

To: SMJFL Club Presidents, Secretaries, Football Operations
From: Matthew Brown, SMJFL CEO
Date: Thursday, April 6, 2023
Re: 2023 SMJFL By-laws – FINAL RELEASE

Background

In July 2022 the SMJFL initiated a review of its By-laws and over the last 8 months the SMJFL Football, Pathways and Talent Committee, SMJFL Board and several Clubs have all contributed to the review at various times and in various capacities.

The process adopted has resulted in a thorough review of the League's By-laws, with Clubs being formally provided the opportunity to provide input on two occasions. This has been a significant undertaking and I take this opportunity to thank the FPT, Board and Clubs for actively engaging on this important project.

As we enter the SMJFL's 2023 season, attached are the final SMJFL By-laws. These will be uploaded to the SMJFL website and distributed via Club Connect and I encourage Clubs to share these with your committees, Team Managers and other interested parties.

The purpose of this memo is to highlight:

- i. The notable and/or substantive changes to the By-laws;
- ii. SMJFL's migration to the PlayHQ Competition Management Platform and the amendments required as a result of this move – especially regarding **Match Day Paperwork** (Clause 21); and
- iii. Adoption by the SMJFL of elements of the **AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook (NCFPH)** which have been circulated previously.

As always, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the SMJFL Office.

CHANGES TO THE SMJFL BY-LAWS

1. Administrative Changes etc

A significant number of proposed changes relate to formatting, numbering, grammatical corrections, additions to Definitions, or for clarification as required as a result of changes made to PlayHQ, for example in Girls' age groups.

This category of changes has no impact on the intent or operation of any particular By-law.

2. Notable/Substantive Changes

Of the remaining changes, the following are of particular note:

- A definition of "Round" has been included to enable games to be played on a range of days from the Friday prior, to, and including the Thursday following, the published date of the Round (the main day for games will continue to be a Sunday).
- Clause 2.1 – Definition – U11 Girls Division 1 has been amended to be non-Modified.
- Clause 5.5.2 – New By-law allowing the CEO to refuse a team nomination or deregister a team if multiple NAG/Interleague players join from other teams.
- Clause 9.26 – Club sponsors' logos are now allowed on the back of shorts in addition to the front of shorts.
- Clause 14 –Number of Players
 - 14.1 – Changes to the number of players permitted to reflect changes to Girls' age groups and the growth in Girls' player numbers and support development.
 - 14.2 – In non-Modified rules games where one team does not have a full team, the team with the numerical advantage in players may play with up to two extra players (i.e. loan players removed from By-law).
 - 14.3 – In Modified rules games where one team does not have a full team, both teams to play with the same number of players (i.e. loan players removed from By-laws).
 - 14.1 – Finals – Retained no limit on player numbers for U11-U14 Mixed, U15 Boys and U16-U17.5 Boys.
- Clause 15 – Forfeited Matches
 - 15.2 – Deleted requirement for a Club to forfeit its lowest ranked team in an age group.
 - Changes to administrative arrangements re advising of forfeits.

- Clause 20.8 – New By-law stating an SMJFL Team or Assistant Coach cannot coach at NGA, Interleague or Development Program in same age group.
- Clause 20.40 – Removed the inability of Field Umpires to override the decision of an SMJFL appointed goal umpire.
- Clause 21 – Match Day Paperwork – please read carefully.
- Clause 23 – Premiership Ladders
 - Changes for clarification, including that match ratio is used as the primary determining factor to rank teams on the premiership table.
 - Removed regrading competitions after ladders have been reset, i.e. there will be no regrading after Round 4.
- Clause 27 – Send Offs – Modified to include “Team Officials” in addition to “Players” as being able to be sent off.
- Clause 31.1 and 31.2 – added ability of the CEO to refer a matter directly to an Independent Investigator as per Clause 41.
- Clause 35.7 – The value of one penalty unit has been increased to \$20.
- Clause 38.2 – Limitations on vaping added to smoking limitations.
- Clause 44 – Appendix 4 – Player Movement and Finals Qualification - sub clause 2.4:
 - Finals qualification increased from 4 games to 5 games

3. AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook (NCFPH)

With reference to the AFL National Community Football Policy Handbook (NCFPH) we have taken the approach that the SMJFL should continue with our own By-laws where they best suit us and only adopt national position policies.

For example, Vilification, Safeguarding and Transgender matters are national issues so we have determined to defer to the national position.

4. SMJFL Tribunal and Appeals

The changes to the By-laws do not include any changes to Tribunal or Appeals procedures.

The league will conduct a further review of our Tribunal and Appeals processes as per the current By-laws ahead of the 2024 season.

5. Vilification and Discrimination

Clubs that were consulted during the By-law review all stated that they were seeking clear procedures when faced with any vilification and/or discrimination issues. We recognise that in the instance of such matters, that the use of the AFL's policy will assist Clubs with handling of any issues that arise and therefore the SMJFL has adopted the Vilification Discrimination components of the AFL NCFPH Policy for 2023 (see SMJFL By-laws Clause 40) and will continue to monitor the implementation of this policy during the season.

This continues to be a focus area for the SMJFL and we welcome feedback on this Policy from you.

The AFL has released access to Vilification Education Resources via the home of AFL learning. Access to the learning platform requires an account and can be accessed [AFL LMS: Log in to the site \(androgogic.com.au\)](#) and is accessible to all those involved in community football.

Once in the platform, refer to **LIBRARY** and ***Vilifications and Discrimination*** which is a featured course.

The AFL are also conducting several sessions nationally to brief Controlling Bodies on how to manage vilification complaints as per the National Community Football Policy Handbook ([here](#)) and will also be producing a range of templates and guidelines to assist in assessing and gathering information about the complaint and sending notifications to the parties involved.

The briefing sessions cover:

- What is prohibited conduct?
- Lodging a prohibited conduct complaint
- Acknowledging a complaint
- Preliminary assessment of complaint
- Notice to parties
- Investigation
- Conciliation – including access to specialist conciliators
- Notice of Breach
- Tribunal

The SMJFL will be attending these briefing sessions to ensure we are best informed on management of the Vilification Policy as contained in the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

END