



# AFL Cairns By-Laws

## Season 2026

### 2.1 Application

**2.1 (a) (ii)** These by-laws are to be used in conjunction with AFL Queensland Community Rules and Procedures, the National Community Football Policy Handbook, the Lawns of Australian Football and any other relevant Policy as referred to throughout this document.

### 2.3 Affiliate League/Region amendments to these Rules

**2.3 (a) (i)** 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.

### 6.2 Payment of Players

**6.2** Clubs are required to submit a signed Player Contract Agreement for all players that participate in the Men's and Women's Senior competition at any stage in the season, regardless of whether they are a paid player or not, using the Clubs allocated Player Contract Agreement on Cognito Forms. Each Club, may modify the terms and conditions of each Player Contract, to suit the club's conditions.

### 6.5 Age Eligibility – Senior Competitions

**6.5 (a)** The minimum age that a player can play in the AFL Cairns Seniors and Senior Women's competition is 15 years, as long as written Parental Consent is gained by the club. A copy of the parental consent **must** be submitted to the league for approval.

AFL Cairns may, at their discretion, provide an exemption in exceptional circumstances. Clubs are responsible for submitting requests for exemptions in writing to AFL Cairns.

### 6.13 Permits

**6.13 (c) (i)** Players that are registered with an NTFNL team may play in the AFLC competition on a Season Permit, including in the AFLC Finals Series, however, must meet the finals eligibility criteria.

**6.13 (c) (x)** 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:

(A) The player must have played at least 40 games with the requesting club (any grade, including Juniors).

(B) The requesting club must be the last AFL Cairns club in which the player was registered.

(C) 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.

#### 7.4 Match Forfeit

##### **7.4 (c) Forfeit Penalties:**

COMPETITION	PENALTY
Seniors	<b>200 Units + Cost of Umpires</b>
AFLCW	<b>200 Units + Cost of Umpires</b>
Development	<b>100 Units + Cost of Umpires</b>
Div 3	<b>50 Units + Cost of Umpires</b>

AFL Cairns reserves the right to apply additional fines and/or punishments at their discretion for match forfeits in any grade.

## 7.6 Match Timing

### 7.6 (a) Match Duration (Time of Quarters)

COMPETITION	TIME OF QUARTERS	TIME OF BREAKS
Seniors	<b>H&amp;A:</b> 20 mins + time on <b>Finals:</b> 20 mins + time on	6/20/6
Development	<b>H&amp;A:</b> 20 mins, no time on <b>Finals:</b> 17 mins + time on	5/15/5
AFLCW	<b>H&amp;A:</b> 17 mins, no time on <b>Finals:</b> 15 mins + time on	5/10/5
Div 3	<b>H&amp;A:</b> 20 mins (halves), no time on <b>Finals:</b> 17 mins + time on	10 HT

7.6 (e) Senior Women's, Development and Division 3 will adopt the following time on procedures during AFL Cairns Finals Series;

- (A) After a goal is scored
  - i. Time is stopped once the umpire begins to wave their flags
  - ii. Time is stopped when a behind is scored
  - iii. Time is restarted once the ball is bounced/thrown up to recommence the game.
- (B) When signaled by the Field Umpire.
  - i. Time is stopped when signaled by the controlling Central Umpire by raising their hand and blowing their whistle.
  - ii. Time is restarted when the ball is thrown in by Boundary Umpire, bounced/thrown up by Field Umpire or indicated by Controlling umpire by again raising arm and blowing their whistle to resume play.
- (C) Field Umpire – Time on shall be signaled when the controlling umpire deems a significant delay in the match. A significant delay may include:
  - i. The ball leaves the field of play over the boundary line that would cause a delay of more than 30 seconds.
  - ii. An injured player is being attended to by a trainer and is in the vicinity of play.
  - iii. An injured player requires a stretcher.
  - iv. Umpires are issuing a White, Yellow or Red Card.
  - v. A player is deemed to be deliberately slowing the play, e.g. returning the ball to kick out from behind.

## 7.7 Team Lists and Team Sheets

### **7.7 (b) (i) Team Selections:**

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

**7.7 (b) (iii) Men's Senior Competition:** 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.

### **(iv) 23<sup>rd</sup> Player (Senior Grade)**

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

- (A) The player must be under 21 years of age as of 01 January in the year of the season.
- (B) The player can only play a maximum of 20 Senior grade games (across all Leagues).
- (C) The player must be selected as '23<sup>rd</sup> player' in PlayHQ.
- (D) An eligible player can only be nominated as 23<sup>rd</sup> player five (5) times in the Home & Away season.
- (E) Any of the nominated 23<sup>rd</sup> players can be selected as 23<sup>rd</sup> player in the Finals Series.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> players point allocation will be included in the points cap, as will any expenses incurred in the salary cap and must be report in the 2025 Salary Cap Reporting Template.

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

**(iv) (A)** AFL Cairns Senior Womens competition will consist of a maximum number of twenty-two (22) players to be made up of 16 on field and 6 interchange players.

## 7.11 Apparel

**7.11 (f) (i) (A)** Either black or beige visible under garments can be worn in AFL Cairns competitions.

### 7.13 Admission to Grounds

**7.13 (b)** Admission prices for all AFL Cairns venues in season 2026 are:

- (i) adults – six dollars (\$6)
- (ii) concession – free
- (iii) under 16 – free

### 7.15 Coaching Box – White Card System

**7.15 (a)** Unacceptable behaviours within the Coaching Box may be managed by the Umpires pursuant to the [Coaching Box \(White\) Card System](#), and;

(i) any AFL Cairns match official (Match Manager, AFL Cairns Staff Member, AFLCUA Coach) present at the game, may report unacceptable Coaching Box Behaviour to the Umpire Panel at the next break, at which point a white card can be issued.

### 8.1 Home Team Responsibilities

**8.1 (xiii)** No umpire escort is required by Home Clubs at any AFL Cairns venue, unless directed by the Competition Manager.

### 8.2 Runners

**8.2 (c) (i)** Clubs shall be entitled to use two (2) runners for each grade in AFL Cairns competitions.

**8.2 (d) (vi)** Runners will be permitted to carry water bottles whilst delivering messages to players if the Club cannot provide at least three (3) water carriers.

### 9.5 Umpire/Club lodgment of Incident Referral Form

**9.5 (c)** Pursuant to section 22.1(b)(i) and (ii) of the National Handbook, an Incident Referral Form must be lodged via Cognito Forms to AFL Cairns Operations Manager by;

(i) 10:00am on the first business day following the match; or

(ii) 10:00am on the third business day following the match, if AFL Cairns Operations Manager determines exceptional and compelling circumstances exist amounting to an extension of the deadline outlined at (i).

**9.5 (d)** Pursuant to section 22.1(b)(iii) of the *National Handbook*, which requires that lodgement of an Incident Referral Form be accompanied by a fee set by the controlling body, AFL Cairns hereby determines that **no fee** shall be payable for the lodgement of an Incident Referral Form within the AFL Cairns competition.

Accordingly, clubs affiliated with AFL Cairns may submit Incident Referral Forms without payment of the prescribed fee, and no such fee shall be required or collected by AFL Cairns.

### 9.10 Multiple Reprimands within one Season

**9.10 (c)** Any player that receives four (4) yellow cards within a 12-month period will automatically have the fourth yellow card upgraded to a one (1) match suspension. For every additional card (yellow or red) received by the same player in the same period, an automatic one (1) match suspension will apply. Clubs may choose to refer these decisions to the tribunal.

### 11 Tribunals and Appeals

**11.2 Appealing Tribunal Decisions (c)** Pursuant to section 26.1 (c) (i) (B) of the National Handbook, the appeal fee is set at \$1000, which is refunded to the appellant if the appeal is successful.

### 12. Governance

**12.4 Broadcast Rights** AFL Cairns retains the exclusive right to undertake, license and deal with all rights relating to any broadcast, transmission, recording and communication via television, radio, internet, mobile device or other technology (whether presently known or hereafter devised) of each Australian football match administered by AFL Cairns.

AFL Cairns retains for its own benefit all revenues derived therefrom, and no Club is permitted to undertake any such activity itself or enable, facilitate or grant any competing or conflicting license, right or entitlement to any third party.

### 14.1 Finals Eligibility

**14.1 (g)** A player must play a minimum of three (3) Home & Away games with any team (Seniors or Development) with their registered Club to be eligible to play Senior finals.

**14.1 (g) (i)** A player must play a minimum of three (3) Home & Away games in the Senior Women's team to be eligible to play finals.

**14.1 (g) (ii)** If a player has played three (3) or more home and away games in the Senior team, they must have played in at least five (5) home and away games in the reserves to be eligible to play finals.

**14.1 (g) (iii)** A player must play a minimum of two (2) Home & Away games in the Division 3 team, with a registered Club to be eligible to play finals in Division 3 only. They will not be eligible to play in Development or Senior finals unless they meet the criteria in 8.1 (g) or 8.1 (g) (ii).

**14.1 (g) (iv)** A player that has played one (1) or more games in the current season of the Men's Senior competition will be ineligible to play in the Division 3 finals. Practice matches are excluded from this rule.

**14.1 (g) (vii)** FIFO players must play a minimum of five (5) Home & Away games with any team (Seniors or Development) with their registered Club to be eligible to play Senior or Development finals.

**14.1 (j) (ii)** When a club has its Senior grade and Reserve/Development grade teams participating in finals on the same weekend, the selection of players in the finals shall be unrestricted, provided a player has participated in at least three (3) home and away matches with either team in their club during the season.

## 18. Player Points System & Salary Cap

**18 (a)** AFL Cairns has adopted a Player Points System (PPS) for the Men's and Women's competition. Details are provided in the AFLC – Player Salary Cap & Player Points System – 2026 document.

**18 (a) (i)** Once AFLC receives a player's contract, they will assign that player a Player Point in accordance with the AFLC PPS.

**13 (b)** A salary cap applies to the AFL Cairns Men's and Women's Senior competition and Clubs must comply fully with all the relevant rules as per the AFLC – Player Salary Cap & Player Points System – 2026 document.