



GREAT GAME

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ABN 75 010 616 798
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MEMO

To: Senior Club Presidents

CC: AFL Cairns Staff

From: Ben Carbis – Senior Football Operations Manager - AFL Cairns

Date: Wednesday, 8 November 2023

Re: AFL Cairns 2024 Rule Changes

2024 RULE CHANGES – CONFIRMED

Requests for Rule Changes (All Grades)

Clubs requesting changes/exemptions to specified rules within the AFLQ Community Rules & Procedures and/or AFL Cairns By-Laws must submit a formal proposal to AFL Cairns identifying the specific rule, proposed change, impact on the League (not just their club) and detailed reasoning.

AFL Cairns reserves the right of approval, however, may seek input from other club president's, including a vote system to determine the outcome.

The cut-off date for requesting rule changes is 01 March each year. After this date, exemptions can still be approved, but changes to rules will not be considered.

Player Points System (Senior Grade)

Players Returning to Home Club after post-State League

Players that depart the AFL Cairns competition to play in a State League competition and return to the same AFL Cairns club, will not reset their registration streak with that club, allowing them to become a 0-point player once they are in their 5th year with that club.

This only applies if the player is registered in a State League competition for 3 seasons or less. If the player registers with a team outside of the State League, or does not register with any team, their AFL Cairns club streak will be broken. The PPS Board will be utilised for complex cases.

Junior Player Criteria for 0-Point Player Status

Juniors playing on a Season Permit in the Senior competition (either Development or Senior grade, not Div 3), must play at least three (3) games to have that season included in the 5-year playing streak to become a 0-point player.



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Player Point Exemption Requirements

Clubs requesting a Player Point exemption are required to apply for approval to AFL Cairns within 30 days of the player transferring. Exemptions will only be considered if the player is forced to relocate for employment, study or compassionate reasons (ie – relocating closer to family after the birth of a child).

The club requesting the exemption must be the closest club to the player's new residential address. Players residing more than 150kms from their new club will be considered FIFO and will not be eligible for an exemption.

Applications will be considered by the PPS Board, consisting of at least three (3) members and the outcome decided by vote (majority wins). The PPS Board may request supporting documentation, including employment contracts, education certificates, etc. If approved, the PPS Board will determine the amount of player points allocated to the player at their new club.

PPS Total Points Cap

All clubs will be allocated an additional player point to their Total Points Cap to account for the 23rd player rule.

Teams finishing inside the top four will be reduced four (4) points (to a minimum of 35) and teams finishing outside the top four will receive an additional four (4) points (to a maximum of 43), with the following exemptions:

- Teams finishing the Home & Away season with two (2) or three (3) wins will receive eight (8) points to their Total Points Cap (beyond the maximum of 43).
- Teams finishing the Home & Away season with zero (0) or one (1) win will receive 16 points to their Total Points Cap (beyond the maximum of 43).

FIFO Players

Fly-In Fly-Out (FIFO) Players will now be allocated four (4) player points. In addition, FIFO players will require five (5) regular season games to qualify for Finals.

Players that fall under multiple categories will be allocated the highest point value. For example, if a FIFO player has also transferred from another club, they will be an 8-point player, not 4-point player.

FIFO players do not have the ability to qualify to become a 0-point player, regardless of the number of consecutive seasons they have competed in the competition.

Marquee players are included in this rule and will be allocated as a 4-point player if they are FIFO.



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A FIFO Player is defined as a player who has not established permanent residence in the Cairns region (including Port Douglas) before 31 March in the year the competition commences.

The AFL Cairns 'Residency Test' can be used to determine permanent residence:

1. *What is your current address, as listed in PlayHQ?*
2. *Can you produce:*
 - a. *Two recent household documents/bills with your name and current address listed; or*
 - b. *Two recent employment documents with your name and current address listed; or*
 - c. *One recent household document/bill and once recent employment document with your and current address listed.*
3. *Are you and your club president prepared to sign a Statutory Declaration and/or Affidavit to support your responses to these questions?*
4. *AFL Cairns may request a player to present at the AFL Cairns office at a requested time.*

Where a player relocates during the course of the season and no longer meets the AFL Cairns Residency Test, that player will be re-classified as a FIFO Player.

AFL Cairns reserves the right to make the final ruling on a Player(s) residency status, including by:

- a. Using the AFL Cairns Residency Test;
- b. Having regard to a player's particular circumstances.

Playing Coaches

FIFO players must attend at least one (1) training session per week to be considered a Playing-Coach/Assistant Coach.

Club Challenge (All Grades)

Female Coaches

Clubs with females coaching in any competitive grade (U13's and above) will receive Club Challenge Bonus Points in line with the AFLQ Female Participation Action Plan.



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Tribunal (All Grades)

AFL Cairns will have Legal Counsel for all Tribunal and Appeal Board hearings in season 2024 and beyond.

Tribunals will be held on Wednesday nights to allow all parties sufficient time and not disrupt club training, subject to change at AFL Cairns' discretion.

Tribunal hearings will follow the AFL Cairns Tribunal Procedure attached to the email.

Salary Cap (Senior Grade)

Total Salary Cap

The 2024 Salary Cap will increase from \$60,000 to \$63,000 to account for CPI (averaged at 5%).

Finals

All FIFO travel during the AFL Cairns Finals Series will be exempt from the salary cap.

Playing Coaches

A playing coaches' contract is divided by 16 (total Home & Away games), then the 50% reduction, which gives a 'payment per game' amount. This amount is then applied in the Salary Cap to only games played by the Playing Coach.

For example, if the Playing Coaches contract is \$10,000, their 'payment per game' will be \$312.50 ($10,000 / 16 / 2$). For every game the Playing Coach plays, \$312.50 is included in the Salary Cap.

23rd Player (Senior Grade)

Each club will be allowed to nominate a 23rd player every game that acts as a 5th interchange and can be used at any point throughout the game. Here is the 23rd player eligibility:

- The player must be under 21 years of age as of 01 January in the year of the season.
- The player can only play a maximum of 20 Senior grade games (across all Leagues).
- The player must be selected as '23rd player' in PlayHQ.



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- An eligible player can only be nominated as 23rd player three (3) times in the Home & Away season.
- Any of the nominated 23rd players can be selected as 23rd player in the Finals Series.

The 23rd players point allocation will be included in the points cap, as will any expenses incurred in the salary cap.

Clubs found to breach the 23rd player eligibility rules risk forfeiting the match and additional penalties at the discretion of AFL Cairns.

Team Submission Deadline (Senior Grade)

Teams are to be selected in PlayHQ no later than 9am the day before a game.

The 23 players + 6 emergencies listed in PlayHQ by this deadline will be the only players permitted to play in the game.

After the deadline, if a club wants to play a player outside of the those listed, they will require approval from AFL Cairns and will, at the discretion of AFL Cairns, receive a \$500 deduction from their salary cap.

In the event of extenuating circumstances (ie - multiple players sick), clubs can request exemptions to the listed players and \$500 salary cap penalty.

Team sheets are to be handed to the Match Day Manager 10mins before the start of each game. Players that are not in PlayHQ will not be permitted to play.

Permits (All Grades)

No permits (including AFLNT or intrastate) will be approved post-30 June unless the player is returning to their home club. To be eligible, the following criteria must be met:

- The player must have played at least 40 games with the requesting club (any grade, including Juniors).
- The requesting club must be the last AFL Cairns club in which the player was registered.
- The player must have played for the requesting club within 3 years prior to the permit request.

Players eligible for an approved permit post-30 June will not be eligible to play finals.

Clubs can request exemptions to this rule in special circumstances (ie – charity event, significant milestone, etc) by submitting a request to AFL Cairns at least 7 days prior to the match.