



# Ground Marshall Information Resource

## Background

Across the league our club presidents have been calling for greater education and support of the volunteer Ground Marshalls.

AFL Brisbane Juniors believes that the Ground Marshall role (junior/youth grades), is the most important 'off field' role, due to its ability to manage our match days environments to ensure a positive, safe and family friendly environment. The role is essential in maintaining a positive match day environment and ensuring the day runs smoothly.

## Outcome

The Ground Marshall is a simple role and can easily be undertaken by an adult volunteer, with the help of this online information resource and "Ground Marshall Checklist" (attached) which can be provided to you by your club and needs to be filled out prior to every match. However it is very important that the Ground Marshall is well aware of their responsibilities.

## A Ground Marshalls responsibilities include:

- You are responsible for managing the environment
  - Managing off field behaviour
  - You support and uphold the principles of fair play
  - You issue warnings the first time a person breaches a code of conduct that occur off-field
  - You are a complaints receiver, a listener and an advisor
- You wear a bib and represent your club and league
- You report off-field inappropriate behaviour that contravenes the codes of conduct using formal incident recording and reporting processes such as the Ground Marshall Incident Form. (see incident flow chart)
- Monitor officials in coaches box for behaviour and whether or not they should be there
- Facilitate the removal of people where appropriate
- With the assistance of committee members or other match officials you involve the Police if the situation escalates beyond your control.
- Supporting the umpires
  - Assist umpires with their off-field duties such as:
    - Support them throughout the reporting process, this happens when there is a red card.
      - A red card is given when a player or official commits a reportable offence.
      - Once receiving a red card a player or official is not permitted to enter the ground, as well as the interchange area and coaches box, for the remained of that match or any matches thereafter.
      - A player is able to be replaced on the field.
      - The red card process includes the reported player, the witness and both team managers coming to the umpires rooms no later than 10 minutes after the match and to elect how they wish to proceed, whether that be with the set penalty or taking the matter to tribunal.
    - Diffuse conflict if it arises during reporting process
- Introduce yourself to umpire 30 minutes prior to the match commencing

- Some on-field duties include:
  - Provide a drink to umpires at quarter and three quarter time
  - Staying with umpires until siren has sounded
- Maintain the Match Day Schedule
  - Ensuring matches start on time
  - Completion of JLT Match Day Checklist and Ground Marshall Checklist
- Assist First Aid – if there is a stretcher called assist by calling and co-ordinating emergency services
- Extreme weather – if necessary contact the league, but in severe weather if there is inherent danger to the players, play may be stopped.

## Tips for conflict resolution

- Don't become emotionally involved
- Acknowledge the person's anger up front
- Listen to what the person has to say and ask questions
- Give the person space
- Remain calm and confident (don't yell or interrupt)
- Be aware of the tone of your voice and the type of language you use
- Use non-aggressive body language and facial expressions (e.g. don't point your finger, don't stand with your hands on your hips)
- Be patient
- Summarize the situation as you see it
- Give realistic choices/work towards a solution
- If the conflict turns physical, don't get involved – call the Police immediately.

## **STOP, LOOK, LISTEN, RESPOND**

Ground Marshalls may at times deal with volatile situations that require strategies to redirect hostile people and defuse confrontational situations. The first minute of an interaction often determines its direction and outcome and how people react to an interaction is largely dependent on the cues they pick up from you. Try the following steps...

### **STOP**

1. Assess the risk and situation as I approach
2. Decide whether to send for assistance
3. Stay open-minded, intending to defuse the situation
4. Remain calm
5. Don't argue, accuse, or tell to 'calm down'

### **LOOK**

1. Have I ever reacted like that?
2. When I was that age...how did I behave? (if applicable)
3. Are their expectations of the umpire, coach, players or club too high?
4. Am I the focus of their anger?
5. Has the person just displayed aggression towards an individual or group?
6. Is it likely that the person will physically and/or mentally harm you or others?
7. Are they intoxicated?
8. Do you think that this situation is more appropriate for Security or Police?

### **LISTEN**

1. Receive other people's comments without interruption
2. Show empathy and use statements carefully.
3. Validate and clarify
4. Recognise your own prejudices
5. Be quiet

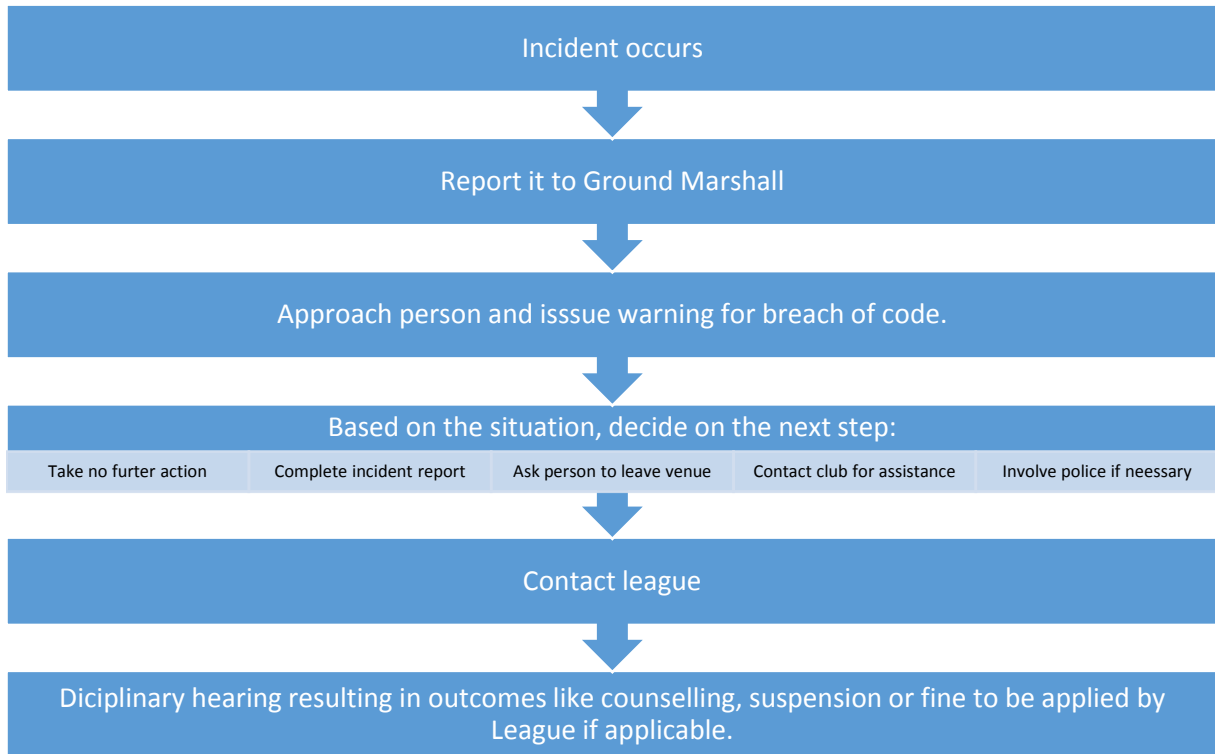
### **RESPOND**

1. Remain calm and keep your language short and simple
2. Use non-threatening body language and tone of voice
3. Very rarely is using the word: 'NO' going to get you very far with the public
4. It is better to say: 'I need' or we need rather than 'you must' or you 'have to'
5. Learn to feel comfortable with phrases such as:
  - a. 'I can help you better if...'
  - b. 'I need you to help me by slowing down just a little...'
  - c. 'I really don't think your comments...'

### **IN SUMMARY**

- Listen to what the problem is for them
- Say what the problem is for you
- Focus on the problem, not the person
- Look for answers so everyone gets what they need
- If the situation can't be resolved in a rationale manner, report the incident.

# Incident Process Flowchart



## Complaint handling principles

As a Ground Marshall it's important that your handling of complaints is fair, just and transparent (i.e. you follow clear processes and procedures).

You should apply the following principles:

- **Treat** complaints seriously
- **Act** promptly
- **Treat** people fairly and listen to both sides of the story
- **Stay** neutral
- **Keep** parties to the complaint informed
- **Try** to maintain confidentiality if possible
- **Protect** against victimisation
- **Keep** accurate records
- **Make** decisions based only on information gathered not personal views
- **Disciplinary** action should be relative to the breach

Where possible, less serious complaints should be resolved informally at the level they occur (e.g. club). An example of a less serious complaint is a coach showing favouritism towards their own child in team selection. However, the circumstances of some complaints may require more formal processes, such as a player missing out on team selection because of race or religious beliefs. Referral to an external agency may be required for very serious issues like suspicion of harm against a child.

There are occasions when a club would benefit from the support of their league to deal with a complaint, for example if a fair process can't be guaranteed because the person being complained about is also responsible for dealing with complaints at the club. Whether such support is available or necessary depends on your league's policies.

## Important Match Day Contacts:

Tony Saunders - Youth Competition Manager (Under 12 – 17) – 0400 006 859

Tim Menzies – Junior Competitions Co-ordinator (Under 6 – 11) – 0433 064 776

Police/Ambulance – 000

Club presidents contact details – refer to [www.aflbj.com](http://www.aflbj.com)

## **PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT**

All parents are requested to carefully read the Codes of Behaviour and parent education undertaking.

1. Remember that children play sport for their enjoyment not yours;
2. Encourage children to participate, do not force them;
3. Focus on the child's effort and performance rather than winning or losing;
4. Encourage children to always participate according to the rules;
5. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a game;
6. Remember that children learn by example. Applaud good play at all times;
7. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse for sporting activities;
8. Show appreciation of volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them your child could not participate;
9. Respect officials decisions and teach children to do likewise;
10. The consumption of alcohol and smoking is inappropriate at all junior games.

## **COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. I will respect the rights, dignity and worth of all individuals within the context of my involvement in the AFL game, including refraining from any discriminatory practices on the basis of race, ethnic background, or special ability/disability;
2. I will abide by and teach the AFL Laws of the Game and the Rules of my Club and League;
3. I will be reasonable in the demands I make on the time commitments of the players in my care, having due consideration for their health and well-being;
4. I will refrain from any form of personal abuse or unnecessary physical contact with the players in my care;
5. I will have due consideration for varying maturity and ability levels of my players when designing practices schedules, practice activities and involvement in competition;
6. Where I am responsible for players in the 5-12 year old age group, I will ensure that all players gain equal playing time. I will avoid overplaying talented players, aiming to maximize participation and enjoyment for all players regardless of ability;
7. I will stress and monitor safety always;
8. In recognizing the significance of injury and sickness, I will seek and follow the physician's advice concerning the return of injured or ill players to training;
9. I will endeavour to keep informed with regard to sound principles of coaching and skill development, and to factors relating to the welfare of my players;
10. I will at all times display and teach appropriate sporting behavior, ensuring that players understand and practice fair play;
11. I will display and foster respect for umpires, opponents, coaches, administrators, other officials, parents and spectators;
12. I will ensure that players are involved in a positive environment where skill learning and development as priorities are not overshadowed by a desire to win;
13. I reject the use of performance enhancing substances in sport and will abide by the guidelines set forth in the AFL Drug Policy.

## **ADMINISTRATION/OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Ensure that equal opportunity for participation in sports are made available to all children regardless of ability, size, shape, sex, age, disability or ethnic origin;
2. Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules take into consideration the age, ability and maturity level of participating children;
3. Ensure that adequate supervision is provided by qualified and competent coaches and officials capable of developing appropriate sports behavior and skill technique;
4. Ensure that parents, coaches, sponsors, physicians and participants understand their responsibility regarding fair play;
5. Modify rules and regulations to match the skill level of children and their needs;
6. Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents;
7. Ensure that your behaviour is consistent with the principles of good behaviour.



## AFL QUEENSLAND JUNIORS - GROUND MARSHALL CHECKLIST

### Match Details

Date: ..... Age / Div: .....  
Time: ..... Home Team: .....  
Venue: ..... Away Team: .....

### Ground Marshall Details

Name: ..... Email: .....  
Mobile (optional): ..... Signature: .....

### Pre Match Requirement - Please tick that requirements are in place

JLT Checklist completed (only required for 1st match of the day )

| First Aid                               | Ground Related   | Coaches Box (inc. upstairs)  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Kit  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Marshall Bib             | <input type="checkbox"/> Lanyards/Bibs visible                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stretcher      | <input type="checkbox"/> Score Board Attendant           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 x Coach                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Siren                           | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 x Assist. Coach                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bib/Lanyard    | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Keeper                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 x Manager                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company        | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaches Box / Inter marked      | <input type="checkbox"/> Interchange players                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Injury Forms   | <input type="checkbox"/> Officials have closed footw ear | <input type="checkbox"/> No others permitted<br>(incl. water carriers) |

*I understand I am required to provide the umpires with water at quarter time and 3 quarter time breaks.*

*I maybe required to advise each team of reduced playing numbers*

### During Match Requirements

- Monitor spectators & coaches boxes of behaviour outside of the Code of Conduct
- Ensure that no spectators engage w ith the umpire(s) during the breaks or before & after the match
- Be visible to the umpire(s) during the course of the match & assist w ith send-offs (if any)
- Do NOT engage w ith coaches asking for messages to be passed on to the umpire(s)

### Post Match Requirements

- I have met w ith the umpire(s) and team managers on the ground
- I have handed the First Aid Reports to the umpire(s) (if applicable)
- Umpire(s) have given the "ALL CLEAR"
- In case of a player report, I have allow ed Player(s) & Team Manager(s) only in the umpires room

**ANY UNREASONABLE CONDUCT MUST BE REPORTED TO THE COMPETITION MANAGER VIA THE 'GROUND MARSHALL INCIDENT FORM'**



## AFL QUEENSLAND JUNIORS – GROUND MARSHALL INCIDENT FORM

This form is to be completed, kept by the club and a copy sent to AFL Queensland Juniors.

### Ground Marshall Details

Name

Club

Home Phone No.

Mobile Phone No.

### Incident Details

Date / Time

Location Venue

Age Group & Division

Match

Vs.

Type of Incident

- Breach of Code of Conduct       Safety / Facility Breach       Malicious Damage  
 Property/Equipment Damage       Theft       Other

Give a brief overview of incident

Give brief overview of action taken by Club

Is further action required?

 Yes No

Ground Marshall Signature

Date





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