared to act in accordance with the policies and values of the MJFC.

## **5. TEAM SIZE AND SELECTION POLICY**

The MJFC seeks to maintain a fair, transparent and equitable team selection process.

### **5.1 TEAM SELECTION**

The MJFC is committed to fairness, transparency and equity.

The MJFC adopts an approach which recognises that players vary in size, skill and ability but that all players are entitled to be treated fairly and that teams are managed to be competitive irrespective of their grading.

### **5.2 UNDER 8s, 9s & 10's**

#### **5.2.1 TEAM SIZE**

The EFNL has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 26 (subject to change).

#### **5.2.2 TEAM SELECTION**

It is the MJFC's desire to field two teams in every age group.

Team selection will be determined after registration day, although in the non-competitive U8 and U9 age groups, it is expected that teams will be primarily based on school groupings. At U10 level, the decision may be made to conduct a 'soft grading' in preparation for competitive level football which begins in U11s.

Where two teams in the same age-group exist, the teams shall be known as the Black and the Yellow team.

We aim to ensure that there are an equal number of players in each team to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities.

### **5.3 UNDER 11s to 15s**

### **5.3.1 TEAM SIZE**

The EFNL has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 26. The MJFC considers that the ideal number of players in these teams to be 26 and shall cap these teams at this number, and continue to take registrations up to this number.

### **5.3.2 TEAM SELECTION**

It is the MJFC's intention to field two teams in each age group. Where there are enough players to form two teams in the one age group, the players will be graded based on their skills, size, confidence and football maturity. The players will then be split into teams having regard to the suitability of the players to participate in the relevant divisions and the MJFC's desire to field two competitive teams. On this basis it is expected that the majority of the more competent players (but not necessarily all the better players) will be in the higher graded team.

The higher graded team shall be referred to as the Black team with the second team referred to as the Yellow team.

The teams will operate as separate teams (i.e. the yellow team shall not be considered a 'reserve' team). It is expected that the teams will train together and that the coaches will cooperate during the selection process and in the sharing of players throughout the season should a team be short of players, as per EFNL policy. Culturally, it would be hoped teams socialise and mix as one whole age group, negating the barriers between what is seen as a top and a bottom side and encouraging the one MJFC mentality.

Ideally, the teams should have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities. However, in order to field two competitive teams within each age group, and in consideration of the EFNL's grading system for age groups registering two teams (i.e. having two grades between teams e.g. playing in B and D grades rather than B and C grades), the number of players in each team may require flexibility to ensure players participate in the most suitable divisions for their ability level.

In order to determine the formation of multiple teams, the coaches should:

- observe all players during the pre-season 'try-out' period;
- take into account assessments shared by the previous year's coaches;
- liaise with the MJFC's Football Sub-Committee;
- agree the proposed composition of the two teams, and
- forward the team lists to the Football Operations Manager for approval.

It is important that players play in the most appropriate division having regard to their abilities and the competitiveness of our teams. In recognition of this and the fact that players develop at different rates (both physically and ability wise) all players will be assessed during the pre-season 'try-out' period each year to determine the most appropriate team that they should play in.

The coaches should not disclose the composition of the recommended teams to any players or parents until the teams have been approved by the Football Operations Manager.

When teams are announced by the coaches, the coaches are to ensure all players are aware that movement of players may occur within the first four (4) weeks of the season if they believe players are better suited to play within another team. All coaches are required to assess all players from the other team/s at training for a minimum of two (2) training sessions within the first four (4) weeks of in-season training. Movement of players between teams can be made during this time.

### **5.3.3 TRY-OUT PERIOD**

No formal try-out period exists for girls' teams nor boys up to and including Under 15 (U17 see below), although the Club reserves the right to introduce such a period should it determine it necessary.

## **5.4 UNDER 17's**

### **5.4.1 TEAM SIZE**

The EFNL has capped the maximum number of players in any Under 17 team at 30. The MJFC considers that the ideal number of players in these teams to be 26 but will offer a place to all players from the previous year. Should less than 30 players from the previous year register on time, the MJFC may offer a place to new players.

### **5.4.2 TEAM SELECTION**

It is the MJFC's intention to field at least two teams in the Under 17s competition.

Where there are enough players to form two or more teams, the players will be graded based on their skills, size, confidence and football maturity. The players will then be split into two teams having regard to the suitability of the players to participate in the relevant divisions.

On this basis it is expected that the majority of the more competent players but not necessarily all the better player will be in the higher graded team.

The teams will operate as separate teams (i.e. the Yellow team shall not be considered a 'reserve' team). Notwithstanding this, it is expected that the teams will train together and that the coaches will cooperate during the selection process and in the sharing of players throughout the season should a team be short of players.

Ideally, the teams should have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities. However, in order to field two or more competitive teams within each age group, and in consideration of the EFNL's grading system for age groups registering two teams (placing one team in A grade and one team in D grade), the number of players in each team may require flexibility to ensure players participate in the most suitable divisions for their ability level.

In order to determine the formation of multiple teams, the coaches should:

- observe all players during the pre-season 'try-out' period;
- take into account the player assessments prepared by the previous year's coaches;
- liaise with the previous year's coaches (if necessary);
- liaise with the MJFC's Football Operations Manager and Coaches Coordinator;

- agree the proposed composition of the two teams;
- forward the team lists to the Committee for approval.

All players, whether existing MJFC players or those new to the club, will be assessed on their merits. The coaches shall fairly and objectively consider the proposed composition of teams.

The coaches should not disclose the composition of the recommended teams to any players or parents until the teams have been approved by the Committee. The Committee shall appoint a three-person sub-committee to review the teams. When teams are announced by the coaches, the coaches are to ensure all players are aware that movement of players may occur within the first four (4) weeks of the season if they believe players are better suited to play within another team.

All coaches are required to assess all players from the other team/s at training for a minimum of two (2) training sessions within the first four (4) weeks of in-season training. Movement of players between teams can be made during this time.

#### **5.4.3 TRY-OUT PERIOD**

The try-out period is three x intra MJFC match type sessions (likely in early February).

Prior to the try-outs, the coaches shall develop player assessment guidelines to assist them with the team selection process. The Guidelines must be approved by the Football Operations Manager and shall be made available to parents and players prior to the commencement of the try-outs.

Players must attend at least two of three try-outs to be considered for the higher graded team(s). The Coaches must run these three tryouts in February so that the players can be properly graded as early as possible.

Any player who does not participate in the try-outs will automatically be placed in the Yellow team and will be assessed in their first two games to determine which team they should play in for the remainder of the season.

However, a player may be exempt from this requirement in exceptional circumstances and subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. For example, the better players at this level may be in training squads at Oakleigh Chargers or Eastern Rangers and may not be available for the try-out. These players may be selected to the Black team, subject to the approval of the Football Operations Manager.

#### **5.5 END OF SEASON ASSESSMENTS**

At the end of the season, the coaches must provide the MJFC with a simple player assessment addressing: size; skills (kicking, marking, handball; positioning and reading of play); confidence (to attack the ball under pressure, tackle players etc.); maturity; and the recommended team for the following year.

These assessments will be used in subsequent years to assist in the selection of teams where we have multiple teams in the U11s - U18s.

The assessments are confidential documents and will not be released to players or parents.

Once the teams have been selected our Football Operations Manager will review the teams against the previous year's assessments.

## **5.6 TEAM SUPPORT STAFF**

The MJFC greatly appreciates the time and effort of our many volunteers, including the coaches and their support staff (i.e. assistant coaches, team managers, runners and trainers).

Where a single side exists in an age group, the support staff should be confirmed as soon as possible and definitely before pre-season training commences.

Where multiple teams exist, it is important that coaches establish a support crew that has regard to the players likely to play in each team. Support roles should not be finalised until the teams are finalised. Players should not be selected based on the roles their parents may undertake for the team, or indicated they will undertake within a specific team, rather they should be selected based on the team most suitable for their skills and ability.

## **5.7 TIMING**

It is anticipated that the teams will be finalised three weeks prior to the first game.

## **5.8 GRIEVANCES**

Team selection is not an exact science and requires consideration of a range of factors. Coaches will be provided with selection guidelines to ensure that players are placed in the most appropriate teams having regard to their skill level in consideration of the skill level of all players registered to that age group.

The coaches will provide feedback on areas of improvement to all players in the second side within two weeks of the announcement of the teams.

Any person who feels aggrieved should first raise the matter with the relevant coaches and or team manager/s. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the matter may be referred to the Club Secretary and will be considered by the Executive Committee.

## **6. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING**

The MJFC seeks to develop all of our players to the best of their abilities.

### **6.1 DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS & TRAINING**

The MJFC is committed to the development of all of its players.

The MJFC adopts a pathway approach encouraging children to participate in Auskick, then developing them through their junior years (U8s – U18s) with the hope that they will then go on to play senior football.

The underlying aim is to have fun and develop players to the best of their ability.

### **6.2 U8s, U9s and U10s**

#### **6.2.1 DEVELOPMENT**



The majority of players in U8s, U9s and U10s are still in the early stage of learning what many would consider to be the basic skills.

In these age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and wellbeing.

The MJFC believes strongly in the equality of opportunities given to players in the U8s, U9s and U10s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. Similarly, players should be provided with the opportunity to play in all positions, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

### **6.2.2 TRAINING**

The U8s, U9s and U10s shall train one night a week.

The Team Manager will advise the location, timing and duration of training once finalised by the Football Operations Manager.

Players are encouraged to attend training and to participate in a co-operative manner. Nonattendance at training will not affect a player's selection or game time.

Players must wear mouthguards and helmets at training.

The MJFC does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## **6.3 U11s and U12s**

### **6.3.1 DEVELOPMENT**

Some players in the U11s and U12s have developed good skills and are able to perform at a faster pace, which places them at a more competitive level in a match situation. However, some players are still in the early stages of understanding the game and developing their skills. In many ways this is a transitional period as the players' progress into a more competitive environment.

In these age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. Additional focus is placed on skill development and teamwork supplemented through set plays and positioning.

The MJFC believes strongly in providing equal opportunities to players in U11s and U12s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. While some players at this age become naturally suited to set positions, we encourage players to try various positions. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

### **6.3.2 TRAINING**

The U11s and U12s may train one or two nights a week, dependent upon Coaches request and venue availability.

The Team Manager will advise the location, timing and duration of training once finalised by the Football Operations Manager.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions where there are two provided.

Players are expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Irregular non-attendance at training shall not affect a player's selection or game time. However, a player who is not able to regularly attend training may be selected in the Yellow team where the coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice his/her skill development and the ability to effectively compete at a higher level.

Players must wear mouthguards at training.

The MJFC does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training, as and where instructed.

## **6.4 U13s – U16s**

### **6.4.1 DEVELOPMENT**

Many players in U13s and U16s have developed good skills with some even playing representative football while others are still developing. This can be a difficult time as players mature at different rates. Individual players can grow rapidly leading to significant differences in size, ability, confidence and maturity.

In these age groups there is still an emphasis on participation and enjoyment but with an increasing focus on development as the players mature.

The MJFC believes strongly in providing equal opportunities to players in the U13s – U16s. Players should be provided equal game time, although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. Players are still encouraged to try various positions while recognising that this is a time when players can begin to specialise as they develop and mature.

### **6.4.2 TRAINING**

The Under 13s – 16s shall train for two nights a week, dependent upon Coaches request and venue availability.

The Team Manager will advise the location, timing and duration of training once finalised by the Football Operations Manager.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions where there are two provided.

Players are expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Irregular non-attendance at training shall not affect a player's selection or game time. However, a player who is not able to regularly attend training may be selected in the Yellow team where the

coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice his/her skill development and the ability to effectively compete at a higher level.

Players must wear mouthguards at training.

The MJFC does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## **6.5 U17s and U18s**

### **6.5.1 DEVELOPMENT**

By this stage we expect that most players will have developed good skills and a sound understanding of the game. While the coach has overall responsibility for the development and wellbeing of the team, we expect players to become more accountable and take greater responsibilities for their training and performance.

This is a watershed period - some players have developed very good skills and have been selected by Oakleigh Chargers/Eastern Rangers. Others are aspiring to play senior football at Mitcham while others are less driven to play senior football. Hence it can be a difficult period with players having various aspirations. Our aim is to help the players develop to the best of their abilities and while the MJFC will seek to achieve this, it will very much depend on the desires of the players and their individual commitments to not only training but their own development.

### **6.5.2 TRAINING**

The Under 17s shall train two nights a week.

The Team Manager/s will advise the location, timing and duration of training.

Players are encouraged to attend both training sessions, and expected to attend at least one training session per week and to participate in a cooperative manner.

Non-attendance at training may affect a player's selection or game time where the coaches believe that the player's failure to regularly attend training could prejudice the player's skill development and the ability to effectively compete on game day.

Players must wear mouthguards training.

The MJFC does not provide first aid officers at training. Training may also be cancelled due to excessive heat, inclement weather or poor ground conditions. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training. They are also encouraged to assist the coaches with training.

## **7. GAME TIME (ROSTERING & ROTATION) POLICY**

The MJFC seeks to provide all players with similar opportunities to play football.

### **7.1 U8s, U 9s and U10s – GAME TIME**

#### **7.1.1 PLAYER NUMBERS – U8s and U9s**

The EFNL limits the number of U8s and U9s to 26 per game with 15 players on the ground. Where sufficient players are available a team of 20 players should be selected to play. The coach may use his/her discretion to field additional players. Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates. Players who are rostered off are encouraged to attend the game bringing their full playing gear. Should the opposition not have sufficient players then the MJFC player may get the opportunity to play with the opposition.

#### **7.1.2 PLAYER NUMBERS – U10s**

The EFNL limits the number of U10s players to 26 per game with 18s players on the ground. Where sufficient players are available a team of 26 players should be selected to play. Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates. Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.). Players who are rostered off are encouraged to attend the game bringing their full playing gear. Should the opposition not have sufficient players then the MJFC player may get the opportunity to play with the opposition.

#### **7.1.3 GAME TIME – U8s, U9s and U10s**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player:

- should be afforded the same amount of game time over the course of the season.
- selected on game day will play a minimum of half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

No player should play a full game until all players have had the opportunity of playing at least half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

#### **7.1.4 POSITIONING – U8s, U9s and U10s**

Players should be provided with the opportunity to play in all positions (i.e. backline, centre/on ball, forward line and bench), although this may need to be averaged out over several weeks. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability. Players should rotate their position on the ground at least once during the game, to maximize exposure to the game.

#### **7.1.5 LIGHTNING PREMIERSHIP – U9s**

The Lightning Premiership gives players in the EFNL's non-competitive age groups a taste of competitive football – undefeated teams on the day are crowned Lightning Premiers! All players wishing to participate in the Lightning Premiership should be entitled to play. However, if there are too many players, priority will be given to those players who turn 9 that year and who have not participated before. Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player should be rostered for approximately the same amount of game time, although there may not necessarily be equal rotation through all positions.

## **7.2 U11s to U16s – GAME TIME (HOME & AWAY)**

### **7.2.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

The EFNL limits the number of U11s to U16s to 24 players per game with 18 on the field and six (6) on the bench. Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play. Hence there is the potential for players to be rostered off. Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

U11s & U12s - Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier).

U13s to 16s - If there is the need to roster off a player:

- the coach should liaise with other coaches in his/her age group and the coaches in the next age group to ascertain whether any other teams are short of players and whether the rostered off player(s) may be suitable to play in another team.
- If the rostered off players do not play in another team, they should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier).

### **7.2.2 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player:

- should be afforded the same amount of game time over the course of the season.
- selected on game day will play a minimum of three quarters (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

U11s & U12s - No player should play a full game until all players have had the opportunity of playing at least three quarters (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

### **7.2.3 POSITIONING**

While some players at this age become naturally suited to set positions, the MJFC encourages players to try various positions. We believe this to be the best way to provide young footballers with all round development regardless of their level of ability.

## **7.3 U11s to U16s - GAME TIME (FINALS)**

As detailed within the EFNL Bi-Laws, a player must play a minimum of three (3) matches with their affiliated junior club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the finals series for their junior club.

It is generally recognised that finals football is different from Home and Away games. The policy will be based on the following principles:

- an opportunity for as many players as is possible to experience finals football;

- an understanding that player selection and playing time for individual players gives the team the best possible opportunity to win;
- an understanding that the policy will provide Coaches in the U13s to U16s greater scope for varying playing time for individual players than U11s and U12s.

### **7.3.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

Where sufficient players are available a team of 26 players should be selected to play. Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.). In finals, the full list of 26 players can be selected to play.

### **7.3.2 PLAYER SELECTION**

Where a team will play two or more finals, then every player on the team list must be selected in at least one of the first two finals. Where a team is not guaranteed to play more than one final then team selection is at the discretion of the coach. It is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken should the team continue to progress (ie. the MJFC Committee expects that all players should be given the opportunity to play in finals).

Where a team plays three or more finals, it is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken to give all players equal opportunity to play in finals.

### **7.3.3 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player selected in a finals game will play a minimum of half a game.

### **7.3.4 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

## **7.4 U17 & U18s – GAME TIME (HOME & AWAY)**

### **7.4.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

The EFNL limits the number of U17s & U18s to 30 players per game with 18 on the field and 6 on the bench.

Where sufficient players are available a team of 24 players should be selected to play. Hence there is the potential for players to be rostered off. Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player should be afforded the opportunity to play the same number of games as their teammates.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

### **7.4.2 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances each player selected should play a minimum of half a game (or equivalent time over the duration of the game). Coaches may, however, apply some

discretion to the selection of players and the amount of game time they play in any particular week having regard to:

- the preparation of the player (including attendance at, and commitment to, training);
- the performance of the player (including commitment to the game);
- the calibre of the opposition;
- the safety of the player concerned;
- the status of the game.

### **7.4.3 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

### **7.5 U17s & U18s - GAME TIME (FINALS)**

As detailed within the EFNL Bi-Laws, a player must play at least three (3) matches with their affiliated junior club in the home and away matches to qualify to play in the finals series for their junior club.

It is generally recognised that finals football is different from Home and Away games. The policy will be based on the following principles:

- an opportunity for as many players as is possible to experience finals football;
- an understanding that player selection and playing time for individual players gives the team the best possible opportunity to win;
- an understanding that the policy will provide Coaches in the U17s & U18s greater scope for varying playing time having regard to player commitment and the needs of the game.

#### **7.5.1 PLAYER NUMBERS**

Where sufficient players are available a team of 26 players should be selected to play.

Any player rostered off should be considered an 'emergency' and should attend the game to replace a player who may not be available or to assist the team (e.g. water carrier etc.).

#### **7.5.2 PLAYER SELECTION**

Where a team plays two or more finals then every player on the team list must be selected in at least one of the first two finals.

Where a team is not guaranteed to play more than one final then team selection is at the discretion of the coach. It is expected that a reasonable and fair selection process will be undertaken should the team continue to progress (i.e. the Committee expects that all players should be given the opportunity to play in finals).

Where a team plays three or more finals, it is expected that a fair and reasonable selection process will be undertaken.

#### **7.5.3 GAME TIME**

Subject to injury or other extenuating circumstances, every player selected in a finals game will play a minimum of one quarter (or equivalent time over the duration of the game).

#### **7.5.4 POSITIONING**

Players should be positioned having regard to their abilities and the needs of the game.

#### **7.6 MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS BETWEEN TEAMS AND AGE GROUPS**

There may be occasions where a team has insufficient players for a game and coaches may seek players from other teams.

Where there are two teams in the same age group, coaches should seek players from the other team in their age group in the first instance.

Where additional players cannot be sourced from the same age group, coaches should seek players from the age group below.

The two relevant coaches should satisfy themselves that any child nominated to play up is capable of playing in the higher competition.

The coach has total discretion about the amount of game time a substitute player may play if s/he has already played a game that day.

The EFNL poses severe limits on players playing up (e.g. number of games allowed, finals qualifications etc.): coaches should consult with our Football Operations Manager before seeking to play a player up.

All players in the U10 to U16 grades (inclusive) may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may play more than two years above his/her registered age group;

The first team a player plays his/her third (3) match in is the only team they can qualify for finals in.

Once a player has qualified in a division, they are limited to two (2) matches in a higher division. They cannot move down to a lower division.

All players in the U17 & U18 grades may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may:

- Play nine (9) or more games out of his/her registered age group in any one season;
- Play nine (9) or more games in the senior competition or TAC Cup Competition and participate in the Under 17 finals in that season.

Players may qualify for finals in both U17/U18 and Under 19/seniors.

#### **7.7 MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS WITHIN AGE GROUPS**

In accordance with the EFNL By-Laws, players in U10s to U16s can only play up two age groups (e.g. an U12 player can only play up to U14s), and can only play out of their registered age group twice per season.



Players in U17s may play out of their registered age group. However, no player may play nine or more games out of his/her registered age group in any one season; play nine or more games in the senior competition or TAC Cup Competition and participate in the Under 17 finals in that season. Players may qualify for finals in both Under 17 and Under 19 Seniors.

Where a club fields more than one (1) team in the same age grade a player in U11s to U18s is permitted to move between teams. However:

- Once a player has played five (5) matches in the higher graded team, that player may not move to the lower graded team for the remainder of the season;
- Players in the lower rated team are free to move to the higher rated team during home and away matches;
- The first team a player plays five (5) games is the only team that player is eligible to represent in the finals series;
- Where a bye is fixtured in the higher graded team, no player is permitted to move to the lower graded team during the week of the bye;
- If a club with multiple teams in one age group forfeits a match, the forfeit can only occur in the lower rated team.

## **7.8 PLAYER AVAILABILITY & GAME TIME RECORDS**

The Coaching Team must keep a record of:

- player availability each week;
- the amount of game time a player receives each week.

The Team Manager must:

- keep the records until presentation day;
- provide the records to the Committee with 48hours of receiving a request from the Club

Secretary or Football Operations Manager for the records.

## **8. CAPTAINS**

The MJFC seeks to provide strong leadership for all of our teams and to reward players who clearly lead by example and reflect the values of the MJFC.

### **8.1 U8s, U9s and U10s – TEAM CAPTAINS**

The coach shall appoint a captain or co-captain each week. A player shall not be reappointed until all players have had the chance of being a captain.

### **8.2 U11s to U16s – TEAM CAPTAINS**

Ideally a captain should be appointed for the season. Alternatively, the team may elect to appoint a leadership group.

Where a captain is appointed, the team may also appoint a vice captain or vice captains. The coach may appoint the captain or invite the players to vote for whom they believe should be the captain. The coach should ensure that the Captain demonstrates maturity, leads by example, has the respect of the players and, most importantly, complies with the MJFC's Behaviour policy.

A player in the U11s to U16s teams should not be appointed as a captain for two or more consecutive seasons.

### **8.3 U17s and U18s – TEAM CAPTAINS**

Only a single captain should be appointed for the boys U17s boys team/s and U18s girls team/s.

The teams should also appoint a vice captain or vice captains.

The coaches may invite the players to vote on who they believe should be the captain. The coach should ensure that the captain demonstrates maturity, leads by example, has the respect of the players and, most importantly, complies with the MJFC's Behaviour policy.

The captain of the second U17s boys team may be reappointed as the boys U17s captain for the following season.

## **9. AWARDS & MILESTONES**

The MJFC seeks to celebrate the achievement and development of our players.

### **9.1 WEEKLY AWARDS**

Weekly encouragement awards should be distributed evenly to all players over the year to recognise their efforts and achievements. These awards are granted at the discretion of the Coach. These awards are also to provide opportunities for sponsors who otherwise would not be able to assist the club. These sponsors should be acknowledged throughout the season when awards are presented.

### **9.2 U8s, U9s & U10s - AWARDS**

All U8s, U9s & U10s players will receive a participation trophy or medallion during the course of the season and/or at the end of the season. In addition to this, each group will be provided with three (3) coaches awards as selected by the coaching team.

### **9.3 U11s – U18s – AWARDS**

The following awards will be presented at the end of the season for the U11s – U18s:

- Best and Fairest (by votes). Multiple winners are allowed and each receives a trophy (i.e. no count backs).
- Runner up Best and Fairest (by votes). Multiple winners are allowed and each receives a trophy (i.e. no count backs).
- Three (3) additional awards as nominated by the Coaching Team e.g. most consistent, coaches award, most improved. Selected at the discretion of the coach and support staff. Single award only.

#### **9.3.1 BEST & FAIREST VOTING**

Best and Fairest awards are applicable to all competitive boys and girls age group teams i.e. from U11 to U18.

The 'Best and Fairest' and 'Runner Up Best and Fairest' players will be determined by a combination of coaches and parent/guardian votes.

Three (3) sets of votes are to be cast in every game. Two by team officials – the Coach and one other team official, such as Assistant Coach, Runner, Trainer (as determined by the Coach) and one parent (as determined by the Team Manager on a weekly basis) will cast votes at the conclusion of each game.

Best and Fairest votes are awarded on a descending scale with the best player being awarded five (5) votes scaling down to the 5<sup>th</sup> best player being awarded one (1) vote.

All votes must be correctly recorded using the MJFC Voting Slip. The voting slips must include the date and the round, full player name and player number.

At the conclusion of the season the counting of votes is conducted in the presence of the Team Coach, Secondary Official and Team Manager. Once the vote count has been conducted, the results must be kept confidential and the Team Manager must forward the results to the Club Secretary after the last game of the Season.

If two or more players are tied on the same number of votes, they should be declared joint winners. The same applies to the two runners up.

## **9.5 AWARD PRESENTATIONS**

The awards outlined in Sections 9.2 – 9.4 will be awarded at the MJFC's Annual Presentation Day.

Team officials should not disclose the award recipients prior to presentation day without the Committee's approval.

## **9.6 MILESTONES**

The MJFC will recognise the outstanding achievement of a player reaching 100 junior games with a 100 game EFNL Medallion.

Players who transfer from another club, should advise their team manager of the number of games played.

The Team Manager will advise the Club Secretary when a player is approaching his/her milestone, so the medal/s can be ordered.

Please note that any costs associated with milestone banners etc are the responsibility of the parent / guardian not the club.

## **SECTION C – BEHAVIOUR, CODE OF CONDUCT & SAFETY**

### **11. BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

The MJFC seeks to provide an enjoyable football environment where we play fairly and respect our teammates, players, coaches, opponents, umpires, parents and visitors.

#### **11.1 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The EFNL has adopted a Code of Conduct for players, coaches, administrators/officials and parents/spectators (see attached document). The MJFC fully supports the EFNL's Code of Conduct and expects all players, coaches, administrators/officials and parents/spectators to abide by the code.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with the EFNL's Code of Conduct. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to the Club Secretary and will be managed in accordance with our Issue Resolution Policy.

#### **11.2 RACIAL & RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION**

No person in his/her capacity as a participant, coach, administrator, official, volunteer, parent or spectator in the MJFC in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the MJFC shall engage in conduct that offends, humiliates, intimidates, ridicules, incites, threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or national or ethnic origin.

No person in his/her capacity as a spectator or participant in the MJFC in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the MJFC shall intentionally engage in conduct that s/he knows is likely to incite hatred against another person, or threaten physical harm or incite hatred in others to cause physical harm to a person or to a person's property because of that person's race, religion, colour, descent, gender, sexual orientation, ability or national or ethnic origin.

The MJFC supports the EFNL's Discrimination and Vilification policy and must adhere to the Australian Football League National Vilification and Discrimination policy (February 2003).

The MJFC is bound by the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic), the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth), and the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic). This Policy is consistent with the legislation but not in substitution of the legislation.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your team manager or to the Club Secretary and will be managed in accordance with our Issue Resolution Policy.

#### **11.3 VICTIMISATION**

No person in his/her capacity as a participant, coach, administrator, official, volunteer, parent or spectator in the MJFC in the course of carrying out his/her duties or functions as or incidental to being a participant in the MJFC should victimise another person.

A person will victimise another person (the victim) if:

(a) the person subjects or threatens to subject the victim to any detriment because the victim (or a person associated with the victim) intends to or has lodged a complaint in contravention of this Policy;  
or

(b) the person assists, requests, induces, encourages or authorises another person to subject the victim to any detriment because the victim (or a person associated with the victim) intends to or has lodged a complaint in contravention of this Policy.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to the Club Secretary and will be managed in accordance with our Issue Resolution Policy.

#### **11.4 GENDER**

The MJFC actively encourages both boys and girls to play football.

In accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic), people aged under 12 years of age cannot be excluded on the basis of sex or gender identity from participating in a competitive sporting activity.

Pursuant to section 66 (1) of the Act, people of one sex or gender aged 12 and over can be excluded from participating in competitive sporting activities in which the strength, stamina and physique of competitors is relevant.

As a member of AFL Victoria, the EFNL excludes females who reach 14 years of age as at 1 January in the year of play from playing in any competition that is not a 'female competition'.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to your Team Manager or to the Club Secretary and will be managed in accordance with our Issue Resolution Policy.

#### **11.5 REPORTED PLAYERS (Including Yellow and Red Cards)**

It can be a very traumatic experience for a junior player to be reported or to be the victim of a reportable incident. The MJFC will endeavour to ensure that the distress associated with this event is minimised.

The Coach and Team Manager need to manage the situation in a calm and supportive manner. Often a report may occur as a result of a heated incident. It is the responsibility of the two MJFC officials to ensure:

- a) The player is removed from the ground for the Coach to be able to talk to the player about the incident and point out the outcomes of such an incident;
- b) That the bench and player/s remain calm, ensuring that no further incidents grow out of the particular case;
- c) That supporters and in particular, the parents, of the reported player remain calm and do not incite a further incident.
- d) Ensure that all details (including witness details) of the incident are immediately noted, as this may be needed as evidence at the tribunal.

After the game, the Coach and Team Manager, in consultation with the player and parents (if they are able to contribute in a positive manner) will discuss the timing and actions to be taken.

The Club Secretary and Football Operations Manager need to be notified of the report and the decision of the Coach, Team Manager and player regarding the taking of the set penalty. If the case goes to the tribunal, the Club Secretary will then contact the MJFC President who will then commission the services of the Football Operations Manager and Player Welfare Officer.

The Advocate will then take charge of the defence. It would be expected that the Coach would still take a very active role in the moral support of the player.

In the event of one of our players being required to give evidence, then all steps will be followed except those related to Set Penalty.

In the event that a set penalty is handed down, there is no grounds for appeal, so no further evidence can be given.

A player who has been on the receiving end of a reportable incident and is required to give evidence needs to be well supported especially morally.

It should also be noted that the MJFC in certain circumstances might impose disciplinary action and/or penalties or suspensions outside the findings of the League / Tribunal with respect to misconduct or bringing the game or the MJFC into disrepute. This action may be taken even if a report has not been made. These decisions will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

All incidents / outcomes should be recorded on an incident report form and should be filed by the MJFC's Secretary.

## **11.6 EFNL PENALTIES & FINES**

A player who is suspended is not eligible to be selected to play for the duration of the suspension. A suspended player should not be considered to be rostered off. Players (and their parents) are liable for the payment of any fines imposed on them by the EFNL. If the EFNL issues the fine to the MJFC it is expected that the player/parents will fully compensate the MJFC. An unpaid fine will be considered a debt to the MJFC and as such:

- The player cannot play for the MJFC until the fine is paid;
- The MJFC will not re-register a player in future season until the fine is paid;
- The MJFC will not approve a transfer to another club until the fine has been paid.

## **12. ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY**

The MJFC seeks to ensure that any issues raised are resolved in a timely and amicable manner to the satisfaction of all parties.

### **12.1 RAISING A CONCERN**

Any person wishing to raise an issue should do so as follows:

- Team related – raise the concern directly with the Team Manager or Coach;

- General nature – raise the concern with a Committee Member, ideally the Club Secretary via email.

## **12.2 TEAM COMPLAINTS**

### **12.2.1 PARENTS/PLAYERS CONCERNS ABOUT COACHING**

Our coaches are not paid. They volunteer a lot of time and effort to provide a positive learning environment for our children. Parents are asked to fully support and, where possible, assist coaches when required. If you have any concerns regarding the coach, you should inform the Team Manager and where possible, speak directly to the coach about your concerns. At no time should you attempt to confront a coach whilst training or a game is in progress.

### **12.2.2 COACHES CONCERNS ABOUT PARENTS**

If a coach has a problem with a parent they should try to establish and maintain an open line of communication and talk to the parent about the concern. It is advisable that this is done in the presence of the Team Manager. Do not let the situation become heated.

If the matter is not able to be resolved in this manner, it should be referred to the Club Secretary, who in turn may refer it to the Executive Committee, including the Welfare Officer, for mediation and resolution.

### **12.2.3 COACHES CONCERNS ABOUT A PLAYER**

If a coach has a problem with a player they should talk to the player and express their concerns. Discussions are always to be undertaken in the presence of a parent or guardian.

If they are unable to resolve the matter at that level they may refer it to the Club Secretary for consideration.

If concerns continue, Coaches have the authority to suspend players if the further incident warrants this action, however this path of action would need to be discussed in the first instance with our Football Operations Manager.

### **12.2.4 PLAYER CONCERNS ABOUT ANOTHER PLAYER**

If a player has an issue with another player, s/he (or their parents) should not take matters into their own hands but rather refer the matter to the coach in the first instance.

If they are unable to resolve the matter at that level, they may refer it to the Club Secretary for consideration.

## **12.3 COMPLAINTS INVOLVING OTHER CLUBS**

### **12.3.1 COMPLAINS AGAINST ANOTHER CLUB**

If a MJFC member has concerns about the behaviour of a player, team official or spectator, they should first raise the matter with the relevant Team Manager who should address it by speaking to the opposing Team Manager. If they are unable to resolve the matter, they may refer it to the Club Secretary for consideration.

Irrespective of the outcome, any complaints made to an opposing Club should be referred to the Club Secretary for noting.

### **12.3.2 COMPLAINTS BY ANOTHER CLUB**

If a representative of another Club wishes to raise a concern, they should do so in the first instance with the relevant MJFC team manager.

If they are unable to resolve the matter, they may refer it to the Club Secretary for consideration.

Irrespective of the outcome, any complaints received from an opposing Club should be referred to the MJFC Club Secretary for noting.

### **12.4 COMPLAINTS TO THE CLUB SECRETARY**

The MJFC Club Secretary shall act as the MJFC's Complaints Officer.

#### **12.4.1 RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS**

Depending on the nature of the issue the Club Secretary will, in consultation with the President, refer the matter to the relevant MJFC Official for investigation and resolution, typically:

Matter Investigating Officer – as appointed by President

Player selection, game time etc. Football Sub-Committee

Coaches and other team officials behaviour – Football Sub-Committee

Player behaviour - Welfare Manager/ Football Sub-Committee

Matters involving claims of vilification, discrimination & bullying – Vilification Officer

Parent / spectator behaviour – President / Secretary

Matters involving the EFNL and/or other Clubs - President & Secretary

Depending upon the nature of the issue the matter may be referred to a third party either internally or externally to the Club (e.g. Child Protection Officer).

The MJFC President, Vice President and Secretary are the only representatives of the MJFC who may lodge an official complaint with another team, the EFNL or any other organisation.

#### **12.4.2 RESOLUTION**

In attempting to resolve the issue, all parties should take into account the following factors:

- The extent of the issue, i.e., if it is likely to have a wider effect in the MJFC;
- The number of players or teams affected;
- Whether appropriate temporary measures are possible or desirable;
- The expected time before the issue can be addressed; and
- What resources may be needed to resolve the issue.

On receiving a complaint, the Investigating Officer shall:



- inform the person alleged to have contravened the Policy (the respondent) of the complaint and provide the respondent with an opportunity to respond to it;
- obtain statements from any witnesses identified by both parties to the complaint;
- where available, obtain any other evidence;
- arrange for the complaint to be conciliated, by an independent conciliator agreed upon by both parties;
- take all steps necessary for the complaint to be conciliated within 5 working days from the day on which the incident is alleged to have occurred;
- ensure that where a matter is resolved by conciliation the only public statement made shall be agreed to by both parties to the complaint and the MJFC's President and that the terms of any settlement are finalised to the satisfaction of the complainant and respondent and signed by the parties and the conciliator.

## **12.5 SANCTIONS**

Where a MJFC member is found to have breached Club policy, the MJFC may adopt the following response:

### **12.5.1 COMMITTEE**

By taking a role in the Junior Committee, each member accepts the collective responsibilities this entails. Each member must ensure that his/her behaviour and demeanour set an example for others to follow. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code may include:

- Written Warning: (By Executive Committee / Delegated Committee Representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before a recommended constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Relevant Coordinator, Secretary or delegated Board representatives).
- Suspension: (decision of Executive Committee).

### **12.5.2 PLAYERS**

Part of learning how to play the game is learning how to conduct themselves both on and off the field. Players must be aware that MJFC demands the highest standards of behaviour. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code, may include:

- 'Formal' Verbal Warning: (Coach) - Coach to handle the initial on-field misdemeanours.
- Written Warning: (Committee /Delegate)
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Manager and/or committee representative, Team Manager, Coach, Team Captain).
- Suspension: (By Executive Committee).
- Deregistration: (By Executive Committee).

### **12.5.3 COACHES**

A coach is mentor, role model, teacher and counsellor to players. Parents and players therefore should expect that the behaviour and demeanour of coaches is not only exemplary but beyond reproach. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code (graded):

- Warning: (Football Operations Manager/ Coaches Coordinator / Executive Committee Representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Operations Manager and two other relevant officials, approved by the Junior Committee).
- Suspension (By Executive Committee).

#### **12.5.4 PARENTS**

Parents of players at MJFC have the right to expect that the MJFC will provide a safe, harmonious and enjoyable environment for their child to play football.

The MJFC in return expects that parents will ensure that their behaviour does not bring the MJFC into disrepute. Possible consequences of breaches of the Code (graded):

- Warning: (By Team Manager / Executive Committee representative).
- Written Caution: (By Executive Committee - after appearing before an appropriately constituted panel - to be comprised of at least two of: Football Operations Manager and two other relevant officials, approved by the Executive Committee).
- Suspension: (By Executive Committee).

Care needs to be exercised to ensure that players are not penalised for the behaviour of others.

#### **12.6 CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the complaints process. All parties to a complaint must agree to the maintenance of confidentiality. No person involved in the complaints process should publicly comment on any aspect of the complaints process without the prior written agreement of all parties.

### **13. PLAYER SAFETY POLICY**

MJFC seeks to provide a safe playing environment for its players and spectators.

#### **13.1 MEDICAL NOTIFICATION**

At the start of the season each player (or parent/guardian) must complete the players required medical details as outlined on the MJFC's online Registration form.

The player (or parent/guardian) must advise of any conditions that would place the player at risk or could impede his/her ability to participate.

The medical details of each player is to be retained by the team's Trainer for the duration of the season and destroyed at the end of the season.

Players (or parent/guardians) must notify their coach and/or trainer of any changes in circumstances (injury / health problem etc.) that could place the player at greater risk.

## **13.2 INJURIES**

The health and safety of the MJFC's players, personnel and spectators is the MJFC's most important priority and overrides any other consideration including winning games and finals.

There may be occasions during the season when injuries occur. All teams must have a qualified Trainer (Refer Section 13.8). At least one parent or nominated guardian of each child is expected to remain at training and during the games, to attend to any off-site medical attention that their child may need. In the event that a parent/guardian is unable to be located, the Trainer has the authority to make decisions on his/her behalf in accordance with the welfare of the child.

Before each game, the responsibility for a player's capacity to play the relevant game rests with the player's parents/guardians. Although the relevant Trainer and Coach may be consulted concerning this issue, any decision must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian.

During each game the responsibility for the health and safety of players rests with the Trainer together with the player's parents/guardian. Any decision concerning this issue must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian together with the Trainer.

In the event of an injury or health concern during a game, other MJFC personnel including coaches and assistant coaches are to be guided by the Trainer and the player's parents/guardians concerning the player's capacity to play the game and any decision concerning this issue must ultimately be made by the player's parents/guardian together with the Trainer.

It is the responsibility of the Trainer to administer any medications or substances/sprays etc. but consent must be provided as set out below.

- Except in the case of an emergency, no medications, medical assistance or substances/sprays etc. are to be provided by the Trainer to a player without the consent of the player's parents/guardian.
- To avoid doubt this does not include minor and routine assistance to a player such as stretching/rub down/ice assistance for a muscle strain or similar type of injury which may be provided as a matter of course and without the need for consent of the player's parents/guardian.
- The cost of transportation and/or medical treatment is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- Any player who is sent to a hospital for treatment as a result of an incident at a game or training, must provide a medical certificate stating that they are fit to play, prior to resuming training /playing.
- All injuries are to be reported to the Trainer in the first instance. Serious injuries (i.e. those that may require medical treatment) should be reported to the Team Manager who should then inform the Trainers Coordinator and Club Secretary within 24 hours.
- Team managers are provided with accident forms in their kits.

If the Coach or Trainer is concerned about a player's fitness, they may require the player to provide a medical certificate stating that they are fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing.

### **13.2.1 CONCUSSION**

The most important element in the management of concussion is the welfare of the player in the short and long term.

The MJFC recommends a conservative approach to the management of concussion. In particular, the MJFC adopts the key AFL concussion management principle, namely "If in doubt, sit them out."

Any player who suffers a concussion or suspected concussion as a result of an incident at a game or training, must not return to the field.

If a coach or trainer suspects a player may have suffered a concussion at a game or training, s/he must require the player to provide the teams trainer a medical certificate stating that the player is fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing. The trainer will be required to advise the coach.

Any player who suffers a concussion or suspected concussion away from the field must provide the coach or trainer with a medical certificate stating that the player is fit to play, prior to resuming training / playing.

The priority for players is the successful return to learning and school before returning to playing.

### **13.3 MOUTHGUARDS**

Players must wear a mouthguard during matches and at training. The MJFC may organise for mouthguards to be fitted and purchased prior to each season to assist in the facilitation of this policy.

### **13.4 U8s – U10s HELMETS**

The wearing of helmets is compulsory in the U8s – U10s teams.

### **13.5 U13s – U18s HELMETS**

The wearing of helmets in Under 13s – Under 18s is at the discretion of the individual players and their parents. Any child playing up is actively encouraged to wear a helmet. Helmets may be able to be purchased through the club.

### **13.6 EXTREME WEATHER**

#### **13.6.1 EXTREME WEATHER AT TRAINING**

When weather is inclement the coach will decide if training is to proceed and coaches will always defer to player safety.

If lightning is present at the commencement of training then training will not proceed until the lightning dissipates. Players and coaches should seek shelter. Parents should feel free to take their children home.

A coach should cancel training if s/he believes that weather conditions are unsuitable.

When the weather is extremely cold or inclement, parents should decide if they want to subject their child to training in such conditions. The decision ultimately remains with the parents.

In heat conditions (pre and early season) parents should decide if they want to subject their child to training in such conditions. The decision ultimately remains with the parents.

Selection in the team for matches will be in accordance with the MJFC's Team size and Selection policy and the Game Time (Rostering & Rotation) policy. Cancellation of training or non-attendance due to severe weather conditions shall not be a factor in selection.

### **13.6.2 EXTREME WEATHER ON GAME DAY**

The MJFC must adhere to the Australian Football League National Extreme Weather policy (June 2013) and Match Cancellation – Adverse Weather Conditions guidelines as detailed within the EFNL's By-Laws.

## **13.7 GROUND SAFETY**

### **13.7.1 GROUND SAFETY AT TRAINING**

The Coach should satisfy him/herself that the ground and weather conditions are such that it is safe to train.

If the Coach considers that the conditions are not safe, i.e. due to poor ground conditions, excessive heat or inclement weather, they can either check if the MJFC rooms are available to run an indoor training session if suitable, or training may be required to be cancelled. Accordingly, parents are expected to remain at training for all junior teams.

### **13.7.2 GROUND SAFETY ON GAME DAY**

The Coach should satisfy him/herself that the ground and weather conditions are such that it is safe to play football.

If the Coach considers that the conditions are not safe, they should first consult with his/her Team Manager and the Coach and Team Manager of the opposing team to discuss the matter.

If the Coach still considers that the conditions are not safe, they should immediately raise the matter with the Field Umpire, although it should be noted that the EFNL does not give the umpires the responsibility of determining whether an oval is fit for play.

If the matter still cannot be resolved the Coach or Team Manager should immediately contact the MJFC President or a member of the Executive Committee, who will liaise with the EFNL.

The MJFC will fully support a Coach who determines and can demonstrate that the conditions are unsafe for football.

A parent or guardian may determine that the conditions are not safe for their child and withdraw them from the game without fear of recrimination.

## **13.8 TRAINERS**

Each team must have a suitably qualified trainer in attendance for the duration of the game.

As detailed in the EFNL By-Laws, at least one Level one accredited trainer needs to attend all matches. All other trainers are required to complete a recognised senior first aid course (e.g. Sports First Aid, St Johns or Red Cross). Details regarding the qualification of trainers can be obtained from the Eastern Football League Trainers Association.

Each team is permitted to have up to three trainers.

The minimum age for trainers is 15 years of age.

## **14. CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

### **14.1 PURPOSE**

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Executive Committee, General Committee and volunteers of the MJFC to child safety, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the MJFC has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

The MJFC supports the AFL's National Child Protection Policy (March 2015).

### **14.2 COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

All children who are a part of the MJFC have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our MJFC care will always be our first priority and the MJFC has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The MJFC aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the MJFC's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

### **14.3 APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY**

This policy was developed by the MJFC and in collaboration with our volunteers.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- Participants/players
- Coaches
- Parents/Guardians
- Spectators
- Administrators
- Volunteers
- Officials
- Contractors

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and

- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

#### **14.4 CHILD ABUSE**

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse including via social media and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the MJFC is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

#### **14.5 CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO SAFETY & PARTICIPATION**

The MJFC encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We listen to and act on any concerns children or their parents/guardians raise with us. We have a Welfare Officer to whom complaints can be made, and we have Executive and General Committee members who are aware of and committed to the importance of child safety.

#### **14.6 VALUING DIVERSITY**

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. The club is committed to racial vilification and discrimination education for all our junior teams.

#### **14.7 RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

The MJFC takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of its volunteers:

- Interview and conduct reference checks on all Coaches;
- Require Working with Children Checks for our Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Managers, Trainers, Runners and Committee of Management representatives;
- Require our Coaches and Assistant Coaches to obtain an AFL Victoria level 1 coaching course;
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all coaching applications and as part of the induction process for our volunteers, which includes the MJFC's use of the Everproof platform - <https://everproof.com> – which is the EFNL accreditation guidelines.

#### **14.8 SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEERS**

The MJFC seeks to attract and retain the best volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated.

#### **14.9 REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT**

The MJFC has appointed our player Welfare Officer as a Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by children, parents/guardians or volunteers.

#### **14.10 RISK MANAGEMENT Child Safety reporting procedure**

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid or minimise direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel; or
- physical contact when coaching or managing children.

## **15. CHILD SAFETY REPORTING PROCEDURES**

The MJFC is committed to thoroughly and quickly responding to any allegations of abuse in order to protect the safety of our players.

The safety and welfare of our players are paramount and are more important than, for example, the reputation of the MJFC and winning games of football.

### **15.1 INITIAL REPORTING TO MJFC VOLUNTEER**

If a player discloses an allegation to a MJFC volunteer the volunteer shall:

- show concern and empathy for the player;
- listen to what they are saying including by letting them use their own words;
- tell the player that they did the right thing by telling them;
- let them know what will happen next; and
- inform the MJFC's Welfare Officer. The MJFC has appointed a Welfare Officer as Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by children, parents/guardians or volunteers.

The volunteer must not:

- make promises you cannot keep i.e. promising you won't tell anyone;
- push the player into giving details of the alleged abuse. The role of the volunteer is to listen and not to investigate; and
- indiscreetly discuss the circumstances of the incident with others not directly involved with the player.

### **15.2 NEXT STEPS**

The MJFC, via its Welfare Officer and Executive Committee, will initially consider which steps to take, which may include:

- providing appropriate support to the player and their family including counselling;
- commencing an internal investigation;



- reporting to an external authority; and
- obtaining legal advice.

If appropriate the MJFC should consult the Police or Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding how they want the MJFC to proceed before undertaking any internal investigation. Such bodies may want to speak to the accused or witnesses before the MJFC does this.

### **15.3 INTERNAL INVESTIGATION**

When an internal investigation is conducted the specific details concerning the incident should be obtained by asking questions such as:

- Can you tell me what happened from the start?
- When and where did the incident occur?
- Did anyone see the incident?
- Who was there?
- What was said?
- Did you make a note of what happened including via text or social media message?

All participants in the investigation are required to maintain confidentiality and should be required to sign a confidentiality agreement as part of this process.

Depending on the circumstances the MJFC should consider appointing an independent and external investigator who is suitably qualified.

All participants must be afforded procedural fairness. To ensure this, the accused must be made aware of the allegations against them in sufficient detail and must be allowed a reasonable opportunity to respond to them.

The investigator may then seek to interview all relevant witnesses and gather all relevant documents. They should then prepare a witness statement for each participant to record their version of events and sign.

The investigator should then prepare a comprehensive report setting out their findings on the balance of probabilities and their reasoning for the findings. All information collated as part of the investigation should be attached to the investigation report and stored in an appropriate location to ensure confidentiality.

It's very important that the report is kept confidential and not circulated or disseminated.

### **15.4 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

If any person (aged 18 or over) forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (aged 18 or older), that person must make a report to the police as soon as possible unless certain exceptions apply.

Committee members, volunteers or of age players of the MJFC should discuss their concerns and observations with the MJFC's Child Safety Officer, who can assist the person to make the report to the police as required. The EFNL and/or AFL Victoria can also be contacted on a confidential basis as required.

Any person (of any age) that forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect) may disclose that information to the police or DHS. The MJFC encourages all persons with concerns to raise this directly with the MJFC's Child Safety Officer.

### **15.5 MAKING A REPORT**

Ring:

- Victoria police on 000 for emergencies;
- If not an emergency, call the Victoria Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team on (03) 8690 4056.
- DHS on 1300 664 977 or 131 278 (AH). Ask for child protection.

The information needed for making a report is:

- name age and address of child;
- the reason for suspecting that the behaviour or injury is a result of abuse;
- an assessment of the level of danger to the child;
- a description of the injury or behaviour observed;
- the current whereabouts of the child;
- any other information about the family; and
- any specific cultural details e.g. English speaking or disability etc.

The person making the report should:

- ask that the MJFC be informed of each step of the procedure; and
- ask that if an interview is to take place at the MJFC the visiting officer is in plain clothes and the time of the interview is specified so that the MJFC can make appropriate arrangements. If the complainant alleges that a crime has been committed by a committee member, coach, volunteer or contractor, that person will be stood aside immediately while an investigation takes place.

### **15.6 FURTHER MATTERS**

Where an allegation has been made the MJFC will make secure and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the MJFC's response to it.

If the child is to be interviewed by the police or DHS then the MJFC's child safety officer should offer to be present at the interview to give support.

If a report is made the child safety officer should confidentially inform AFL Victoria and the EFNL so that any records can be amended or updated as is appropriate.

Throughout the process outlined above, the interests of the child and their family should be protected from unnecessary disclosure of information concerning the alleged abuse.

If any MJFC volunteers, coaches, players or parents have any queries concerning these procedures they should contact the MJFC's Child Safety Officer or an executive committee member.

These procedures will be reviewed in February 2021.

## **16. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

The MJFC has adopted the Australian Football League's National Social Media Engagement policy (June 2013).

No adult within the MJFC shall engage in individual social friendships with any children, including players on personal social media sites, or shall exchange personal contact details such as phone number, email addresses or social networking site with children, except where necessary for a football related purpose such as availability to play or train.

Multiple adults including an Executive or General Committee member should be part of the contact list and included in any social media communication with players on behalf of or regarding the MJFC.

For any MJFC social media platform, a MJFC administrator needs to monitor posts and comments.

The MJFC must obtain permission (by opt-out request) from parents for any use of a child's name or photo to be used in any postings.

With regards to posts by our members and players (including parents), recognise that you are responsible under law for anything you write or present online.

Be respectful of all other users. Do not engage in behaviour that is derogatory, defamatory, inflammatory, abusive, sexually or racially vilifying, libellous, threatening, bullying, hateful, disrespectful or illegal.

Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person. Do not convey the impression that you speak on behalf of the MJFC unless you have been authorised by the Committee of Management to do so.

Do not post information which is confidential to the MJFC operations or from the Committee of Management.

Social Media is not the forum to raise any complaints or concerns regarding the MJFC, the CoM, club members, sponsors or associates. Please contact a member of the Executive (preferably via email) if you have any concerns or complaints.

The club treats all social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets as public comment.

Postings (written, photos, videos and/or images) will be family friendly and feature positive club news and events.

The administrators and/or editors will have the discretion to re-post any posts from club sponsors pages to fulfil requirements of sponsorship agreements. No personal information about our club members will be disclosed.

No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.

No statements will be made that might bring the club into disrepute.

Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements will not be tolerated. Offending posts will be removed and those responsible will be blocked from the site.

If you notice a posting by a MJFC member or affiliate which breaches these guidelines, or if you notice comments made by others which reflect badly on the club or its members, please bring it to the attention of the MJFC President or another member of the CoM without delay.

## **17. SMOKING & ALCOHOL**

The MJFC seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment for its players and spectators.

### **17.1 NO SMOKING POLICY**

The MJFC is strongly opposed to smoking at all Junior Football activities.

Whilst we acknowledge the individual's right to smoke, we also recognise the potential health implications associated with smoking and passive smoking.

Coaching staff must not smoke whilst they are actively engaged in coaching.

Support and administrative staff must not smoke whilst in the presence of children on the ground.

Parents/guardians and supporters are encouraged not to smoke at junior football matches and events.

Smoking is not allowed in the MJFC clubrooms, change rooms or in the coach's box.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported to the MJFC Secretary and will be managed in accordance with our Issues Resolution Policy.

In doing so, the MJFC may adopt the following response:

- a) Assume that the person is unaware of our No Smoking policy.
- b) The Team Manager or a member of the Committee will approach the person breaching the policy and politely ask them to refrain from smoking and advise them of our MJFC's No Smoking policy.
- c) If the offence continues, then a member of the Committee will verbally warn them and remind them again of the MJFC's No Smoking policy. The offending patron must also be made aware that if they don't stop smoking then they will be required to leave the MJFC's grounds.
- d) If the offence does continue then the patron will be escorted out of the grounds by a Committee member or Senior MJFC representative.
- e) The MJFC may suspend a team official, match day official or committee member who continues to breach the policy.

## 17.2 ALCOHOL POLICY

A total prohibition on alcohol consumption within the reserve applies during junior game days, whilst games are in progress and during training sessions.

There is also a total prohibition of alcohol on the ground during training nights held at the MJFC grounds or at any other grounds.

While alcohol may be served on social occasions, it may only be served:

- in accordance with liquor licensing requirements; and
- in a responsible manner.

Alcohol must not be served to nor consumed by persons who are:

- Under 18 years of age; and /or
- intoxicated.

Alcohol must only be served in accordance with the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (the Act) as regulated by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

All persons associated with the MJFC must comply with these requirements. Any breaches should be reported and will be managed in accordance with our Issues Resolution Policy.

In doing so, the MJFC may adopt the following response:

- a) Assume that the person is unaware of our Alcohol Policy.
- b) The Team Manager or a member of the Committee will approach the person breaching the policy and politely ask them to refrain from drinking alcohol and advise them of the MJFCs Alcohol Policy.
- c) If the offence continues, then a member of the Committee will verbally warn them and remind them again of the MJFC's Alcohol policy. The offending patron must also be made aware that if they don't comply then they will be required to leave the MJFC's facility.
- d) If the offence does continue then the patron will be escorted out of the facility by a Committee member/Senior MJFC representative.
- e) The MJFC may suspend a team official, match day official or committee member who continues to breach the policy.

## **ENDORSEMENT**

POLICY REVIEWED BY: MJFC Secretary, Executive Committee, member 2019

POLICY OWNER: MJFC President 2019

POLICY RATIFIED BY: MJFC Executive Committee 2019

RATIFICATION DATE: 1 November 2019

NEXT REVIEW DUE: 1 November 2020

## **SOURCES & RELATED POLICIES**

- Eastern Football League Incorporated By-Laws (May 2018)
- Eastern Football League Code of Conduct (November 2017)
- Australian Football League Rules (February 2018)
- Australian Football League National Child Protection Policy (as at March 2015)
- Australian Football League National Vilification and Discrimination policy (February 2003)
- Australian Football League National Social Media Engagement policy (June 2013)
- Australian Football League National Extreme Weather policy (June 2013)
- Australian Football League (Victoria) Affiliate Regulations (Regulation 4 – Gender Regulation)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 (the Act)

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Policy Owner will:

- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, policy, research and best practice.
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy.
- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness.

**EASTERN FOOTBALL NETBALL LEAGUE**  
**CODE OF CONDUCT**

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## COACHES:

- Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Avoid over-playing the talented players, the "just average" players need and deserve equal time.
- Remember that players participate for fun and enjoyment.
- Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
- Take into consideration the maturity level of the players, when scheduling and determining the length of practice times and competition.
- Develop team respect for the ability of opponents as well as for the judgement of officials and opposing coaches.
- Follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Keep yourself informed of the sound coaching principles and the principles of growth and development of players.
- Create opportunities to teach appropriate sports behaviour as well basic skills.
- Ensure that skill learning and appropriate sports behaviour have priority over highly structured competitions for young players.
- Help players understand the responsibilities and implications of their freedom to choose between fair and unfair play.

"A child's self-esteem is delicate and easily damaged, particularly by parents attempting to act out their own lives through the youngsters on the sports field. Participation in sports events must be something for children to enjoy. They should not be saddled with win-at-all costs attitudes at any early age."

Daily Telegraph editorial.

## ADMINISTRATORS/OFFICIALS:

- Ensure that equal opportunities for participation in sports are made available to all players, regardless of ability, size, shape, sex (for females under 14), age, disability or ethnic origin.
- Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules take into consideration the age, ability and maturity level of participating players.
- Ensure that adequate supervision is provided by qualified and competent coaches and officials capable of developing appropriate sports behaviour and skill technique.
- Remember that players participate for enjoyment and play down the importance of rewards.
- Provide clinics aimed at improving the standards of coaching and officiating, with an emphasis on appropriate behaviour and skill technique.
- Ensure that parents, coaches, sponsors, physicians and participants understand their responsibilities regarding fair play

Modify rules and regulations to match the skill level of players and their needs.

- Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.
- Publicly encourage rule changes which will reinforce the principles of participation for fun and enjoyment.
- Ensure that your behaviour is consistent with the principles of good sporting behaviour.
- Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed of sound officiating principles and the principles of growth and development of players.



## **PARENTS/SPECTATORS**

- Encourage players to participate, if they are interested.
- Encourage players to always participate according to the rules.
- Never ridicule or yell at a player for making a mistake or losing the game.
- Remember that players learn best from example. Applaud good plays by all teams.
- If you disagree with an official, raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than questioning the official's judgement and honesty in public.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches.
- Remember that children play organised sports for fun. They are not playing for the entertainment to spectators only, nor are they miniature professionals.
- Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
- Demonstrate appropriate social behaviour by not using foul language, harassing players, coaches or officials.

## **PLAYERS:**

- Play by the rules.
- Never argue with an official. If you disagree, discuss the matter with your coach.
- Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other players, or provoking an opponent is not acceptable.
- Work equally hard for yourself and/or for your team. Your team's performance will benefit, so will you.
- Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they be by your team, an opponent or the other team.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another player.
- Cooperate with your coach, teammates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
- Play for the "fun of it" and not just to please parents and coaches.
- Avoid using derogatory language.

Note: Codes of Conduct are part of the National Football Policy provided by the Australian Football League.