



# NSW COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE

---

## 2026 Policies and Procedures Manual



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	6
CHANGES & ADDITIONS .....	7
APPLICATION OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES & SITUATIONS NOT COVERED IN THIS MANUAL.....	8
DEFINITIONS.....	9
ADMINISTRATION – DISTRICTS & REGIONS .....	10
1.1 Alcohol and Sports Betting Branding .....	11
1.2 Application to Combine Teams .....	12
1.3 Development Competitions and Tackle Ready .....	14
1.4 Constitutions .....	15
1.5 Fines and Fees.....	16
1.6 Media Enquiries .....	17
1.7 Player Portability.....	18
1.8 Playing With More Than One Club.....	21
1.9 Playing in More Than One District or Region.....	23
1.10 Protests and Appeals .....	24
1.11 Registration Requirements .....	28
1.12 Suspended and Disqualified Person – Officials / Parents / Supporters / Spectators .....	29
1.13 Suspended Player Guidelines.....	31
1.14 Trial Games / Carnivals / Gala Days – Approval Process.....	33
ADMINISTRATION – COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB .....	35
2.1 NSWRL Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy - Reporting.....	36
2.2 Working With Children Check (Requirements & Process).....	37
2.3 Club Colours / Playing Uniforms .....	38
2.4 Club Constitutions and By Laws .....	39
2.5 Defaulters.....	40
2.6 Financial Bonds .....	41
2.7 Hydration, Heat and Water Bottle Guidelines .....	42
2.8 Insurance.....	44
2.9 Licensing Program .....	45
2.10 Mandatory Reporting.....	46
2.11 Certificate of fitness players 40 years or older .....	47
2.12 Medical Exemptions.....	48
2.13 Minimum Age to Play Mini Footy .....	49
2.14 Minimum Age to Play Senior International Football (Open Age) .....	50



2.15	Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications .....	51
2.16	NSWRL Communication Protocol .....	53
2.17	NSWRL Regional Member Travelling & Touring Teams .....	54
2.18	Play / Train Policy .....	55
2.19	Playing a Player Above Their Natural Age Group (Playing Up) .....	56
2.20	Playing a Player Below Their Natural Age Group (Playing Down).....	58
2.21	Player Electronic Match Day Cards / Sign on Sheets .....	59
2.22	Player Transfer Policy – Community Rugby League.....	60
2.23	Playing Field Lighting Requirements.....	67
2.24	Racial, Religious and Sexual Vilification Reporting Process .....	68
2.25	Religious Headwear / Clothing.....	69
2.26	Social Media Policy.....	70
2.27	Video and Photography Policy .....	71
2.28	Weight and Age Guidelines.....	74
COMPETITIONS .....		77
3.1	Abandoned Matches Due to Injury, Inclement Weather or Foul Play.....	78
3.2	Byes .....	79
3.3	Competition Points .....	80
3.4	Competition Structures.....	81
3.5	Competition Tables (Ladders) .....	82
3.6	Duration of Matches .....	83
3.7	Finals Eligibility.....	84
3.8	Forfeits .....	85
3.9	Game Scheduling .....	86
3.10	Gradings, Divisions and Re-Gradings .....	87
3.11	Mixed Gender Participation.....	88
3.12	NSWRL Regional Members – Clayton Cup .....	89
3.13	NSWRL Regional Members – Cup Competition and Plate Competition Rules .....	90
3.14	NSWRL Regional Members – Trophies .....	91
3.15	Player Points Index System (PPIS).....	92
GAME DAY POLICIES .....		93
4.1	Admission Prices, Gates & Season Passes at Regional Member Matches.....	94
4.2	Air Quality Policy .....	95
4.3	Alcohol Sales and Supply.....	97
4.4	Ball Persons / Kicking Tee Runners .....	98
4.5	Biting, Gouging, Spitting or Vilification Allegations .....	99



4.6	Blood Bin Procedure .....	100
4.7	Change Room Policy.....	101
4.8	Coach / Sports Trainer / Team Managers .....	103
4.9	Compression Garments.....	105
4.10	Critical Incident Management.....	106
4.11	Drawn Matches During Finals Series .....	107
4.12	Electronic Communication Devices .....	108
4.13	Football Boots .....	109
4.14	Ground and Match Preparation Requirements .....	110
4.15	Ground Managers .....	111
4.16	Hearing Aids .....	115
4.17	Head Injury and Concussion Guidelines.....	116
4.18	Interchange .....	117
4.19	Kicking Tees.....	119
4.20	Making Changes to the Duration of a Game.....	120
4.21	Match Ball Sizes .....	121
4.22	Mercy Rule .....	122
4.23	Needle Stick Injury Management.....	123
4.24	Number of Players on the Field .....	124
4.25	On-Field Injuries.....	125
4.26	Player Equipment.....	126
4.27	Playing an Unregistered Player .....	127
4.28	Pre-Match Heritage or Cultural Performances .....	128
4.29	Referees .....	129
4.30	Score / Official Table Requirements .....	131
4.31	Send Offs.....	132
4.32	Offensive Songs.....	133
4.33	Team Benches .....	134
4.34	Teams Not Ready at Kick-Off .....	135
4.35	Touch Judges.....	136
4.36	Unauthorised Person Inside the Spectator Fence (Playing Area) .....	137
	RULES OF THE GAME.....	138
5.1	District and Regional Local Rules .....	139
5.2	National Safe Play Code .....	140
5.3	NRL Code of Conduct .....	141
5.4	Tough Love in League Policy – Curbing Violence in our Game .....	142



CODE OF CONDUCT.....	148
6.1 Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures.....	149
6.2 Code of Conduct Procedure.....	152
6.3 Publication on MySideline .....	162
JUDICIARY.....	163
7.1 Judiciary Code of Procedure .....	164
7.2 Publication on MySideline .....	182
APPEALS CODE OF PROCEDURE (CODE OF CONDUCT & JUDICIARY) .....	183
8.1 Appeals Committee Code of Procedure .....	184
DISTRICT AND REGIONAL BY-LAWS .....	194
9.1 Local League Rules / By-Laws.....	195
APPENDIX AND NRL POLICIES .....	196
10.1 Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines.....	197
10.2 Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines .....	198



## INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies & Procedures Manual.

The Manual has been developed through consultation over many seasons between the NSWRL, the Districts and Groups affiliated with the NSW Rugby League and the Community Rugby League Association.

The Manual is not intended for over-regulation of our game, it is aimed at bringing consistency with regards to how the game is administered and played.

With consistent application around rules and regulations, there will be a more even playing field from one competition to the next, and this consistency will bring stability to our game, providing a platform for long term growth.

The Manual is a 'living' document. It will see additions and changes as the seasons pass, when new policies and procedures are introduced, or existing ones are amended.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff and volunteers that had a hand in the production of the NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies & Procedures Manual, and I look forward to seeing its continued development.

Kind regards  
David Trodden  
Chief Executive Officer  
New South Wales Rugby League



## CHANGES & ADDITIONS

This manual is a living document and the policies and procedures contained within may change from time to time.

Each year the Manual, and any changes required to Policies, Procedures and Appendix that were identified within the previous year, will be reviewed and approved by the NSWRL Board. The approved Manual will then be distributed to District and Regions along with Community Rugby League Clubs (by way of upload to the NSWRL website).

The NSWRL reserves the right to make changes and / or amendments to any Policy, Procedure or Appendix, or add new policies to the NSWRL COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL at any time as they see fit. Any changes will be notified to District Administrators and Area / Regional Managers in a timely manner for distribution Leagues and Clubs.



## APPLICATION OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES & SITUATIONS NOT COVERED IN THIS MANUAL

For the avoidance of any doubt, it is intended that this Policies & Procedures Manual shall apply to all rugby league matches played under the auspices of the NSWRL, the District Clubs and the NSWRL Regional Members for the 2025 Rugby League season and beyond. Each club that participates in these matches, and its registered players and officials, shall comply fully with the provisions of this Policies & Procedures Manual.

This Policies & Procedures Manual shall apply to matches played under the auspices of NSWRL Community Football and its affiliates.

If there is a situation not covered within this Policies & Procedures Manual, please refer to other current documents including:

- » International (13s+) Laws
- » Junior League Laws (6-12s)
- » [www.playrugbyleague.com](http://www.playrugbyleague.com)

Should the situation still remain 'not covered' then the situation should be referred to your League Administrator for determination.





## DEFINITIONS

The following terms have the corresponding meanings when used in this Policies & Procedures Manual:

DISTRICT CLUB or DISTRICT	means a 'Club Member' of NSWRL
NSWRL	New South Wales Rugby League
NSWRL Regional Member or Region	means a 'NSWRL Regional Member' of NSWRL
NRL	National Rugby League
ARLC	Australian Rugby League Commission
NSWRL CRLA	New South Wales Community Rugby Leagues Association
LEAGUE ADMINISTRATOR	The person responsible for the administration of a District or League
ELECTRONIC MATCH DAY CARDS	Identification for players and volunteers which is accessed through the NRL MySideline database
LEVEL 1 NSWRL COMPETITION	NRL Telstra Premiership
LEVEL 2 NSWRL COMPETITION	NSW Cup and QLD Cup
LEVEL 3 NSWRL COMPETITION	Ron Massey Cup, Denton Cup
LEVEL 4 NSWRL COMPETITION	Jersey Flegg / Sydney Shield
LEVEL 5 NSWRL COMPETITION	District Club / League

*SECTION 1*

# **ADMINISTRATION**

## DISTRICT & REGION



## 1.1 Alcohol and Sports Betting Branding

Alcohol and / or sports betting branding is not permitted to be displayed on any playing or training uniform for teams / players under the age of 18.

Alcohol branding is defined as direct product marketing (using specific names of products i.e. Jim Beam).

If Clubs are unsure if a sponsor is appropriate, please contact your League Administrator



## 1.2 Application to Combine Teams

In certain situations, it may be in the best interests of the Game / League to allow two teams from different Clubs to combine into one. Clubs can apply to the NSWRL to combine teams from two different Clubs in the same District to maintain a team and to allow players to keep an identity with their original Club.

This option will allow ongoing participation for players in age groups where team numbers at a single Club have fallen below the requirement to field a stand-alone team. It allows for players to maintain their historical data and playing history with their original Club, whilst continuing to participate in their District.

A single Club (HOST CLUB) will need to take ownership of such a team, including responsibility for all players, officials, and spectators.

The process for application is outlined below:

- » Host Club to be determined by the greater number of players registered (i.e. if Club A has 10 players and Club B has 5 players, the Host Club will be Club A / Guest Club will be Club B).
- » If exact numbers are registered at each of the participating Clubs, then Clubs can determine between themselves where Primary responsibility for the team will lay.
- » If player numbers required to permit to the Host Club is permissible under the NSWRL player Transfer Policy (i.e. 2 players or less), a combined team will not be approved and the said players are required to obtain a Clearance to a single team.
- » Once Host Club is determined, application will be made by the Club Presidents of both Host and Guest Club, in writing to their Local League and NSWRL for approval to combine the teams for the current Rugby League season
- » Once approved, the team will need to be set up at the Host Club on MySideline
- » Players will register with their historical Clubs and transfer “permits” will be allowed for players from the Guest Club to the Host Club as required.
- » Host Club will nominate team in relevant competition with the name ‘Host Club / Guest Club’ (i.e. Cromer Kingfishers / Manly Christian Bros).
- » The Team will participate in competition wearing either the Host Club or Guest Club uniforms (playing strip) as determined on a weekly basis.

Before making application for a combined team, Clubs should be aware of the following information:

- » By registering with either the Host Club or the Guest Club, all players and team staff agree to comply with, and abide by all NRL / NSWRL Policies and Procedures, Codes, Rules and regulations which govern Community Rugby League.
- » Participants attempting to transfer to either Club (Host or Guest) participating in the ‘Combined Teams’ agreement from any other Club will be subject to the NSWRL Player Transfer Policy (i.e. only 4 players from Clubs within the District will be able to transfer to Host Club and Guest Club in that age group and 4 players from Clubs within other Districts will be able to transfer to the Host Club and Guest Club in that age group. For the avoidance of doubt, a maximum of 8 players only may transfer to the merged entity from any other clubs other than the original Host and Guest Clubs. All other restrictions within the NSWRL Player Transfer Policy will apply, particularly those that relate to Representative players and Grand Final teams.



- » If a participant registered to a Combined Team wished to play up an age group, they must complete the appropriate NSWRL Playing in a Higher Age Group form. They will only be permitted to play up an age group at the Club for which they were originally registered to.
- » If the Combined Team requires the services of a player from a younger age group, only registered participants from the Host Club will be permitted to play up in the Combined Team.
- » The Host Club will be the District and NSWRL Contact for all correspondence including Judiciary and / or Code of Conduct disciplinary notifications.
- » It is the Host Clubs responsibility to ensure all associated paperwork (Judiciary and Conduct forms, etc.) are relayed to any player that is either registered with their Club or permitted to their Club, and to ensure that responses are made to relevant Leagues in timeframes outlined.
- » The Host Club shall be responsible for all insurances while players and team staff are training / playing and they are also liable for any fines or fees which are charged as a result of their participation in any competition.
- » All Combined Team agreements are only valid for a single competition season
- » Clubs must apply in writing to their Local League Administrator and the NSWRL on a seasonal basis when seeking approval to Combine Teams.

Please note – All applications to Combine teams will be assessed on their merits, and will only be approved should the League determine the merger is in the best interests of its competitions. The decision of the NSWRL in these matters will be final.



### 1.3 Development Competitions and Tackle Ready

The New South Wales Rugby League Board fully endorses the operation of competitions aligning with the National Player Development Framework.

NSWRL and all Leagues will not approve any action designed to circumvent Player Development Framework (PDF) including, but not limited to, transfers of teams, gala days, carnivals or like events involving finals or progression, groups of players playing up age groups or any other action deemed by Leagues or NSWRL to not be within the spirit or rules of the PDF.

#### Development Competitions

Laws of the game and classifications of competitions are available in the National Junior League Laws link as follows [Junior League Laws - Play Rugby League](#)

Below is a Table outlining the minimum requirement in regard to implementation of Development Competitions.

Year	Metro Dev Comps	Regional Dev Comps
2026	6s to 12s	6s to 12s

#### Under 6s and Under 7s

In line with the introduction of the Player Development Framework in all Community Rugby League competitions, all Under 6s matches will be played in a non-contact (Tag) format. All Under 7s matches in approximately the first half of the season (up to June Lone Weekend) are to be played in a non-contact (Tag) format. Leagues must ensure that Tackle Ready training is delivered to all teams in the Under 7s age group prior to June Long Weekend. After June Long Weekend, and the successful completion of Tackle Ready training, games may progress to the contact (Tackle) format.



## 1.4 Constitutions

Districts, Regions and other affiliates should operate from an approved Constitution that was issued when the District or Regional Member was incorporated.

Districts and Regional Members may only alter their Constitution at an Annual General Meeting and in accordance with the rules of their Constitution, the constitution of the NSWRL, and all applicable laws.

Each District and Regional Member should lodge a copy of their Constitution with the NSWRL.

A copy of the District's and Regional Member's Constitution must be available at all District General Meetings and Region General Meetings (as the case may be).

Districts and Regional Members may attach a set of By-Laws to their Constitution. Such By-Laws may be altered, deleted or established at any District General Meeting or Regional General Meeting.

Districts and Regional Members must observe and support the rules of their Constitution at all times.

If a particular rule or policy cannot be found in the District Constitution or Regional Constitution, the NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies & Procedures Manual should be consulted and adhered to.



## 1.5 Fines and Fees

The following Fee Schedule is applicable in all NSWRL Community Rugby League competitions throughout NSW.

This schedule is to be used at the discretion of each League Administrator.

INFRINGEMENT	FIRST OFFENCE PER SEASON	SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENCE PER SEASON	REMARKS
Late Fees	\$100 per event	\$200 per event	A fine will apply to clubs who ignore closing dates. The fee is paid to the League.
Playing an unregistered or unqualified player	\$300 per match	\$600 per match	The match will be considered a forfeit. The fee is paid to the League.
Not obtaining appropriate clearances at the time of registration	\$400 per offence	\$800 per offence	The player will not be eligible to train or play until appropriate clearances have been obtained. The fee is paid to the League.
Playing a player who exceeds the age in any grade	\$400 per match	\$800 per match	The match will be considered a forfeit. The fee is paid to the League.
Registration irregularity occurring after July 1	\$100 per offence	\$200 per offence	Depending on the breach, there may be a loss of competition points and / or deregistration of the player/s concerned. The fee is paid to the League.
Playing a player in two (2) teams in the same division	\$150 per match	\$300 per match	Loss of competition points for each breach. The fee is paid to the League.
Not notifying the League of a forfeit by 5.00pm on the Friday prior to the match	\$400 per offence	\$800 per offence	The fee is paid to the League.
Appeal against a decision	\$500 per appeal	N/A	This fee is paid to NSWRL.
Protest of a rule or regulation	\$500 per protest	N/A	This fee is paid to NSWRL.

### Unpaid Fines

Should fines that have been invoiced to a Club remain unpaid in a competition season, that Club will be unable to accrue competition points in the following season until the total balance due is paid and or teams are disqualified from finals series eligibility.

Fines will be due to be paid 30 days from the date of invoice.





## 1.6 Media Enquiries

All media enquiries should be referred to the NSWRL Head of Communications & Community Engagement.

**TRACIE EDMONDSON**

NSWRL Head of Communications & Community Engagement

0416 258 342

[tedmondson@nswrl.com.au](mailto:tedmondson@nswrl.com.au)

Please inform your Area / Regional Manager of any Media Enquiries directed to your club.



## 1.7 Player Portability

Right across NSW, the following Competitions are now available to provide club's players with portability and a designated pathway right throughout a season:

- » District clubs participating in NRL and the Jersey Flegg Cup
- » Clubs participating in the NSWRL open age competitions (NSW Cup, Harvey Norman Women's Premiership, Ron Massey Cup and Sydney Shield)
- » NSWRL Regional Members and affiliated competitions
- » NSWRL District Leagues

### Generic Rules

- » Approval must be obtained from a player's registered / contracted club to endorse movement
- » The NSW Cup and Jersey Flegg Cup have 'equal status'
- » Players moving up and down through portability must abide by the NSWRL's Portability and Permit rules and guidelines determined from time to time and failure to adhere to the rules will leave both the club and the player open to action from the Board of the NSWRL
- » Player portability will continue beyond 30 June each year for players moving between higher and lower competitions
- » Players utilising portability to a NSWRL Regional Member club will abide by the rules of that competition for semi-finals, finals, grand finals and play offs unless amended. NSWRL competition final qualification rules will apply to all NSWRL competitions.
- » Insurance to be paid by the players primary Club (NRL / NSWRL)

### Specific Examples of Portability

#### NSW Cup

- » All clubs participating in the NSW Cup that are not aligned to an NRL club directly or through the approved feeder arrangement will be given District club status whilst participating in the NSW Cup Competition.
- » The unrestricted movement of players to and from the NRL Competition.
- » Movement of players to and from Jersey Flegg Cup for players under twenty (20) years of age as at 1<sup>st</sup> January in the year of registered contract.
- » For the movement of players to and from NSW Cup, Ron Massey Cup, Sydney Shield and NSWRL Regional Member Competitions, an NRL top 30 contracted player for salary cap purposes at the commencement of the season can only come down as far as NSW Cup and Jersey Flegg in that season



- » Portability destination will be determined by NRL club in consultation with NSWRL, prior to the player's participation in a competition.
- » For Major Competitions, a player can be afforded portability between original nominated teams during any one season which have been approved by the Board of the NSWRL.
- » Special circumstances may apply if a player is required to be placed in local competitions for a specific reason. Such application must be made to the NSWRL Head of Major Competitions.

### **Jersey Flegg Cup**

Feeder arrangements allowed between NSW Cup and NRL cubs.

- » Portability allowed to Ron Massey Cup and Sydney Shield but restricted by PPIS.
- » Determination of portability pathway by NRL club in consultation with NSW Cup, Ron Massey Cup, Sydney Shield, and Community Rugby League.
- » Player can only be afforded portability between original determined teams in any one season.

### **Ron Massey Cup**

The Ron Massey Cup is quite unique in the fact that not only is it governed by a points system and salary cap, it is played across boundaries of the NSWRL's metropolitan and regional areas and stands alone from the NSWRL District competitions. Ron Massey Cup players can move freely to and from the Jersey Flegg Cup, NSW Cup competitions, District Leagues and NSWRL Regional Member competitions to his pre-determined nominated club.

### **Sydney Shield**

Sydney Shield is a Level 4 NSWRL competition and is administered by the NSWRL. Players may move freely to and from the Jersey Flegg Cup, NSW Cup, Ron Massey Cup, District Leagues and NSWRL Regional Member competitions provided that they fit into the Sydney Shield Points System and Salary Cap.

This competition invites teams from within the Sydney Metro and Regional areas to participate in a competition above the Community Rugby League club. It is also governed by a points system and salary cap.

### **District Clubs and NSWRL Regional Members**

Player portability back and forth to NSWRL District Clubs, NSWRL Regional Members and their Leagues must be acknowledged by all Leagues affiliated with District Clubs and the NSWRL Regional Member.

The Senior District club must endorse their affiliates as being representative of their District via the participant club (i.e. Penrith and Windsor, Parramatta and Wentworthville).

The District club must endorse the competitions as a development pathway within their boundaries.

The Generic Rules of portability as detailed above must apply.



The adoption of these Portability Rules by the NSWRL Board has provided the opportunity for all players to have an unrestricted Rugby League pathway right across all areas of the State.



## 1.8 Playing With More Than One Club

Once a player is registered with and has played three (3) or more competition matches with the player holds their primary registration, they are unable to play with another club in the same season unless:

The players' team withdraws from the competition:

- » Clubs shall advise in writing the reason for withdrawing
- » They should include a list of the players that are registered with the withdrawing team
- » A list of players that intend to transfer to other clubs should be attached. It should be signed by each player and endorsed by the club Secretary.

A Club has an overabundance of players and is prepared to release those not required (i.e. representative players returning – an influx of new players – return of previously registered players):

- » Clubs shall submit a list of registered players
- » A list of players that intend to transfer should be attached. It should be signed by each player and endorsed by the club Secretary.
- » Under this clause, players are not able to make application to transfer on their own behalf
- » The District Board, Area Manager or delegated official agrees with such transfers or there are other special reasons
- » No transfers can take place after the 30<sup>th</sup> June.

A player is registered in and plays a “tackle” rugby league competition match (or a portion of a match) with a club and wishes to play “tag” rugby league with a second club (or vice versa):

- » The players “tackle” Club shall be the primary Club and a permit will be allowed to play “tag”

A player has extenuating circumstances such as:

- » Change of address

Fines will apply if any club promises or encourages a transfer without referring the matter to the League Administrator.

A player cannot play in a Community Rugby League Competition and a higher graded NSWRL Competition (i.e. S G Ball, Tarsha Gale, Harold Matthews, Andrew Johns, Laurie Daley, Ron Massey Cup, Sydney Shield and / or NSW Cup) on the same weekend. This applies to the 17 players named in the squad. Penalties will apply.

For example, any participant that takes the field in an SG Ball, Harold Matthews, Ron Massey Cup, Sydney Shield or NSW Cup match cannot play in a NSW Community Rugby League Competition on the same weekend.

Should a team involved in the Final Series of either Harold Matthews, SG Ball, Tarsha Gale, Andrew Johns or Laurie Daley Competitions be deemed, after their game, to be eliminated from that competition then this



would be the only exception to this rule and would be permitted to play on the same weekend pending District or Regional approval and completion of relevant registration / clearances.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “weekend” could mean Saturday and Sunday, or it could mean a wider period of days (for example, Thursday to the following Monday) depending on the scheduling of matches over the course of a specific period.

---

## Reference Documents

NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 1.9 Playing in More Than One District or Region

Players are not able to play with more than one Community Rugby League Competition on any one weekend.

i.e. A player registered to a team in South Sydney DJRL may not play for a team in Canterbury DJRL on the same weekend.

In unique circumstances, approval may be granted upon application to the NSWRL Community Football Department for an applicable permit to play in two different Districts or Regions on different weekends.

Any decision made by the NSWRL Community Football Department will be final.

Regardless of such permit, players are only eligible to play in one District or Region on any one weekend.

Prior to a permit as outlined above being granted, a player applying for a permit to play in more than one District must nominate a 'Home Club'. This player will only be eligible to play finals with the team that they nominated as their 'Home Club'.

---

### Reference Documents

NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 1.10 Protests and Appeals

### PROTESTS

Provided all rules and regulations have been observed and followed, a club may lodge a protest against a breach of the League rules in relation to the outcome of a match. This complaint may be heard by an appropriate League Sub-Committee or by the Community Rugby League Administrator.

All protests should be in writing and addressed to the Community Rugby League Administrator and be lodged or delivered to the League by 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the match.

If a club decides to protest while a match is in progress (or immediately before or after), a brief account of the protest should be submitted with the name of the club, official and position.

It is still necessary for the club Secretary to forward a letter of protest to the League Administrator by 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the match.

If the required follow up protest letter from the club Secretary is not received by the League by 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the match, no further action will be taken by the League Administrator. The protest letter may be emailed to the League however the club submitting the protest should ensure that it has been received.

Upon receipt of the protest and the prescribed fee, the League Administrator will advise brief details of the protest / complaint to the club complained against and arrange for the matter to be investigated and adjudicated upon. Non-receipt of that notice will not be a defence at any subsequent hearing.

The League Administrator has the authority to deem a protest frivolous and dismiss the complaint.

Should a club or an Official lodge a frivolous or groundless complaint or fail to proceed with a complaint in such a way it is considered an inconvenience or an embarrassment, disciplinary action against the club or official lodging the protest may follow.

The League Administrator is empowered to adjudicate on any protest, complaint or issue felt is appropriate.

Protests at Semi-Finals, Finals etc.

- » Should a protest be unable to be resolved at the venue, all protests will be heard if possible on the day of the match, at a time and venue to be advised by the League Administrator. Any protest shall be immediately referred to the League Administrator who will make a determination of merit and if required, refer the protest to a Match Review Committee for hearing.
- » For a protest to be accepted from clubs involved in the final series matches it must be lodged in writing at the official table no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the completion of the game. The League Administrator may institute action in regards to a breach of the League Rules at any time.

The League Administrator is authorised to investigate all protests, complaints and other concerns and make adjudication. This may be done by involving a match review committee should that be required.





## **LEAVE TO APPEAL**

***For Appeals against Code of Conduct Review Panel and Judiciary findings, please see Section 8 of this Manual.***

In accordance with, and subject to the applicable appeal rules, any club has a right to request leave to appeal against any adjudication or decision made by a League Sub-Committee, Executive, League Administrator or the Board of Management with regards to decisions pertaining to their Club. All requests for leave to appeal against a decision made regarding an individual must be completed by his or her club.

Requests for leave to appeal a decision can only be submitted with the authority of the Club Secretary, and any request for leave to appeal that is filed without the authority of the Club Secretary and by the club (i.e. a request for leave to appeal filed by an individual) must be dismissed by the Appeals Committee

The relevant Appeals Committee will adjudicate upon all appeals. For an appeal to be accepted by the Appeals Committee the following requirements must be observed:

- » The official NSWRL Application for Leave to Appeal Form should be used
- » The prescribed fee should be attached to the completed Application for Leave to Appeal Form
- » The request for Leave to Appeal should be lodged at the League office within the limitation of time (see full definition below)
- » Fresh evidence (if applicable) must be available and fully set out in, or attached to, the Application for Leave to Appeal Form
- » Proper appeal procedures should be followed

Copies of the NSWRL Application for Leave to Appeal Form can be obtained from District Leagues or the NSWRL website ([www.nswrl.com.au](http://www.nswrl.com.au)). All sections of the form must be completed and if necessary, additional documentation can be attached.

The Application for Leave to Appeal Fee is \$500.00. Payment should be made and confirmation of payment attached to the completed NSWRL Application for Leave to Appeal Form when it is lodged with the relevant body hearing the request for leave to appeal. If a form is submitted without accompanying proof of payment, an invoice will be raised and sent to the Appellant. The request for Leave to Appeal will be reviewed once payment has been confirmed.

### **Limitation of Time**

Appeals (other than Judiciary and Code of Conduct), along with associated payment, must be lodged within 48 hours of the adjudication / result.

Should there be insufficient time to arrange an Appeal Hearing prior to the following weekend. Any penalty (suspension, fine or other penalty) appealed against will stay in place and be binding until the Hearing takes place.



## **Fresh Evidence**

Fresh evidence is evidence that could not have been reasonably known at the time of decision. Any evidence that could have been available at the time the decision was made, if all diligent searches and inquiries had been made by the appellant prior to the decision, is not fresh evidence.

## **Responsibilities of the Community Rugby League Administrator**

Prior to sending the Application for Leave to Appeal Form and associated documents to the Appeals Committee, the League Administrator should check the documents to ensure that they are in order and attach a report advising that all request for Leave to Appeal procedures have been followed.

The League will endeavour to respond to all Appeals and Protests, in the first instance with acknowledgment of receipt, within two (2) business days.

After the Appeal Application Form and associated documentation is submitted to the Appeals Committee, the appellant should be advised of whatever decision and supporting comments are made by the Appeals Committee or Appeals Chairperson in regards to whether or not the appeal is to proceed at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **Appeals Committee**

The Appeals Committee shall be constituted by a Chairperson and two (2) other Committee Members appointed in accordance with this Code of Procedure.

- a) The Appeals Administrator shall appoint the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be a person who is a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.
- b) The Appeals Administrator shall appoint two (2) Committee Members. A Committee Member shall be a former Rugby League person who is not an official of a club.
- c) A person is ineligible to be a member of the Appeals Committee if that person is also a member of the appellant Club or League.

## **Responsibilities of the Appeals Chairman**

Upon receipt and perusal of the Appeal Application Form and associated documentation, the Appeals Chairman should consider the report from the League Administrator and review and evaluate any fresh evidence submitted and determine if the request has merit and should be referred to an Appeals Committee for hearing.

## **The Appeal Hearing**

The first task of the Appeals Committee is to invite the appellant to present their evidence. Any evidence from any previous hearing will not be admissible. The League representative will then be invited to address the Committee on the evidence provided.

The Appeals Committee may at any time dismiss the Appeal without taking any further evidence if it is considered that the evidence is insufficient or lacking substance.



If the Appeals Committee has accepted the evidence and allowed the Appeal to continue, the appellant may only introduce evidence directly related to the Appeal Submission.

Witnesses will not be expected to attend unless their attendance has been requested and their evidence is directly related to the Appeal.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person lodging an appeal to know the powers of the Appeals Committee and all conditions and aspects of the appeal procedure and be aware that the Appeal may not be accepted if proper procedures are not followed.

If the evidence given by a witness at a lower-level Hearing is not challenged in the Appeal Submission, such evidence will be held to be reliable and true and will be unable to be challenged during the hearing of the Appeal unless the Chairman directs otherwise. The person or club who is lodging the Appeal must advise full details of which parts of the evidence are being challenged.

It is the responsibility of the appellant to gather evidence and arrange for witnesses to attend appeals and give evidence in support of the Appeal Submission.

The Appeals Committee may consider, and if necessary take into account, all available evidence.

### **Powers of the Appeals Committee**

The Appeals Committee may dismiss an appeal on the grounds that there is insufficient evidence.

If the Appeals Committee judges the Appeal to be groundless, frivolous or considers the proper appeal procedures were not followed, the appeal fee can be confiscated.

Appeals against severity of penalty are not permissible.

Pending the result of appeals, all decisions appealed against will be operative.

The Appeals Committee may decrease, increase or otherwise alter any previous penalty imposed.

The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and binding and cannot be appealed against.

---

### **Reference Documents**

Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Request for Leave to Appeal Application Form)



## 1.11 Registration Requirements

All players and volunteer (i.e. Coach / Trainer etc.) registrations must be completed in accordance with the applicable policies appearing in this Manual (see Reference Documents below) and using the MySideline online database.

Each registration should be accompanied by one of the three acceptable forms of identification. This identification should be noted in the player or volunteers online MySideline database record.

All registrations that require a clearance (where a player has played previously for another club) must be initiated before 30 June.

No new registrations will be accepted after 30 June, with the exception of players participating in development Rugby League matches.

A registration will not be deemed complete until such time as the Community Rugby League Administrator has supplied the club with an authorised player / volunteer identification.

The NSWRL may at any time require that players (including any specific class, group or category of players) enter into a playing agreement with his or her Club in a form prescribed by the NSWRL.

Club Administrators, Committee Members and Directors should be reminded of the importance and legalities of having a parent / child's guardian sign off on the Terms and Conditions of registration. That is, a parent / guardian is the only person who can register their child to play Rugby League. This process should not be undertaken by a Club Administrator or a Club Representative on behalf of the child's parent or guardian.

---

### Reference Documents

Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Privacy Policy)

Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL National Registration Policy)



## 1.12 Suspended and Disqualified Person – Officials / Parents / Supporters / Spectators

**Suspensions imposed by any NSWRL affiliated District or Regional Judiciary or Conduct Panel are enforceable across ALL RUGBY LEAGUE Competitions.**

The following restrictions apply to any coach, manager, trainer, match or club official who has been suspended and or disqualified by any affiliated Community League or Disciplinary Tribunal.

### **A PERSON SUSPENDED or DISQUALIFIED FROM All Rugby League activity.**

- » Cannot be inside the spectator fence or rope (the playing area) at any ground at any time whilst games and training are taking place
- » Cannot be in the dressing room at any time with any team
- » Cannot have any official involvement in club or Committee activities, meetings etc. – however the League board may allow suspended persons limited involvement in various activities
- » Cannot be involved in team warm up activities or matches at team talks prior to and during any Rugby League Activity.
- » Can assist with barbeques, field set up, canteen etc. – providing the points above are adhered to

Players suspended by a Judiciary or Code of Conduct Review Panel are disqualified from participating in ALL Rugby League activities. League Administrators, in consultation with the respective Panel's Chairperson, have the discretion to allow a suspended player to coach, train, referee or officiate upon application.

### **Parents / Spectators / Officials Banned from Attending Community Rugby League Matches**

Parents, spectators, and any other officials or players of the game who are banned from attending Community Rugby League matches by a League Affiliated Tribunal must not be in attendance at any Community Rugby League match, including, but not limited to:

- » Community Rugby League Matches, including trial games
- » Schoolboy Rugby League Matches
- » Club Heritage Matches
- » League Gala Days and the like

Should a person banned from attending Community Rugby League matches be found in breach of these conditions, the hosting club has the responsibility to request the match be suspended until such time as the offending person leaves the venue. The club is to report the matter to the relevant League Manager and / or the NSWRL. The relevant Tribunal will issue a Code of Conduct Breach Notice. Following any hearing, the League reserves the right to suspend or deregister any siblings or relatives of the offender as it sees fit.



## **Responsibilities of Clubs**

If any team, club, player or official encourages or takes action to support a suspended or disqualified person having access to a team or player, that team may lose competition points, be disqualified from the competition or have action taken against the Club, player and / or official.

Any member of the Executive of any club that is aware of a suspended or disqualified person having access to a team, contrary to this rule, that fails to promptly advise the League, may face disciplinary action.

Any member of the Executive of any club that is aware of such suspension or disqualification who fails to take reasonable action to prevent such a person having such access to a team, player or official activity (meetings, committee etc), may face disciplinary action.



## 1.13 Suspended Player Guidelines

Suspensions imposed by NSWRL Affiliated Judiciaries and / or Code of Conduct Review Panels apply across all Rugby League activity. When a suspension is imposed by a NSWRL Affiliated Judiciary and / or Code of Conduct Panel, players are unable to participate in **any organised Rugby League Competition or activity (at determination of the NSWRL)** until the suspension has been served (includes School Football, Gala Days, Development Squads etc.).

Suspensions will be enforced across all Leagues.

NSWRL recognises that, in some instances, suspensions may be required to be served in different NSWRL competitions, and that the date on which a suspension is handed down may cause the suspension to carry over from one calendar year to the next. That being the case there is a need to allow suspensions to be served across certain competitions, while maintaining the intent of the original penalty.

Please note in line with 16.10 in the Judiciary Code of Procedure a player cannot count towards their suspension matches in more than one age group/division in each round, even if they would have participated in more than one age group/division during the weekend or timeframe set in the draw for the round to be played.

When a player has a suspension that is unable to be served in the same calendar year in the competition from which the player was suspended, suspensions will be able to be served across the following NSWRL related competitions:

- » Community Rugby League Competitions
- » NSWRL Conference Competitions
- » NSWRL Regional Championships
- » Junior Representative Competitions (Lisa Fiaola, Harold Matthews, Andrew Johns, Tarsha Gale, Laurie Daley and SG Ball)
- » Jersey Flegg
- » Sydney Shield
- » Ron Massey Cup
- » Harvey Norman Women's Premiership
- » NSW Cup

A player can only seek to serve their suspension in a competition in which their suspension equates to a maximum of 80% of the season proper rounds, i.e. if a player is seeking to serve their suspension in the Andrew Johns Cup the suspension can only be four (4) games (of the total five (5) rounds available) or less and the player must play in the next available round game for the suspension to be deemed as served.

Approval is required from the players relevant Area Manager, as well as Major Competitions, for a suspended player to be able to participate in, and serve their suspension, in any Junior Representative competition.



### **While suspended, a player:**

- » Cannot be inside the spectator fence or rope (the playing area) at any Community Rugby League ground at any time while Community Rugby League games are taking place
- » Is NOT permitted to act in any official club capacity
- » IS NOT able to act as a Sports Trainer, League Safe Trainer or a runner for any team
- » IS NOT able to act as a coach unless express permission is granted by the relevant tribunal chair
- » IS able to participate in training activities.

### **WHAT CONSTITUTES A MATCH SERVED IN SUSPENSION**

» Regular Competition Match	YES
» Forfeit (Received)	YES
» End of Season Play Off Match	YES
» Final Series Match	YES
» Washout	YES
» Bye	NO
» Trial (official or unofficial)	NO
» Forfeit (Given)	NO
» School matches/gala days	NO

Please note: the onus is on the player and / or the player's parent / guardian and club to ensure that the suspension is served in full before the player returns to the game.

### **TRANSFERS / CLEARANCES OF SUSPENDED PLAYERS**

Players who have current suspensions to be served may be cleared to another League. The suspended player must not participate in any competition until the player's full suspension is served as per these rules.

NSWRL reserves the right to determine when a suspension is deemed to be served in situations that may not be covered by these rules.

### **TRIALLING / KNOCKOUT / GALA DAYS WHILE UNDER SUSPENSION**

Players will be eligible to participate in NSWRL Sanctioned representative trial matches while suspended if the remaining suspension period is two (2) matches or less, with the remainder of the suspension to be served at the commencement of the first competition match of which the player registers in.

Players are also able to participate in NSWRL SANCTIONED matches, Knockout Carnivals and Gala Days if the remaining suspension period is two (2) matches or less, upon application to NSWRL. The remainder of the suspension to be served at the commencement of the first competition match of which the player registers in.

### **FINALS QUALIFICATION**

Players under suspension cannot claim matches served as matches played in relation to finals qualification.





## 1.14 Trial Games / Carnivals / Gala Days – Approval Process

Clubs wishing to play trial matches may do so only with the prior permission of the relevant Local League Administrator.

### LOCAL LEAGUE TRIAL MATCHES

All inter-area trial matches must be approved by the Local League Administrator. Notification should be sent via email.

### CROSS-BORDER TRIAL MATCHES

All Clubs must notify their Local League Administrator of any trial matches that will be played in an external area. Hosting Clubs must inform their Local League Administrator of these matches. Notification should be sent via email.

Please remember:

1. Adherence NRL On Field Policy with active accredited Sports Trainers is compulsory
2. Adherence to NRL Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Rugby League Policy and associated NSWRL Policies is compulsory
3. Referee/s officiating the match or matches must be accredited and registered for the current season;
4. In the event of a on field or off field incidents of misconduct, reports must be completed and disciplinary processes followed as per NSWRL policy
5. All players must be registered
6. Team sheets are to be completed including all participating players names, coaches names and Sports Trainers. Copies of teams sheets are to be lodged with the Local League administrator before midday on the first business day after the match.
7. Ensure your ground management personnel are across the Heat Guidelines
8. Official sign on sheets should be used for all trial matches. The team manager should prepare and retain a list of everyone that played in the trial (and their previous club, irrespective if the club is in or out of the trial teams District or Region).

### EVENT SANCTIONING – AFFILIATED ENTITIES

Any direct affiliate who wishes to host a Knockout Carnival / Gala Day / Tournament / Sevens or Nines or like competition needs to apply, in writing, to their Local League Administrator and complete the appropriate Sanctioning Form.

Local League Events (teams from within the same League participating) will require the sanction of their Local League Administrator only.

Cross-Border Events (teams from different Leagues participating) will require the sanction of their Local League Administrator to either:

- a) Host the event
- b) Attend and participate in an event being held within a different League



No prizemoney or cash vouchers should be offered or paid at events where participants are under the age of 18.

Organisers should ensure that all participants are registered Community Rugby League players.

Clubs and teams that attend events that require an overnight stay will need to complete an NRL Application to Tour Form.

Any Club that does not comply with this policy may forfeit any insurance rights and may have future applications refused and / or be further dealt with by the Local League or NSWRL.

Please note, as competitions of this nature are normally held pre or post season a higher level of attention than normal shall be given to player comfort in regards to temperature, the number of games played, fitness, hydration and medical support.

### **NON-AFFILIATED ENTITIES**

Bodies not affiliated with NSWRL who wish to host a Knockout Carnival / Gala Day / Tournament / Sevens or Nines or like competition need to seek approval, in writing, from the Local League Administrator. Following this, approval will also need to be sought from NSWRL via submission of the appropriate Sanctioning Form.

Any non-affiliated body seeking sanctioning of an event needs to obtain and provide proof of specific event Public Liability insurance and Personal Injury, Accident and Total and Permanent Disability cover for all participants.

Please note: all event sanction approvals are at the sole discretion of NSWRL.

---

### **Reference Documents**

Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Event Sanctioning Form)

SECTION 2

# **ADMINISTRATION**

COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB



## 2.1 NSWRL Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy - Reporting

Under relevant state/territory laws, failure to report any reasonable suspicion or knowledge that a Child/Young Person is or is likely to be at risk of harm could result in criminal proceedings. This excerpt from the NSWRL Safeguarding Children and Young People policy provides examples of the main actions that must be followed, however knowledge of the relevant state/territory reporting obligations is critical.

The NSWRL Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy in full is available on [nswrl.com.au](https://nswrl.com.au):

### **You must ACT.**

As a person involved in Rugby League you play a crucial role in protecting Children/Young People. You must follow the four actions set out below when responding to any Child Abuse allegations.

#### **Action 1 - Responding**

**If a Child/Young Person is at risk of immediate harm, you must ensure their safety by:**

- Calling 000 for medical and/or police assistance to respond to urgent health or safety concerns;
- Administering first aid, if required;
- Separating at-risk Child/Young Person and others involved;
- Identifying an appropriate contact person for any on-going liaison with the Police.

If there is no immediate harm, go to Action 2 below.

#### **Action 2 – Reporting**

If you suspect, on reasonable grounds that a Child/Young Person was, is, or is at risk of being abused and/or neglected, you must report it to the police and/or the relevant state/territory Child protection agency, a list of which can be found [here](#).

If the alleged Child Abuse is occurring in a Relevant Organisation, it may also be documented on the Report Form found [here](#)

#### **Action 3 – Contact**

You must contact the police and/or the relevant child protection agency to determine the information that may be shared with parents/carers, and who should lead this contact (i.e., police, Child Protection department or Relevant Organisation representative). This could include advice:

- not to contact the parents or carers in circumstances where they are alleged to have engaged in the abuse.
- to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

#### **Action 4 – Support**

- Support should be provided to any Child/Young Person that has experienced abuse.
- It is important that the person providing support to the Child/Young Person does not attempt to provide support which is outside of the scope of their role.
- Support should include maintaining a calm open manner when listening to any allegations and disclosures, while avoiding seeking detailed information or asking leading questions.
- Information regarding allegations of Abuse need to be well documented and shared with NSWRL designated contact.
- Further support for the Child/Young Person, relevant Adults and others involved may be required, including a referral to wellbeing or healthcare professionals and or the development of a safety plan.

**Child Safe reporting to NSWRL:**

**Report a concern or incident via :** [Child Safeguarding platform](#)

**Email** [mpio@nswrl.com.au](mailto:mpio@nswrl.com.au)



## 2.2 Working With Children Check (Requirements & Process)

The NSWRL operates under the National Rugby League National Registration Policy in regard to Working with Children Checks. As per the NRL National Registration Policy all Match officials, Coaches, Volunteers, Sports Trainers and other like persons who participate in a junior environment i.e. 18 years and younger and/or officiate in matches, events involving officials 18 years and younger are required to provide current WWCC (NSW) or WWVP (ACT) details upon registration. Additionally, Coaches, Match officials, Sports Trainers, Volunteers who have attained the age of 18 years and above who work with or in an environment with individuals under 18 years will be required to complete Patrons of the Game Child Safe Education.

NRL Registration Policy: [national-registration-policy-13-12-2022.pdf \(playrugbyleague.com\)](https://playrugbyleague.com/national-registration-policy-13-12-2022.pdf)

A Community Rugby League Club, League, Association or other affiliated body are required by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) to register an 'employer' of staff, whether they are paid or volunteer.

Employers have legal obligations around working with children. It is against the law to engage anyone in child related work without a Working with Children Check (WWCC). If an employee (paid or volunteer) requires a check, there are actions the employer must take.

1. Register your Club or Association as an employer with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (if you are not already registered)
2. List a Club Contact and District or Region Contact (compulsory) to be the point of contact for the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian
3. Inform staff (volunteers) who work with children of their legal obligations under the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 and NRL Registration Policy
4. Request WWCC or APP numbers from volunteers and **verify the details** through the employer profile on the OCG portal.

**This verification step is vital as it creates a link between the Club, the worker and the OCG, which enables the OCG to notify the Club if that person ever becomes barred from working with children. Once you click **VERIFY**, a short report will be generated indicating the person's status. If the result is **CLEARED** or **APPLICATION IN PROGRESS**, you make a record of the verification details. The person can then commence working or volunteering at the Club.**

After the APP or WWCC number has been verified, if the applicant becomes barred or is not cleared to work with children, the OCG will contact you and advise you of what to do next.

5. Notify any staff member who is INTERIM BARRED, BARRED, EXPIRED, CLOSED or NOT FOUND that they must cease any child related work immediately
6. Keep a record of all required information in relation to a volunteers WWCC on the spreadsheet provided by the OCG (see example below).

Employee full name	Date of Birth	WWC number	Start date	Verification date	Verification outcome	Expiry date	Paid or volunteer work
John Smith	20/09/1989	WWC000XXE	1/07/2015	30/06/2015	Cleared	28/06/2020	Paid

7. Provide any information requested by the NSW Office of Children's Guardian for auditing purposes

**NOTE – AS AN EMPLOYER IN CHILD RELATED WORK, YOU HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE LAW. REFUSING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AUDIT MAY LEAD TO AN ORGANISATION RECEIVING A FINE FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACT.**



## 2.3 Club Colours / Playing Uniforms

The Secretary of each Community Rugby League Club shall register their club's colours with their Community Rugby League Administrator and clubs should ensure that their players appear in the correct uniform at all matches. The Board shall have the power to refuse to register any uniform if it is not sufficiently distinctive. Upon registering the uniform, it shall become exclusive property of the club first registering it, and it may not be worn by any other club.

Clubs should ensure that players appear in proper uniforms in all competition matches and end of season matches which shall consist of jerseys in the clubs registered colours, socks, shorts, boots or shoes (which must not have spikes or studs which in the opinion of the referee could be considered dangerous). The regulation playing number must be attached to each jersey.

Infringements of this rule should be reported to the Community Rugby League Administrator. Any club failing to ensure all of its members conform to these rules shall be fined a sum as decided by the Board.

Clubs are unable to alter the colour, design or logo of the club uniforms, unless approval from the Community Rugby League Administrator is obtained.

Teams or players displaying colours or designs that have not been approved by the Board or the League Administrator may lose competition points or may be liable for other penalties as determined by the Board.

In the event of Jumpers clashing in colour, the designated "Away" team will be required to make alternative arrangements.

The following must be adhered to in relation to playing uniform:

- » Compression garments must not come past the bottom of playing shorts / jersey sleeves
- » Players with beaded hair / religious headpieces must wear headgear
- » Knots cannot be tied anywhere in the football jumper
- » Body jewellery must be removed or taped
- » Prison ankle bracelets must not be worn

---

### Reference Documents NSWRL Policy 2.9 – Licensing Program

NSWRL Policy 2.25 – Religious Headwear / Clothing

NSWRL Policy 4.9 – Compression Garments



## 2.4 Club Constitutions and By Laws

It is recommended that Clubs operate from the Model Community Rugby League Club Constitution.

Clubs may only alter their Constitution either at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary Meeting and in accordance with the rules of the Constitution and all applicable laws.

Each club shall forward a copy of its Constitution to their League and advise when alterations are made from time to time.

A copy of the clubs Constitution must be available at all meetings of the club.

Clubs may attach a set of By-Laws to the Constitution. Such By-Laws may be altered, deleted or established at any General Committee Meeting of the club.

Clubs must observe and support the rules of the Constitution at all times.

Areas of concern should be advised to the Community Rugby League Administrator.

If a particular rule or policy cannot be found in the club Constitution, the Leagues Constitution should be consulted and adhered to.

All Rugby League clubs must be Incorporated and have a current Constitution.



## 2.5 Defaulters

A club may refuse a transfer or clearance if a player is financially encumbered to that club or has not returned property owned by the club.

Once a club lists a player as a defaulter, that player cannot be registered with ANY club.

Once a club plays a player who has been listed as a defaulter by that club, the default will no longer be recognised.

A default can only be lifted against a player by notification in writing to the League.

Clubs or players who feel they have been disadvantaged may make representations to the League Administrator on any aspect of this rule.

If a player who has been listed as a defaulter makes an application for a transfer or clearance, the club Secretary should deny the clearance, listing the following details in the clearance request on MySideline:

- » Player listed as defaulter. Transfer (or clearance) not approved until player pays the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the club.

If a club approves a transfer or clearance online for a player that has been listed as a defaulter without adding the above statement against the players request, then the default against the player will no longer be recognised.

A player cannot be listed as a defaulter for the non-payment of registration and / or insurance fees unless listed in a player's contract.

A player can also not be listed as a defaulter unless the player has been invoiced for the amount due by the entity claiming the debt.





## 2.6 Financial Bonds

Should a Club, or a Team, be placed on a financial bond by a Judicial or Code of Conduct Panel Hearing the bond required should be paid by the Club within 30 days of invoice.

The Club is responsible to pay any financial bond incurred by either the Club or the Team. Teams cannot be held responsible for a bond independently of a Club.

The amount paid will be returned to the Club within 30 days of the completion of the stipulated bond period.

Leagues reserve the right to suspend participation should bonds not be paid within designated timeframes.



## 2.7 Hydration, Heat and Water Bottle Guidelines

### Performance

- » Avoid heat stress and poor performance by adequate fluid replacement during Rugby League activities
- » Exercise in hot or humid weather will result in additional fluid loss and increase the risk of dehydration. Even small degrees of dehydration will cause a decrease in exercise performance.
- » Dehydration contributes to fatigue and may make the player susceptible to cramps, heat stress and heat stroke.
- » Children are at much greater risk of heat stroke.

### Drink Up!

- » Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait to feel thirsty; thirst is a poor indicator of fluid needs.
- » Flavored drinks such as sports drinks and low concentration cordial, as a result of their taste, may encourage fluid consumption more than plain water.
- » Cool drinks may be absorbed more rapidly than warmer fluids.

### Drink Up Routine

- » Avoid starting activities dehydrated. Drink plenty of water for several hours prior. A well hydrated athlete should be able to pass a good volume of clear urine in the hour before participation.
- » Drink at least 500ml (2 – 3 glasses) ½ to 1 hour before exercise.
- » Drink at least 200 ml (1 glass) every 10 – 15 minutes during exercise.
- » During exercise take advantage of all breaks in play to take a drink.
- » After exercise drink liberally to ensure that you are fully re-hydrated.

### Drink / Water Bottles

- » THE SHARING OF DRINK/WATER BOTTLES IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.
- » The most common way of infectious diseases spreading is by common use of drink/water containers or sharing anything hand to mouth. This applies especially in the training and playing arena.

### How Much Fluid?

The athletes weighing themselves before and after exercise can assess fluid requirements.

- » Each kilogram of weight lost = 1 litre of fluid deficit.
- » Aim to keep these fluid losses to a minimum by drinking before, regularly during and then after exercise.
- » Sweating and fluid losses continue after exercise. Aim to replace at least 1.5 times the amount of fluid deficit, measured at the end of exercise.



### Other Ways to Beat the Heat

- » Wear light clothing – light in color, light in weight.
- » Wear a 30+ sunscreen to prevent skin damage and skin cancer.
- » Where appropriate for the activities involved, wear a hat and sunglasses to protect the eyes.

### Symptoms of Heat Injury or Heat Stroke

Be aware of and react quickly to the following symptoms of heat injury:

- » Fatigue
- » Nausea
- » Headache
- » Confusion
- » Light headedness

### Emergency Treatment Plan

- » Lie the victim down
- » Loosen and remove excessive clothing – cool by fanning
- » Give cool water to drink if conscious
- » Apply wrapped ice packs to groins and armpits
- » SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

---

### Reference Documents

Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Sun Protection Policy)

Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Heat Guidelines)



## 2.8 Insurance

### Player Insurance

Player insurance payments and other compulsory insurance fees as deemed necessary by the NSWRL (or its delegate) must be paid at the prescribed rates and times.

No player or official, may play or be involved in rugby league competitions played under this Policies & Procedures Manual, or other official activities, if not covered by the prescribed insurance or other protective insurance as determined by the NSWRL (or its delegate).

Clubs may be fined, or face other disciplinary action for late payment or for ignoring request(s) for payment.

The NSWRL reserves the right to disqualify teams or clubs from regular season or finals series matches in situations where insurance payments are not met.

### Indemnity Insurance

For insurance purposes, the maximum age for participation as an official is eighty-five (85) years.



## 2.9 Licensing Program

In order to participate in all NSWRL Community Rugby League Competitions, team on-field playing gear (jersey and shorts) along with officiating apparel for referees and touch judges must include the NSWRL approved logo.

The NSWRL approved logo is a licensed product and only approved suppliers are allowed to manufacture on-field playing gear including this logo.

Accordingly, all teams entering NSWRL competitions and officiating bodies must source their on-field playing gear from a NSWRL approved supplier.

A full list of the official suppliers can be found on the NSWRL website – [www.nswrl.com.au](http://www.nswrl.com.au).

Off field kit and leisure wear does not have to include the NSWRL approved logo and can be sourced from any supplier.

Community Rugby League Clubs, Leagues and officiating bodies are required to submit artwork for on-field playing gear to their Community Rugby League Administrator for approval before orders are confirmed. The artwork must comply with the NSWRL Licensing Program guidelines for logo placement.

Clubs and associations are also advised to save copies of their invoices for on-field playing gear from their chosen Licensed Supplier. This will ensure that rebates available under the NSWRL Licensing Program are recouped from suppliers and refunded accordingly.

Clubs, associations or other affiliates that choose not to adhere to this policy may be fined, have competition points deducted, or be suspended from finals matches at the sole discretion of the NSWRL in its capacity as the governing body of Rugby League in New South Wales.



## 2.10 Mandatory Reporting

It is a requirement for Community Rugby League Clubs and Districts and Regions to report to NSWRL any of the following incidents that may occur:

- » Any match that is abandoned due to foul play
- » Any melee at your ground on game day
- » The need to engage any emergency service (Police, Ambulance or Fire) at any game day or training (exceptions being non-life threatening game related injuries attended by Ambulance)
- » Any financial impropriety by any office bearer within the Community Rugby League Club, District or Region that is officially reported to Police
- » Any registered participant that is charged with an offence that is related to child abuse or child endangerment
- » Any registered participant that is listed as BARRED from working with children by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian

Should a Club fail to report any of the above incidents both NSWRL and the League reserve the right to impose a penalty for non-reporting. This penalty could be a financial penalty or a competition points penalty for an individual team or could also include sanction of a Club official by way of a Code of Conduct Charge.



## 2.11 Certificate of fitness players 40 years or older

A person who is turning 40 years of age or older in the current calendar year and desires to register and participate in contact Rugby League under NSWRL jurisdiction must provide to the relevant registering club the completed certificate of fitness using the approved NSWRL form prior to participating in any game, training session or carnival.

The certificate of fitness form must be completed by a registered Medical Practitioner in Australia stating:

- a) that the person is medically fit to participate in body contact sport; and
- b) such other qualifications, terms and conditions as may be required by the NSWRL insurance provider as part of the registration process.

The completed NSWRL certificate of fitness form is to be uploaded to the players My Sideline registration profile.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Certificate of Fitness form turning 40 years and older [40yrs-fitness-cert-form.pdf](#)



## 2.12 Medical Exemptions

There are many different factors to take into consideration when determining suitability of a participant to play in any contact sport.

Further to the application of any policy incorporated into this Policies & Procedures Manual (including each of the documents referred to in Part 10), should a club hold a concern about the suitability of a participant, the club should ensure the procurement of a Medical Certificate of Fitness for participation in Rugby League.

In cases where clubs would like to make an application to (in accordance with the restrictions on doing so, including those set out in Policy 2.20 and Policy 2.30) play a registered player in an age group lower than they naturally qualify for, a Medical Certificate outlining the specific condition should be forwarded to the NSWRL and they will have the application assessed by the NSWRL Chief Medical Officer or a delegated medical practitioner.

The determination of the NSWRL CMO or delegated medical practitioner will be final.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.20 – Playing a Player Below Their Natural Age Group (Playing Down)

NSWRL Policy 2.28 – Weight & Age Guidelines





## 2.13 Minimum Age to Play Mini Footy

Players must have turned the age of four (4) years of age before being allowed to register to play, or to take part in any training, trial or sanctioned match.



## 2.14 Minimum Age to Play Senior International Football (Open Age)

Players must be seventeen (17) years of age before being allowed to play Senior International Open Age Rugby League (i.e. A Grade and other open age competitions). Players who are 17 years old still require parental consent to play in competitions 19 years and above. To remove doubt players that have turned 17 years of age are permitted to play Open Age, 19s, 20s, 21s or other Age Limited competitions above their age but require parental consent until they turn 18 years of age.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 2.15 Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications

The following modifications of rules and policies will be applied to all Blues Tag competitions and participants.

### **Playing in More Than One Club / Playing in More Than One District or Region**

Players participating in both Tackle and Blues Tag competitions are allowed to participate in two different Clubs and if necessary, two different Leagues or Regions if a Club does not field teams in both formats of the game.

The players "tackle" Club shall be the primary Club where the player will register, and a permit will be allowed to play "tag". The player must complete their registration (permit) at their secondary club as a League Tag participant.

### **Minimum Age to Play Open Age**

The minimum age to participate in Open Age Blues Tag Competitions is 16. The player must have turned 16 before they are eligible to participate.

In Regional areas, application can be made to participate before the age of 16 if extenuating circumstances exist.

### **Duration of Matches**

The duration of all Blues Tag Competition are as follows:

Under 8 – Under 9	4 x 8 minute quarters
Under 10 – Under 12	2 x 20 minute halves
Under 13 and above	2 x 25 minute halves

### **Interchange**

All Blues Tag competitions have an unlimited interchange rule.

### **Number of Players on the Field**

The minimum number of players required for competition is as follows:

Under 13 and above	Minimum eight (8) players
Under 10s – Under 12s	Minimum six (6) players
Under 8s- Under 9s	Minimum six (6) players

### **Player Equipment**

Tags provided by NSWRL are the only tags which are allowed to be used in all Blues Tag competitions.

Tag belts are not allowed to be used in competition matches.

### **Finger Nails**

Fingernails must be kept short to prevent injury to you as a player and your opposition. As a guideline, nails should not be seen from the underside of the finger. Acrylic and gel nails are permitted as long as they adhere to the previous point and are rounded and not sharp in any way.



### **PLAYING A PLAYER ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP (PLAYING UP)**

For League Tag (Blues Tag) competitions, players may participate in competitions a maximum of 3 years above their natural age (i.e. a player turning 12 this year may play in an Under 15s competition but NOT in an Under 16s competition).

This will operate as per PLAYER PLAYING ONE YEAR ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP rules as above. This will not require the additional approval of a Senior Club Coach or approved NSWRL delegate.

Any application to vary from the rules as they apply to League Tag competitions should be made through the Local League to the NSWRL. Playing below a natural age group is not permitted in Blues Tag.



## 2.16 NSWRL Communication Protocol

At all times, Clubs should follow the protocol between below when initiating contact with the NSWRL.

1. All contact between a Club and the NSWRL should be made through the Secretary of the Club involved
2. Initial contact should be made by email to your local NSWRL Club & Competition Coordinator
3. The appropriate NSWRL staff member will respond to the email in a timely manner

### IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY ISSUE

4. Please contact the NSWRL Head of Community Rugby League (Peter Clarke [pclarke@nswrl.com.au](mailto:pclarke@nswrl.com.au))
5. And / or the NSWRL Head of Community Engagement & Communications (Tracie Edmondson [tedmondson@nswrl.com.au](mailto:tedmondson@nswrl.com.au))

### IN THE CASE OF A COMPLAINT BY AN INDIVIDUAL AGAINST A CLUB / DISTRICT / GROUP OR REGION

6. In the first instance please contact your Community Rugby League District / Group or Region
7. If you cannot resolve the issue at a District / Group or Regional level, please contact NSWRL (as per 2) with evidence of your attempts to resolve through your District / Group or Region

**It should be noted that if the correct Communication Protocol, as above, is not followed, Clubs and individuals will be asked to follow the protocol as described.**



## 2.17 NSWRL Regional Member Travelling & Touring Teams

### Interstate Travel and Activities

Any team under the auspices of a NSWRL District or Regional Member representing any club or NSWRL District or Regional Member that wishes to travel / tour interstate for the purposes of playing rugby league or otherwise representing the sport shall:

- » have completed and submitted an Application to Travel/Tour in the form prescribed by NSWRL no later than six (6) weeks prior to departure;
- » not undertake any such travel or tour activities except with the prior permission of the relevant club, NSWRL District or Regional Member and the NSWRL.

### International Travel and Activities

Any team under the auspices of a NSWRL Regional Member representing any club or NSWRL District or Regional Member that wishes to travel / tour internationally for the purposes of playing rugby league or otherwise representing the sport shall:

- » submit to the NSWRL an expression of intention to tour one (1) year prior,
- » have completed and submitted an Application to Travel/Tour in the form prescribed by the NSWRL no later than six (6) months prior to departure;
- » only be considered for approval providing that each of the members of the touring party are aged 17 years or older; and
- » not undertake any such travel or tour activities except with the prior permission of the relevant club, NSWRL Regional Member and the NSWRL.



## 2.18 Play / Train Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure the integrity of District and Regional Rugby League Competitions by recognising and maintaining District and Regional Boundaries. It protects District Associations and Regions from Rugby League Clubs that may wish to change from one District or Regional Rugby League competition to another at any point in time.

Rugby League clubs are compelled to participate in matches (play), and train for matches in the District or Region in which the club is located and affiliated to.

A Rugby League club cannot be domiciled within the Boundaries of one District or Region, and choose to compete in a competition conducted by another District or Region without the express sanction of the Boards of:

- » The District or Region they wish to leave
- » The District or Region they wish to go to
- » The NSWRL

A Rugby League club cannot choose to train at a venue that is located outside of the Boundaries of the District or Region to which they are affiliated to without the express sanction of the Boards of:

- » The District or Region they are affiliated to
- » The District or Region they wish to train in
- » The NSWRL

Should any of the Boards listed above refuse sanction to any club request to play or train outside of their boundaries, the application will be denied.

**POLICY EXAMPLE (Play)** – The Dundas Shamrocks JRLFC is domiciled within the Boundaries of the Balmain District Community Rugby League. The club hosts matches and trains at a venue within the Balmain District JRL. The Dundas club is not permitted to leave the Balmain District JRL competition, and play in the Parramatta District JRL without the sanction of the Balmain District JRL, the Parramatta District JRL and the NSWRL.

**POLICY EXAMPLE (Train)** – Blacktown Workers JRLFC is domiciled in, and affiliated to the Penrith District JRL. If a new training venue has opened at Lalor Park, which is within the Boundaries of the Parramatta JRL, then the Blacktown Workers JRLFC is not permitted to train at the Lalor Park facility without the sanction of the Penrith District JRL, the Parramatta District JRL, and the NSWRL.

Where Districts and Regions come together and offer “Combined District Competitions”, Community Rugby League clubs will still maintain the identity of the District or Region to which they are affiliated to; that being, the District or Region that they are domiciled in.



## 2.19 Playing a Player Above Their Natural Age Group (Playing Up)

### NATURAL AGE GROUP

A player is naturally eligible to play in the competition which is named Under, and then the age that the player is turning in the calendar year that the competition is being run (e.g. A child born in the year 2010 can play Under 16s in 2026, as they will turn 16 in that calendar year. A child born in 2015 can play Under 11s in 2026 as they will turn 11 in that calendar year).

### AGE GROUPS

Unless otherwise approved by a Club and a District or Region (using one of the processes below) players will play in their correct and natural age group which is outlined above.

Participants in Under 6s to Under 12s are strongly encouraged to play in their natural age group. Exemptions may be granted for participants to play up one age group only. Exemptions in these age groups to play two years or more above their natural age groups will not be considered as per the Laws of the Game unless extremely exceptional circumstances exist – i.e. it can be proven that a player totally dominates a competition due to their size and strength in their natural age and the age above.

### PLAYERS PLAYING ONE YEAR ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP

A player shall be allowed to play in an age grade competition that is one year above the competition that he or she is naturally eligible to play in (player born in 2016 and registered in 2026 CAN PLAY in Under 10s and Under 11s).

All players who are playing up an age group must have a completed Playing in a Higher Age Group Consent Form before taking the field. This form must then be sent to the League Administrator at the earliest convenience after participation. The form must be authorised and uploaded to the player's member record on MySideline.

### PLAYERS PLAYING TWO YEARS ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP

In exceptional circumstances only, a club can apply to the NSWRL to have a player permitted to play two years above the age group that he or she is naturally eligible to play in under the following conditions:

- » A Playing in a Higher Age Group form, with parental consent, is to be completed and submitted to the League for approval
- » The application must be accompanied by a letter from a Senior Club Coach, Youth Development Coach, Club Coaching Coordinator or approved NSWRL delegate, as a minimum requirement that outlines the player's ability to take part in an age group two years above their natural age group
- » Once approved by the District, the application should be forwarded to the NSWRL for final approval before the player can take the field in the higher age group
- » The decision of the NSWRL will be final and no appeal or protest available to any decision made
- » If approved, the form will be authorised by NSWRL and uploaded to the player's member record on MySideline.
- » Under 17s who have not turned 17 years of age will need to complete the two-year playing up form

### DUAL AGE GROUP COMPETITIONS – PLAYING ONE YEAR ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP

If there is no competition in the player's natural age group, then the player is eligible to play in an age group one year above (e.g. if a player is turning 17 in a calendar year and there is no Under 17s competition offered for players the player is eligible to play Under 18s). Player will not be required to complete a Playing in a Higher Age Group Consent Form if their natural age group falls in the dual competition age group (i.e. a player turning 15 will not be required to





complete a Playing in a Higher Age Group Consent Form if there is no Under 15 competition and they are playing in an Under 16 competition).

### **DUAL AGE GROUP COMPETITIONS – PLAYING TWO YEARS ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP**

If a player wishes to participate in a dual age group competition (e.g. Competitions where age groups offered are Under 14 then Under 16 then Under 18) from an age group that is not within that dual age group (e.g. player turning 14 wishing to play in Under 16s (that includes Under 15s and Under 16s) then only under exceptional circumstances the player can apply to play in the higher age group using the process for PLAYERS PLAYING TWO YEARS ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP.

### **PLAYERS PLAYING TWO YEARS ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP WHERE CLUBS HAVE MISSING AGE GROUPS**

A remote local League may be provided with permission, via application to NSWRL, to allow a Mod aged player to participate two years above their natural age group where sparse population contributes to the need to significantly modify age groups across the League to support the establishment of competitions

### **PLAYERS RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR OWN TEAM**

Any player granted permission to play in a higher age group is required to fulfil their obligations to their correct (natural) age group before playing in a higher age group. For example, if a players natural age group is Under 10s then that player shall not be permitted to play in any Under 11s for their Club if that Clubs Under 10s team has insufficient players to properly compete in the competitions in which they participate.

It should also be noted that players who have been granted permission to play in a higher age group are not permitted to take the field before a player of the correct age in the team in the higher age group. For example, an Under 10s player shall not be permitted to start a game in Under 11s while a correct aged Under 11s player is on the reserve bench. This applies to all age groups up to and including Under 17s Tackle competitions and Under 16s Blues Tag competitions.

If a player is granted permission to play in a higher age group for the entirety of a season, then that player, once approved, will not be able to play 'down' in their natural age group in that season (i.e. if an Under 10s player requests to register in an Under 11s team at their Club and is approved, they cannot then play in the Under 10s team at that Club in that season). Players may be permitted to play in their natural age group on application to the League in the event that the team they are registered to folds.

### **LEAGUE TAG (BLUES TAG) COMPETITIONS**

For League Tag (Blues Tag) competitions, players may participate in competitions a maximum of 3 years above their natural age (i.e. a player turning 12 this year may play in an Under 15s competition but NOT in an Under 16s competition).

This will operate as per PLAYER PLAYING ONE YEAR ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP rules as above. This will not require the additional approval of a Senior Club Coach or approved NSWRL delegate.

Any application to vary from the rules as they apply to League Tag competitions should be made through the Local League to the NSWRL.

---

### **Reference Documents**

Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Playing in a Higher Age Group Consent Form)

NRL Junior Rugby League Laws: 6 -12 Years Official 2026



## 2.20 Playing a Player Below Their Natural Age Group (Playing Down)

A player shall participate in their correct / natural age group (i.e. if a player is turning 9 in the current calendar year, they shall play Under 9s).

Exemptions to play down an age group may be considered through a formal application process relating to one of the below Policies / Laws:

- a) Medical Exemption by application to the NSWRL Chief Medical Officer
- b) NSWRL Weight and Age Guidelines
- c) Competitions where the use of the NRL 18 Month Registration Window is approved ([18 month registration window - Play Rugby League](#))

---

### Reference Documents

NSWRL Policy 2.12 – Medical Exemptions

NSWRL Policy 2.28 – Weight and Age Guidelines

NRL Policies – Mixed Gender Policy



## 2.21 Player Electronic Match Day Cards / Sign on Sheets

Player Electronic Match Day Cards / Sign on Sheets are to be presented prior to sign on and should be available at the officials / scoring table for the duration of the game. Any anomalies noticed with player identification should be noted on the sign on sheet and a follow up report should be submitted to the League Administrator.

If a player goes onto the field and plays without the player's identification being available at the officials / scoring table, the players team may forfeit any competition points gained as a result of that particular match. The player and the club could face disciplinary action unless the District League Administrator or Regional Manager and / or District or Regional match committee decides otherwise.

A team manager is entitled to check players' Match Day Cards from both teams prior to and during a game. The inspection process should be discreet and courteous. Opposing players and officials should not be cross-examined or put under duress. If player's cards are to be compared with players, this should be done by way of a visual inspection when the opposing team is signing on. Any apprehension, concern or suspected rule breach should be written on the back of the Sign on Sheet and an Incident Report submitted to the League Administrator prior to 5:00pm on the Tuesday following the match.

### Unavailable Player's Electronic Match Day Cards

Team managers should check weekly to ensure all players and team officials identification is available for games. If an individual player's Electronic Match Day Card is not able to be produced at the official table that player should not take the field and if he does the team will be in breach of this rule.

In the event of team officials becoming aware before the weekend that the entire team's Electronic Match Day Cards are for some reason unavailable, they should advise the League Administrator in sufficient time so other authorisation can be arranged before the game.

In the event of team officials becoming aware on gameday that Electronic Match Day Cards are unavailable, they should advise the opposing team manager prior to the game. The game should be played first and any protest or complaint regarding the unavailability of the player's Electronic Match Day Cards should be attended to afterwards.

If there were extenuating reasons for the unavailability of the cards and all players involved in the game were registered in accordance with the rules, there is provision for the result of the game to be recognised.

If the unavailability of the cards was the result of carelessness or lack of preparation, there is provision for the game to be awarded to the opposing team.



## 2.22 Player Transfer Policy – Community Rugby League

### PURPOSE

To ensure the continued success and sustainability of the Game played under its auspices at the Community Rugby League level, the NSWRL, its constituent members and affiliates wish to ensure that teams fielded by Clubs in Community Rugby League are as strong, well matched, and viable as possible. For the purpose of achieving these objectives, the NSWRL has adopted this Policy to regulate the system of Players, eligible to play Community Rugby League, moving between Clubs within Community Rugby League. This policy has been developed by the NSWRL in conjunction with its members and affiliates.

The intentions of the NSWRL in adopting this Policy are to:

1. Maintain a level of stability in the membership of Clubs and teams.
2. Prevent Clubs from obtaining an unfair proportion of the best and most talented Players.
3. Provide Clubs with incentives to develop Players, their teams and the Game.

This Policy governs Transfers separately to the provisions of the National Registration Policy and the National Clearances Policy. Where any inconsistency exists between either the National Registration Policy or the National Clearances Policy on the first part, and this Policy on the second part, the latter shall prevail, and the former shall to the extent of the inconsistency not apply.

With this purpose in mind, all Transfer Requests will be considered in the context of the best interests of the game. Any Transfer Request, whether in breach of this policy or not, may be denied if it is deemed not to be in the best interests of the game.

### Administrative Requirements

For the purposes of this Policy, Players will be considered to be transferring into another team within their 'natural' age group, or the age group above if the Club requesting the Transfer does not have a team in the player's 'natural' age group.

This Policy does not apply to, or regulate the movement of:

1. Players transferring into a team participating in a competition aged U18 or above;
2. Players in relation to Community Rugby League where that Player has not previously Registered to play Community Rugby League for a Club in Competitions at any time;
3. Players who have previously registered to play Community Rugby League for a Club, who wish to register to play the Game for a team or organisation which does not either participate in Competitions, or the Game as affiliated to the NSWRL.
4. The movement of Players to or from a Club where they will or have only played League Tag / Blues Tag.

League administrators have the right to choose either of the following options when processing a clearance:

- i) Process clearances as received in chronological order or;
- ii) Process the clearance once the receiving club has actioned the clearance.



This Policy is intended to improve the balance and integrity of Competitions, particularly those in higher divisions. As such, the Policy will be strictly enforced in these Competitions (e.g. Gold/Division 1 Competitions). Where it is determined to be in the best interests of the Game, a degree of flexibility may be applied in lower division Competitions in consultation with the Clubs involved.

Where a Player applies to move between Clubs after the Season has commenced, the provisions of the NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies & Procedures Manual will apply in the first instance. Any application for consideration of exceptional circumstances (other than Player relocation across a large distance) will not be considered if the Player has played more than 3 matches for their existing Club in the current Season.

Division 1/Gold transfer Case Reviews and Appeals for participants attempting to Transfer to a Grand Final team will only be considered after team nominations are received by the local League.

Clubs who receive a Transfer Request into any of their Division 1/Gold Grand Final teams are encouraged to automatically deny these Transfers.

Development Player Transfers and quotas are not subject to this Policy but may be subject to specific local league rules. Any transfer appeals relating to development players are thus not under the jurisdiction of this Policy.

“My Team may fold” - Participants are strongly encouraged to Register to the Club they played for in the previous Season. Participants who do this will be given preference in terms of being granted a Transfer Permission over and above Transfer limits, should their existing team at their existing Club fold prior to the Season starting.

## TRANSFER POLICY DEFINITIONS

The following terms have the corresponding meanings when used in this Policy:

**Affiliate** has the same meaning as given to that term in the Constitution.

**Blues Tag** means tag version of the game

**Clearance** means the process by which a Player is cleared to move between Clubs or other rugby league teams pursuant to the National Clearances Policy.

**Club** means an organisation which enters teams to participate in Competitions.

**Community Rugby League** means age-limited Competitions for players aged 18 years and under.

**Competitions** means rugby league tournaments, competitions, matches and fixtures conducted by and between Districts with the approval of, and under the auspices of, the NSWRL.

**Constitution** means the constitution of NSW Rugby League, as amended from time to time.

**Division 1** refers to the highest grade of competition available in any one age group within the League concerned. This applies regardless of whether there are one or more Divisions/grades.

**Existing Club** means the most recent Club that a Player was registered to and played a match with during the last 24 months.

**External League** means any NSWRL League outside of the League within which a Club operates.

**Game** means the sport of rugby league.



**Grand Final team** means a team that played in the conclusive game of a final series or where finals are not played one of the two top ranked teams in a premiership competition the previous year.

**Junior Grade Football** means rugby league competitions played from under 5s to 18 years.

**League** means an organisation which is a Member or Affiliate of the NSWRL which conducts rugby league competitions, premierships, tournaments and matches which are approved by the NSWRL.

**Member** has the same meaning as given to that term in the Constitution.

**National Clearances Policy** means the NRL National Clearances and Permits Policy v2.3 as amended or replaced from time to time.

**National Registration Policy** means the NRL National Registration Policy v2.3 as amended or replaced from time to time.

**New Club** means a Club which a Player wishes to Register to play Junior Grade Football for.

**NSWRL Conference Competition** means competitions administered by NSWRL or a Regional Body involving teams from two or more affiliate Leagues

**Player** means a person who is Registered to play rugby league.

**Policy** means this Player Transfer Policy.

**Registered** means the process of a person registering to play rugby league pursuant to the National Registration Policy and Register and Registration have corresponding meanings.

**Registration Permission** means permission granted by a Player's New Club's League, allowing the Transfer of a Player.

**Representative Player** means a Player who has played Representative Football at any time within the last 24 months.

**Representative Quota** means the number of Players within a club/age group who have played Representative Football at any time in the last 24 months, determined by each League by 30 November each year in respect of the next rugby league season. If the District is participating in a NSWRL Conference Competition the quota shall be five (5) Players.

**Representative Football** the Elite Competitions conducted by the NSWRL or QRL in the 16, 17, 18 years age groups, namely the Andrew Johns Cup, Harold Matthews Cup, Laurie Daley Cup, S.G. Ball Cup, Lisa Fiaola Cup, Tasha Gale Cup within the NSWRL and the equivalent competitions in QRL.

**Season** means a rugby league season commencing in about March and ending in about September in a calendar year, for example the "2025 Season".

**Senior Competitions** means open-age Competitions or those competitions catering for players over 18 years which are not considered Community Rugby League for the purposes of this Player Transfer Policy.

**Transfer** means the transfer of the Registration of a Player, who is eligible to play Community Rugby League, from a Club to another Club.

**Transfer Appeal** means an appeal lodged in adherence to sections 8 and 9 of this policy.

**Transfer Permission** means permission granted by an Existing Club's League, allowing the Transfer of a Player.

**Transfer Request** means the request for transfer of a Player's Registration



**Transfer Case Review** an application from a participant to have a denied Transfer assessed by Local League Administrator / Review Committee or NSWRL. The assessor(s) will offer an informed opinion based on the Policy and may approve or deny the application from the information presented. Should the Transfer Case Review be denied, the applicant may enter a formal Appeal to the relevant body.

**Unreasonable Travel Distance** means greater than 45 minutes door to ground travel to participate in home games.

## PLAYER TRANSFERS

- 1) In Age Groups where the Transfer Policy applies, a Transfer window will open on 1 February each year and close on 30 June. That is, no Transfer / Clearance will be actioned until 1 February each season. Local Leagues may choose to shorten this window.
- 2) Any Player who has previously Registered to play Junior Grade Football for a Club at any time in the previous 24 months must, before the Player plays Junior Grade Football for any other Club:
  - a) Obtain a Clearance from the relevant Existing Club; and
  - b) Obtain a Transfer Permission from the Existing Club's League; and
  - c) Obtain a Registration Permission from the New Club's League.
- 3) For the purposes of rules 2(a) and 2(b), where the Existing Club's League and the New Club's League is the same League, the requirement to obtain a Transfer Permission under rule 2(b) shall be deemed satisfied upon the grant of a Registration Permission.
- 4) Any decision by an Existing Club on any request by a Player for a Clearance must be made in accordance with the National Clearance Policy and any other applicable rules.
- 5) Subject to rule 6, a League or the NSWRL may refuse to grant a Transfer Permission in any of the following circumstances:
  - a) If two (2) or more Transfer Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played in the same age group for the same Club in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same New Club for the next Season
  - b) If four (4) or more Transfer Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played for any Club within the League concerned in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same age group in the same New Club for the next Season.
  - c) In Rugby League age groups 13+ where the Player is classified as a Representative Player, has been registered in a Division 1 team or a team in a higher age group within any NSWRL affiliated competition (including Competitions with only one Division) at any time within the previous 18 months, **and** where the Club which the Player intends Registering to play for qualified for the Division 1 Grand Final in that Player's current or correct age group in the previous Season.
  - d) Where the Player has played Representative Football at any time within the last 24 months, and where the team which the Player intends Registering to play for with the New Club already contains the number of **Representative / Development Players** which is equal to or greater than the League/Competition **Representative Quota / Development Quota** (see Definitions, P2 & 3 and or local League Quotas).
- 6) Subject to rule 6, a League or NSWRL may refuse to grant Registration Permission in any of the following circumstances:





- a) If two (2) or more Registration Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played within the same age group for the same club in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same New Club for the next Season.
  - b) If four (4) or more Registration Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players in the same age group, who played for any External Leagues in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same New Club for the next Season.
  - c) In football age groups, where the Player has been registered in a Division 1 team or a team in a higher age group within any NSWRL Competition (note this includes competitions with only one Division) at any time within the previous 18 months, and where the Club which the Player intends Registering to play for qualified for the Division 1 Grand Final in that Players current or correct age group in the previous Season.
  - d) Where the Player has played Representative Football at any time within the last 24 months, and where the team which the Player intends Registering to play for with the New Club already contains the number of **Representative / Development Players** which is equal to or greater than the League/Competition Representative / Development Quota (see Transfer Policy Definitions and or Local League Quotas).
  - e) In the under 6s to under 13s age groups where the League determines Registration Permission be denied based on the proposed New Club's registration numbers and/or team performance(s) in the current or previous season.
- 7) The League or NSWRL **may** grant a Transfer Permission or a Registration Permission which would otherwise breach this Policy in what it determines to be “Exceptional Circumstances”. In all examples, applications for consideration of Exceptional Circumstances will be assessed in the context of the best interests of the Game. These considerations are intended for use in providing some flexibility in the limiting of Player movement in lower divisions rather than compromising the application of the Policy in Division 1 competitions, particularly in regard to Grand Final teams. **For the purpose of this Policy, “Exceptional Circumstances” that may be considered are:**
- a) If the Existing **Club** is disbanded, merges with any other Club, or ceases to exist.
  - b) If the Player is a child of, or otherwise under the guardianship of, a person who has relocated their usual place of residence:
    - i) in connection with that person’s employment; or
    - ii) for compassionate reasons; andwhere the Player lives with that parent or guardian, and as a consequence of that relocation, the Player would have to travel an unreasonable distance to play “home” matches in Competitions for the Existing Club.
  - c) If the Player is in a situation where his/her parents, guardians or family unit has separated, and where court ordered custody arrangements are in place in relation to the Player meaning that would be unreasonable for the Player to play for, or train with, the Existing Club. Please note this does not mean living with a relative to facilitate the avoidance of the Policy.
  - d) If the relevant application for Transfer Permission or Registration Permission is accompanied by medical, psychological or other professional evidence which satisfactorily demonstrates that it would be likely to be of serious detriment to the mental health and wellbeing of the Player, if the Transfer Permission or Registration Permission (as the circumstances dictate) was refused.
- 8) **Club Right to Deny a Clearance:** Under the terms of the Policy a Club may deny a Transfer if:





The Club has already approved 4 INTERNAL Transfers within the same age group; or  
The Club has already approved 4 EXTERNAL Transfers within the same age group.  
Enforcement of this rule is solely at the discretion of the Club.

- 9) Denied Clearance – **Transfer Case Review Process** for participants who wish to move to a new League or move to a new Club that participates in a NSWRL Conference Competition

A parent or guardian who believes a Transfer Permission or Registration Permission has been denied in a manner inconsistent with Policy has the option of submitting a request for a Transfer Case Review. This “Case Review” must be approved by an authorised person from the receiving Club before it is submitted. Please refer to Exceptional Circumstances within the Policy (Section 6), which outlines circumstances in which a Transfer can be approved over and above the Transfer Policy.

This can be done by applying to the NSWRL Regional or Area Manager who shall assess the merits of the Transfer Review and either:

1. Approve the Transfer Permission or Registration Permission

OR

2. Deny the Transfer Permission or Registration Permission

To apply for a Transfer Review under Section 7 of this Policy, please contact your Local League for the correct Transfer Review form.

Should the Transfer Permission or Registration Permission be denied under the terms of the Transfer Review, the aggrieved party shall have the right to Appeal this decision (see section 9).

Local Leagues will have internal processes for the Review of internal League transfers.

- 11) The only right of appeal open to a Player, Club or District League (together an “Appellant”) in respect of any decision made under this Policy in relation to a Player is set out in this rule 9.

**Where the Existing Club’s League and the New Club’s League is the same League and teams involved participate in a Community Rugby League competition conducted solely by that League**

- a) An Appellant may appeal a decision (an “**Appeal**”) to grant or refuse to grant a:
  - i) Clearance;
  - ii) Transfer Permission; or
  - iii) Registration Permission;

(**Transfer Decision**) to the General Manager/Administrator of the League, by written notice addressed to the General Manager/Administrator setting out the grounds on which the Appeal is made and attaching all relevant documents and information relied on by the Appellant.

- b) Any Appeal made pursuant to rule 9(a) must be made within five (5) days of the Appellant receiving notification of the Transfer Decision which is appealed against. The Appeal must be approved by the receiving club before submission.
- c) The only basis on which an Appellant may Appeal a Transfer Decision is:
  - i) If this Policy has been incorrectly applied by the Existing Club or the League in making a Transfer Decision;



- ii) If a Transfer Decision has been made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information in relation to the Player concerned; or
- iii) If Exceptional Circumstances exist in relation to the Player, and those Exceptional Circumstances have not been properly taken into account in relation to the Transfer Decision the subject of the Appeal.
- d) The League General Manager/Administrator shall, after having reviewed the Appellant's Appeal, refer the Appeal on to the nominated Head of the Appeals Committee who shall either:
  - i) Refuse the Appeal, in which case the original Transfer Decision stands; or
  - ii) Grant Leave to Appeal, in which case the General Manager/Administrator shall organise for an Appeals Committee to adjudicate on the matter. This Appeals Committee will be made up of nominated representatives of the relevant League.
- e) The decision of the Appeals Committee in relation to any Appeal is final, and shall not be capable of review or be otherwise justiciable.

**Where the Existing Club's League is different to the New Club's League or the teams involved participates in NSWRL Conference or Regional Competitions**

- f) In any case where an Appeal concerns a Transfer Decision involving or concerning more than one League:
  - i) The application for Leave to Appeal shall be made to, and determined by, an NSWRL authorised Player Transfer Policy Appeals Panel or the Player Transfer Policy Appeals Chairperson(s); with rules 9 (a), (b), (c) and (e) applicable.
  - ii) Transfer Policy Appeal Applications are to be completed on the 'Request for Leave to Appeal NSWRL Player Transfer Policy Decision Form'. This appeal must be authorised by the receiving club before submission.
  - iii) The presiding Transfer Policy Appeal Chairperson's shall, after having considered the Appellant's Appeal, either;
    - (1) Deny the Appeal having considered the evidence provided,
    - (2) Uphold the Appeal without holding a formal hearing, based on the evidence provided, or
    - (3) Grant a formal appeal hearing, requiring the attendance of the Appellant who may bring with them one parent/guardian as a representative.

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Transfer Policy Appeal Form (Online))



## 2.23 Playing Field Lighting Requirements

NSWRL, in accordance with the Australian Standards for sports lighting requires a minimum of 100 lux (luminance) for any competition match to take place.

NSWRL, in accordance with the Australian Standards for sports lighting requires a minimum of 50 lux (luminance) for any type of training activity to take place.



## 2.24 Racial, Religious and Sexual Vilification Reporting Process

On-Field Actions Required by Players (in relation to a compliant)

1. Report the incident to the match Referee or Touch Judge straight away.
2. The Referee should ask the accusing player for an exact quote in the presence of the accusing player's team captain and at least one of the Touch Judges. The referee should also ask the accuser which opposition player is alleged to have made the comment. If they cannot point out this player, then the complaint cannot go ahead.
3. The Referee should then ask the accusing player "do you want to go on with this?". If the accusing player responds "yes", then there is no return – the matter cannot be "dropped".
4. The Referee will then call out the player accused of making the comment and his team's captain and repeat the allegation. Play will then resume.
5. The exact quote will then be included in the match official's Incident Report Form.
6. The player making the accusation will need to lodge a written complaint to the Secretary of his club which should be sent to the Administrator of that club's home district or region. This should be submitted by 10.00am on the Monday following the incident.
7. The participant will have the option of having the matter:
  - I. Referred to the Conduct Review Panel
  - II. Referred to the Conciliation Process via the Human Rights Commission

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Member Protection Policy)



## 2.25 Religious Headwear / Clothing

The NSWRL acknowledges the necessity for some players to wear an altered playing uniform (headwear and long sleeves / legwear) based on their religious beliefs.

If a player is required to wear full length compression (or other) garments, an application should be made to the League Administrator who will refer the matter and application to NSWRL for approval.

Written approval should be kept readily available at each game to present to the Referee is requested.

Players wearing religious headwear are advised that they must at all times wear headgear in tackle competitions.



## 2.26 Social Media Policy

The NSWRL acknowledges the enormous value of social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in our sport.

### **Social media postings, blogs, status updates and tweets:**

- » Must not use offensive, provocative or hateful language
- » Must not be misleading, false or injure the reputation of another person
- » Should respect and maintain the privacy of others
- » Should promote the sport in a positive way

### **Social Media Rules of Engagement**

- » Know why you use it – engage our community to assist with driving participation in Rugby League
- » Know who you represent – you are not acting as an individual, you are speaking on behalf of your club!
- » Use photos – the statistics say that 40% of people will respond better to visual information than plain text
- » Remember the ‘Grandma Rule’ – do not post anything you wouldn’t want your Grandma to see
- » Do not engage in abuse – you have options to hide or delete an abusive comment
- » Do not engage trolls – you can block someone if they consistently post negative comments on your page
- » Do not forget THE NET doesn’t – posting is permanent! Have a colleague proof read before posting.

### **Permissions**

- » When posting pictures of children, it is important to ensure that you have permission to do so.
- » Do not post any pictures of any children where their parents have not given consent at the time of registration.

### **Social Media and the NRL National Code of Conduct**

All participants – all players, coaches, sports trainers (including League Safe Officers), match officials, club officials, volunteers, parents / carers as well as spectators – are bound by the NRL National Code of Conduct which states ‘understand that cyber-bullying, which includes negative or demeaning comments, status posts, personal messages or emails, is deemed as a serious form of harassment’.

Any behaviour that is deemed to be in breach of the NRL National Code of Conduct may be deemed as an offence which may require investigation and possible suspension or any other penalty deemed fit by a NSWRL Code of Conduct Tribunal.



## 2.27 Video and Photography Policy

Except as otherwise provided for in this section 2.27, any person (including without limitation any person engaged by any League, any Community Rugby League club or team) wishing to take, make or record video footage or photographs must first seek and obtain the prior written permission of the NSWRL.

For the avoidance of doubt and unless otherwise specified in this section 2.27, no person (including any person engaged by any League, any Community Rugby League club or team, or any other person) may film or record any video footage or photographs of any match (including anything in connection with a match) without the person (and any relevant League, Community Rugby League club and team) first obtaining the prior written permission granted by the NSWRL for the person to take the video footage/photographs in any circumstances where the purpose (or a purpose) of taking the photograph, making a recording of or filming that video footage, or doing any connected act or thing, is or might be to broadcast, live-stream, disseminate or distribute in any similar or analogous way (whether in consideration for the payment of any amount of money or not, and whether the broadcasting, live streaming, dissemination and/or distribution is done on a subscription basis or on any other basis) the photograph, video footage or recording (or any part of it). Leagues will be required to complete a permission to film form and risk management plan for NSWRL approval.

Further, except in the case of the NSWRL having given its prior written permission which is able to be produced and evidenced to the Ground Manager at his or her request, the Ground Manager is to and must ensure that no person in attendance at any match (including any person engaged by any League and any Community Rugby League club or team) films, videos or audio-visually records a match (or any part of a match, or anything in connection with a match) for the purpose of broadcasting, live-streaming, disseminating or distributing in any similar or analogous way (whether in consideration for the payment of any amount of money or not, and whether the broadcasting, live streaming, dissemination and/or distribution is done on a subscription basis or on any other basis) that material to any other person or persons.

The sole exception to the application and enforceability of the above requirements, for NSWRL-granted permission being obtained, is where the filming, recording and/or photography is undertaken solely for personal use, and where the subject material is not live-streamed, broadcast, disseminated or distributed on a wider basis or to a wider audience.

Any person filming, photographing or recording in accordance with permission granted by the NSWRL must provide proper identification such as a current Driver's License and contact details if requested. That person granted permission shall:

- » Remain in a designated area
- » Not involve him/herself in any incident
- » Not enter the field of play
- » Provide any video evidence on request and will be provided with a receipt for same (the club requesting the video or photography must provide clear identification for the photographer)

It is Community Rugby League Policy to rely upon any video, DVD, laptop or any similar electronic evidence which may have been captured either within the playing area or outside of the playing area for the purposes of any citings, match review or Code of Conduct matters. Clubs wishing use any video, DVD, laptop or any similar electronic evidence as evidence in any potential citings, match review, Judiciary or Code of Conduct matters must submit this evidence to the League 24 hours prior to the relevant hearing date, clearly marking the time of the incident on the video. Should the League require a full unedited version of the video, that needs to be produced.



**ANY BREACH OF, OR CONTRAVENTION OF THE RULES SPECIFIED ABOVE IN THIS SECTION 2.27 IN RELATION TO THE FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHING, RECORDING ETC SHALL BE CONSIDERED BY NSWRL TO BE A SERIOUS BREACH OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO WHICH THAT THE PERSON IS A PARTICIPANT IN THE SPORT OF RUGBY LEAGUE.**

**FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF ANY DOUBT, NSWRL FULLY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS FOR ANY BREACH OF, OR CONTRAVENTION OF THE RULES SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION 2.27.**

### **Use of Child Images in your Website or Newsletters and otherwise**

Section 6.2 of the NRL Member Protection Policy sets out the applicable policy and rules which must be complied with in relation to the use of images of children. All participants, including all Leagues, Community Rugby League clubs and any person engaged by any of them) must comply and at all times act in accordance with the NRL Member Protection Policy in relation to the taking of, and use of images of children.

Specifically, section 6.2 says:

*A high level of care needs to be exercised by clubs, associations and administrators when dealing with the issue of photo images of children.*

*There have been a number of instances where photos of children in sporting magazines and sporting websites have been misused and/or altered for inappropriate purposes.*

*Clubs, associations and administrators also need to be alert to the possibility that photo images bearing the name of the child and also identifying the club, can lead to the child being located and contacted by third parties for inappropriate purposes.*

*The NRL urges its member clubs and associations to be aware of such risks and to take steps, where possible, to minimise those risks.*

*The NRL requires that individuals and associations, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own. They should also make sure the parent/guardian understands how the image will be used.*

*To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers and toilets which we control or are used in connection with our sport.*

### **Third Party Photographers**

*The NRL recommends that steps be taken to verify the bona fides of any third party photographer wishing to take photographs of children participating in your Club or Association. Even when the bona fides are verified, NRL recommends that the third party photographer be required to complete the Authority to Photograph form, which vests all of the intellectual property in the photos directly to your Club.*

### **Use of Child Images in websites or newsletters**

*It is common practice for clubs and associations to use images of participating children on the club's website and in newsletters. The NRL recommends the selection of images which are not likely to be used by others in an inappropriate manner. Wherever possible, use images which portray the children in full playing uniform. Clubs, associations and administrators should only use images of children when so authorised by the children's parent or guardian.*





### **General Caution on Personal Information**

*The NRL recommends that only the contact details for club officials are displayed on your published material and also recommends the exercise of caution in publishing the full names of children appearing in any published material.*

*The NRL cautions clubs and association regarding the possibility of misuse of personal information such as phone numbers, addresses or names published by your club or association, especially when such information can be cross referenced to photo images naming those children appearing.*

*When publishing photo images on a website, The NRL recommends that advice be sought from a computer specialist to minimise the possibility of images on the website being copied and misused inappropriately.*

*The NRL do not permit under any circumstance access by a photographer to a child for personal or unsupervised photo sessions.*

*National Rugby League Member Protection Policy – July 2015 9 Where the Club is aware of upcoming exposure by the Club to newspaper or television exposure, a general caution should be issued to parents, notifying them of the media exposure and giving them the opportunity to make enquiries or objection.*

**ANY BREACH OF, OR CONTRAVENTION OF THE RULES SPECIFIED ABOVE IN THIS SECTION 2.27 IN RELATION TO THE USE OF IMAGES ETC OF CHILDREN SHALL BE CONSIDERED BY NSWRL TO BE A SERIOUS BREACH OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS PURSUANT TO WHICH THAT THE PERSON IS A PARTICIPANT IN THE SPORT OF RUGBY LEAGUE.**

**WITHOUT LIMITING THE SCOPE AND OPERATION OF THE *NATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY*, NSWRL FULLY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS FOR ANY BREACH OF, OR CONTRAVENTION OF THE RULES SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION 2.27.**

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Member Protection Policy)



## 2.28 Weight and Age Guidelines

### Community Rugby League Weight Dispensation Guidelines

Players may apply for dispensation to participate in an age group one (1) year below that of their 'natural' age (the age that they turn/become in the current calendar year). This will be approved for players who are judged to be within the required Weight Limit as listed below.

Any participant who is granted dispensation to play down in a lower age group is NOT permitted to participate in their natural age group in the same season.

The Community Rugby League Weight and Age Guidelines apply to tackle competitions only.

Lower Weight limit based on approximately the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile of males in the general population.

- U6: N/A
- U7: players 21kg or under may play U6
- U8: players 23kg or under may play U7
- U9: players 26kg or under may play U8
- U10: players 29kg or under may play U9
- U11: players 33kg or under may play U10
- U12: players 37kg or under may play U11
- U13: players 42kg or under may play U12 (13s cannot play down in a mixed gender comp.)
- U14: players 48kg or under may play U13
- U15: players 53kg or under may play U14
- U16: players 55kg or under may play U15
- U17: players 58kg or under may play U16
- U18: players 60kg or under may play U17
- Players turning 19 in the current year and 62kg or under may play U18

### Female Competitions

For female only dual-age competitions U14 – U18 the following Weight Dispensation limits will apply

- U14 – Players turning 13 in the current year and;
  - o 38kg or under may play in U12 female only competitions
- U16 – Players turning 15 in the current year and 44kg or under may play U14
- U18 – Players turning 17 in the current year and 48kg or under may play U16
- Players turning 19 in the current year and 51kg or under may play U18

For female only dual-age competitions U13-U17 the following Weight Dispensation limits will apply:

- U15 – Players turning 14 in the current year and 42kg or under may play U13
- U17 – Players turning 16 in the current year and 47kg or under may play U15
- U18 – Players turning 18 in the current year and 49kg or under may play U17



These guidelines are approved for use within NSWRL affiliated competitions for the season in which the dispensation has been approved. That is, any approval is for one season only. Local League Administrators may use discretion when approving or denying dispensations based on participants previous playing record.

### **Players wishing to play down an age group**

These players must make application to the League to be considered for eligibility for the age group below. In this instance a NSWRL appointed official would weigh the players concerned and if eligible mark these players' records as being eligible for the age group requested. Once weighed and verified, the player will not be required to be weighed for the remainder of the season.

### **Development and Junior Representative Players**

Any participant that is considered a Junior Representative player as per the NSWRL Player Transfer Policy is ineligible to apply for dispensation under the Weight and Age guidelines.

Any participant that is considered a District / Regional Development player may be refused dispensation under the Weight and Age guidelines at the sole discretion of the local League Administrator.

### **Final Approval**

All applications are subject to final approval by NSWRL and may be reviewed at any point during a competition season. That is, a player approved to play down an age group may have their approval removed to protect the integrity of age-based competitions.

### **Community Rugby League Weight Restriction Guidelines**

The NSWRL and affiliated Leagues may also offer competitions utilising a Weight Restriction within an Age Group. In addition to standard Age-based competitions, competitions may be conducted using the weight restrictions below. For example, there may be an U13 Div. 1, U13 Div. 2 and an U13 Weight Restricted competition. In this case, any player weighing above the weight restriction would be required to participate in Div. 1 or Div. 2 rather than the Weight Restricted Division.

Upper Weight limit based on approximately the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of males in the general population

- U6 & U28kg
- U7 & U31kg
- U8 & U36kg
- U9 & U41kg
- U10 & U48kg
- U11 & U55kg
- U12 & U62kg
- U13 & U68kg
- U14 & U75kg
- U15 & U81kg
- U16 & U84kg

Note: A player may also play above their natural age in order to comply with the above guidelines if their club does not have a team in an appropriate Division.



### **Player Eligibility for Weight Restricted Competitions**

Any team who nominates for a Weight Restricted Competition will be required to make their team available for weighing prior to the commencement of the competition. A NSWRL/League nominated official will then weigh each member of the team prior to them being allocated to that team and allowed to participate. Similarly, any player wishing to join the team late or player up from a lower age group must be weighed prior to taking part.

Once weighed and deemed eligible a player will not be required to be weighed again during the season.

Likewise, if weighed and deemed ineligible, a player will NOT be permitted to be weighed again at a later date in an attempt to become eligible through losing weight.

---

### **Reference Documents** *2.2 Playing Down an Age Group*

#### *3.1 Mixed Gender Participation*

NRL Policies – Mixed Gender Policy

*SECTION 3*

# COMPETITIONS

[nswrl.com.au](http://nswrl.com.au)



### **3.1 Abandoned Matches Due to Injury, Inclement Weather or Foul Play**

#### **Injury & Inclement Weather**

Regular Competition matches abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed will need to be replayed at a later date.

The result of matches abandoned after half time shall be recorded as the final score at the point of abandonment.

Note: See competition rules for conditions around replaying of matches and abandoning of games during the final series.

In the event of an injury during the second half of play the clock should continue to run (including any required time-off). If the injury has not been cleared by the full-time bell, then the result shall stand as a full half was played.

#### **Foul Play**

In the event that a match is abandoned due to foul play the following will apply:

- » The match will be considered abandoned.
- » Competition points will not be awarded to either side if evidence from the referee or the Ground Manager proves (following Conduct Review Processes) that both teams participated in foul play which lead to the match being abandoned.

Penalties for games abandoned due to foul play will be at the discretion of the relevant judicial/Code of Conduct Review Processes the NSWRL would urge that in the majority of cases the games are not replayed and teams are liable for loss of competition points (pending outcomes of the relevant judicial/Code of Conduct review processes).



## 3.2 Byes

A BYE shall count as a win, not as a match played. Teams will receive appropriate points for a win as per the competition rules.

For the purpose of a player serving a suspension, a BYE will not count as a match played.

With regards to washouts, a BYE will not be counted as a win and no points will be allocated.

Leagues may apply to the NSWRL to alter the points set out above.



### 3.3 Competition Points

The following points system can be adopted for competitions in NSWRL.

#### Option 1

WIN	Two (2) points for the winning team
DRAW	One (1) point for each team
LOSS	Nil points awarded to losing team
FORFEIT	Two (2) points awarded for the non-offending team
BYE	Two (2) points for the team that has the Bye

#### Option 2

WIN	Three (3) points for the winning team
DRAW	Two (2) points for each team
LOSS	One (1) point awarded to losing team
FORFEIT	Three (3) points awarded for the team receiving the forfeit and zero (0) points for the team giving the forfeit

Leagues may apply to the NSWRL alter the points set out above.





### 3.4 Competition Structures

For localised competitions, The League Board, or in the instance of Conference Competitions (cross district and/or cross Group boundary competitions), the NSWRL (in consultation with the relevant Leagues), shall in decide the competition structure, criteria, by-laws and method of conducting the competitions. This includes but is not limited to:

- » There is a requirement to have a minimum of four (4) teams in a specific age group/division to form an official competition (*In exceptional circumstances, Leagues can apply for competitions to be approved with fewer than four (4) teams*)
- » Matches to be played on dates fixed and shall commence at such times and played upon such grounds as may be directed.
- » In all competitions, a series of games shall be played in which each team will play each other team at least once in each age division, unless otherwise advised.
- » The number of teams required for “Cup” and “Plate” competitions.
- » The maximum number of teams per town or city, permitted to play in NSWRL Regional Member “Cup” and “Plate” competitions.
- » The commencement date of NSWRL Regional Member “Cup” and “Plate” competitions.

Prize money payable to any club participating in any finals series in any competition conducted under the auspices of a NSWRL Regional Member, including any prize money for the minor premiership, shall be as determined by the NSWRL Regional Member, subject always to these rules. Subject to any other provisions of these rules (including any provisions allowing for the deduction of fines or other sums of money from prize money amounts) any prize money won by a club will be paid by the NSWRL Regional Member no later than 31 October in the year in which it is won.



### 3.5 Competition Tables (Ladders)

The competition tables (ladders) will be listed on the associated League and / or Conference Competitions website.

In the event of errors, the League Administrator and / or NSWRL representative will not make any changes until the sign on sheets, or other records, have been provided as proof of error.

No competition tables or ladders should be created or displayed for development competitions.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 1.3 – Development Competitions



### 3.6 Duration of Matches

Games should run for the following amounts of time:

Age Group	Number of Periods of Play	Duration of Periods
Under 6 – 9	Four (4)	Eight (8) minutes
Under 10 – 12	Two (2)	Twenty (20) minutes
Under 13 – 15	Two (2)	Twenty-five (25) minutes
Under 16 – 19	Two (2)	Thirty (30) minutes
Under 20 – 21	Two (2)	Thirty (30) minutes
Open Age (or equivalent)	Two (2)	Minimum thirty (30) minutes Maximum forty (40) minutes

These times may be changed at the discretion of each League with approval from the NSWRL.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



### 3.7 Finals Eligibility

Due to the make-up of different competitions throughout the NSWRL, Leagues and NSWRL Conference Competitions are encouraged to develop their own By-Laws to define rules for qualification of players for finals series.

In all competitions, qualifications for finals should be, at a minimum, 33% of regular season matches, i.e. in a 15 round regular season, finals qualification should be 5 matches played ( $15 \times 0.33\% = 5.0 = 5$ ) or in a 13 round regular season, finals qualification should be 4 matches ( $13 \times 0.33\% = 4.29 = 4$ ).

#### What Constitutes a Game for Qualification Purposes

The following will be counted as a game towards a player's qualification for semi-finals:

- » A game in which a player has signed on and participated in
- » When receiving a forfeit, a player can claim a game played by completing a team sign on sheet and submitting it to the League Administrator or NSWRL representative. See competition rules and bylaws for further information.

The following WILL NOT be counted as a game towards a player's qualification for semi-finals:

- » A washout does not count as a game played
- » A team giving a forfeit cannot claim a game played
- » A Bye does not count as a game played in a case of a player not being able to play the number of matches as required in their competition due to an injury sustained during the season, upon investigation of medical evidence by the League Administrator and / or NSWRL representative, such player may be permitted to take part in a play-off, semi-final, final or grand final. See competition rules and by-laws for more information

Please note the following:

- » A doctor's certificate must be available covering the time the player was unable to play
- » The certificate must be submitted to the relevant competition coordinator or League Administrators as per the rules of the competition.
- » Team Managers / Clubs are expected to make themselves aware of player availability well prior to the semi-finals and take the necessary action to ensure all players are qualified.
- » Playing an unregistered or unqualified player will result in the match being deemed a forfeit and a possible fine (see competition rules and bylaws for more information).
- » Any player who participates (all 17 signed on players) in a higher grade, i.e. NSW Cup, Ron Massey Cup, Sydney Shield, Jersey Flegg and Women's State Premiership shall NOT be permitted to return to play in Community Rugby League competitions on that same weekend (this included regular competition matches)

The onus is on clubs to prove eligibility of games played if required by their League.



### 3.8 Forfeits

Any team/club that has forfeited twice in succession or three times in total may face elimination from the respective competition unless otherwise stipulated in the competition rules and by-laws.

When a team/club forfeits to another, that match shall count as a match played and be declared in favour of the club forfeited to.

When a team/club is aware it is going to forfeit the following people should be advised immediately:

- » The League Administrator along with the relevant NSWRL representative in Conference Competitions
- » The opposing club Secretary
- » The Secretary of the Referee's Association

The competition rules and by-laws will determine the for and against points allocated, if any, when there is a forfeit.

Any team forfeiting a playoff, a semi-final or a finals match shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the competition and be removed from the Final's series completely.

Any team with an ongoing interest in a final series that is removed from the competition, due to a forfeit in a playoff, semi-final or finals match, has the opportunity to lodge an appeal application as per NSWRL Community Rugby League Policy 1.10 Protests and Appeals.

If a team forfeits a Grand Final, all the registered players and officials in that team will have an immediate 12 month calendar suspension imposed unless there are proven exceptional circumstances.

Notification of Forfeits must be made in line with time limits of which are stipulated in the relevant competition rules and by-laws. Please note additional forfeit ramifications may be applied in line with the relevant competition rules and by-laws.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 1.10 – Protests and Appeals



### 3.9 Game Scheduling

All matches in Community Rugby League competitions should be scheduled to commence no earlier than 8.00am and no later than 4.00pm.

Any match scheduled to commence later than 4.00pm will be considered a 'night match' and will require the consent of the Local League.



### 3.10 Gradings, Divisions and Re-Gradings

In localised Community Rugby League competitions, the League Administrator (in consultation with their board) will make determination on the following points.

- » Determine the closing date for team Nominations
- » Distribute a nomination form to each club, which contains the terms and conditions on which a club may apply to nominate a team to participate in a competition, noting that a club which enters a team or teams in any competition in a particular season shall not be entitled as of right to enter any team or teams in any competitions in any subsequent season, and that the League Administrator and their board shall be entitled to refuse the application of any club to enter team(s) in its competitions.
- » Following completion of the forms, the clubs will return the form prior to the date determined
- » Advise all clubs of the various nominations
- » Grading of teams will take place and clubs will be advised of those gradings prior to the commencement of competitions
- » The competition rules and by-laws will determine late nomination of teams and may make adjustment to those already nominated if required.
- » Clubs may make representations to the League Administrator in regards to any nomination or grading matter.
- » At the end of the season will advise clubs of the proposed gradings for the following season (if applicable).
- » At the time of the next season's nomination of teams, clubs have the opportunity to advise any matter associated with grading of teams (i.e. loss of players, number of first year players) to meet club Development Strategies.
- » In line with the competition rules and by-laws teams will be regraded in the event that there are two teams from the same club in the same Division, those teams will be drawn to play each other in accordance with normal draw allocations.



### 3.11 Mixed Gender Participation

Males and females can participate in mixed gender Rugby League up to and including the calendar year in which they turn twelve (12) years of age.

All Junior International (Under 13 to Under 17) and Senior International (Under 18 to A Grade) Rugby League will be played in gender-based competitions.

The rationale for this is that the sport of rugby league is a vigorous, high-intensity body-contact physical activity. The strength, stamina and physique generally of boys aged 12 years and older, when compared and contrasted to the strength, stamina and physique generally of girls of a corresponding age (for example, in the case of a comparison between the strength, stamina and physique of 13-year-old boys and 13-year-old girls) is materially disparate. If boys and girls aged 12 years or more (and within the same age group, such as under 13s) were allowed to compete in the same teams and against each other in competitive rugby league matches, then the competition in those matches would be rendered uneven because of the magnitude of disparity between the relative strength, stamina and physique of girls and boys of the same age.

---

**Reference Documents** NRL Policies – Mixed Gender Policy





### 3.12 NSWRL Regional Members – Clayton Cup

The Clayton Cup is awarded annually by the NSWRL to the best performed first grade team in all NSWRL Regional Member Competitions.

The NSWRL shall seek nominations for the award of the Clayton Cup following the completion of all the NSWRL Regional Member grand finals.

The winner of the Clayton Cup shall be selected by the NSWRL Board, based on a recommendation of the CEO, based on:

- » win / loss records;
- » total points scored;
- » total points conceded;
- » number of games played; and
- » any other criteria which the NSWRL Board considers relevant.



### 3.13 NSWRL Regional Members – Cup Competition and Plate Competition Rules

Cup Competitions and Plate Competitions are bound by the Competition Rules determined by the NSWRL. The standard rules which shall apply in respect of all Cup Competitions and Plate Competitions are set out below in this rule 3.13. Specific rules for Plate Competitions and Cup Competitions may be made by relevant District Clubs and NSWRL Regional Members provided that any such rules are not inconsistent with the standard rules.

#### Standard Rules

1. Clubs shall be entitled to pay their team's designated captain / coach a maximum amount of five thousand dollars (\$5000.00) per season.
2. Clubs shall be entitled to pay their other players a maximum of \$40 per match.
3. Any Club found to have breached rules (1) or (2) shall be expelled from the relevant Cup Competition or Plate Competition by the relevant District Club or NSWRL Regional Member.
4. Any Club expelled pursuant to rule (3) shall have to apply for re-entry into the Competition the following year. Any such decision in respect of such an application shall be at the discretion of the District Club or Regional Member in accordance with the NSWRL Rules.
5. Players who have participated in three (3) or more First Grade or "A" Grade Competition matches in any such Competition in the past two calendar years must seek permission from the relevant District Club or NSWRL Regional Member in order to Register to play in any Cup Competition or Plate Competition except in the case of a team's captain / coach or where the NSWRL determines (on an application made to it) that exceptional circumstances apply which mean that the NSWRL should waive the restrictions contained in this rule (5).
6. Players who have participated in ten (10) or more Reserve Grade Competition matches in any Reserve Grade Competition in the past two calendar years must first seek permission from the relevant District Club or NSWRL Regional Member in order to Register to play in any Cup Competition except where the NSWRL determines (on an application made to it) that exceptional circumstances apply which mean that the NSWRL should waive the restrictions contained in this rule (6)
7. In the event that a player relocates to, and takes up residency in a regional or rural community for the first time because of employment, then subject to the approval of the NSWRL, rules (5) and (6) do not apply regardless as to how many matches the player played in the preceding year.
8. Players aged 18 years and younger are ineligible to play in a Cup Competition except in the following circumstances:
  - a) the player is a resident of the community in which the team is based;
  - b) the player is unable to play in Junior Grade Football because of the distances that the player would have to travel in order to do so;
  - c) the nearest Junior Grade Football team that the player would ordinarily be eligible to play for (because of the player's age) already has 20 or more Registered players; or
  - d) if the District Club or NSWRL Regional Member determines that other exceptional circumstances apply.



### 3.14 NSWRL Regional Members – Trophies

In respect of competitions played under the auspices of NSWRL Regional Members:

- » All trophies awarded as part of the competition or finals series, are the property of the NSWRL Regional Member.
- » The holders of any trophies, shields, cups or the like shall be responsible for the safekeeping of the same and shall, on request, hand them back to the NSWRL Regional Member.
- » The trophy, shield, cup or the like shall be in good order and condition, having regard to the order and condition in which it was received and shall give receipt to this effect to the NSWRL Regional Member.
- » Any Club in possession of a trophy, shield, cup or the like shall, on becoming defunct or inoperative, through any reason, return same to the NSWRL Regional Member.
- » Any damage whatsoever caused to the trophies whilst in the care of the said Club or Team must be rectified and repaired at the cost / expense of the Club / Team. This includes irreparable damage which may involve the total replacement cost of the trophy.
- » Any trophy misplaced and /or lost whilst in the care of the said Club / Team will necessitate the production of a new trophy at the cost / expense of the Club / Team.



### 3.15 Player Points Index System (PPIS)

The Player Points Index System is a grassroots system that ensures the sustainability of clubs in competitions while encouraging the promotion of their players along the many pathways which our game provides at all player levels. The philosophy of competition equalisation is accepted in sports all around the world. Professional sporting bodies have accepted practices such as drafts, salary caps, FIFA Fair Play, and the like, to help competitions safeguard competitive balance and club sustainability.

Many NSWRL competitions have used a Player Points Index System to promote junior and senior alignment, links and pathways, environments for learning, longevity, and service in addition to competitive balance. They recognised that more even and fair competitions stimulate greater interest from all sectors – players, coaches, administrators, supporters, sponsors, juniors, and media which in turn galvanizes the Clubs and strengthens the competitions.

Closely contested competitions allow supporters and club volunteers the chance to turn up on any given match day with the knowledge that the outcome of the game is uncertain, and that their team is a chance of winning. This mindset motivates people to become and remain engaged with their club and provides rewards and recognition to all those that assist in putting a team out on the field.

#### OBJECTIVES

- » Support NSWRL Strategic Plan for Rugby League competitions
- » Promote junior player development and progression
- » Promote player allegiance and service
- » Ensure teams fielded in the manly NSWRL Competitions are strong and as equally matched as possible
- » Provide the best opportunities for players to develop and display their skills
- » Provide opportunities to compete at all levels within an orderly and fair system
- » Enable team spirit and public support
- » Encourage community and corporate sponsorships
- » Reduce the inflationary nature of player payments to assist clubs survive financially and reduce financial burden / stress on Clubs
- » Support the role volunteers undertake in managing their Clubs by:
  - Providing a competitive on field environment, that encourages more volunteers to support at Club level
  - Providing incentive to spend more time and effort in the development of football, and generally growing the game within the local community
  - Minimising the need to fundraise for player payments

The NSWRL Player Points Index System (PPIS) sets out a framework of rules and principles in relation to a player's value in a points system which has been adopted to achieve these objectives without the need for a more intensive administration process such as a salary cap when a player is judged financially.

The Player Points Index System is available here [https://www.nswrl.com.au/ppis\\_aug25.pdf](https://www.nswrl.com.au/ppis_aug25.pdf)

The Player Points Index System special considerations document is available here [https://www.nswrl.com.au/ppis\\_aug25\\_specials](https://www.nswrl.com.au/ppis_aug25_specials)

*SECTION 4*

# **GAME DAY POLICIES**



## 4.1 Admission Prices, Gates & Season Passes at Regional Member Matches

Each NSWRL Regional Member is responsible for setting maximum ticket prices for matches played in Competitions conducted by them (including all pre-season, trial and finals series matches).

The NSWRL Regional Member shall be responsible for setting ticket prices for adults, concessions, aged pensioners and children under the age of 16 years.

Season passes may be distributed by the NSWRL Regional Member at the commencement of each season and shall be recognised by all clubs during that season subject to any terms and conditions imposed by the NSWRL Regional Member. The NSWRL Regional Member has the discretion to allow or disallow the use of season passes at finals series matches.

All entry and exit gates at match venues shall be controlled to the satisfaction of the NSWRL Regional Member. The NSWRL Regional Member may appoint a representative to supervise same. Clubs, should they derive a direct or indirect benefit from gate receipts, have the right to check the gate receipts of all matches in which they participate

Season passes will not be recognised or be able to be used for entry at any matches not conducted by or controlled by the NSWRL Regional Member.



## 4.2 Air Quality Policy

### Policy to provide participation guidelines to Clubs due to Smoke Pollution

Smoke Pollution can create an increased health risk to athletes. The health impact from Smoke Pollution can vary based on numerous factors such as the athletes age, current health, previous medical conditions and levels and types of activity. Athletes involved in high performance sport can also be at higher risk when performing high intensity prolonged outdoor exercise, such as those required during pre-season training and currently scheduled trial games. In addition, the following people are more likely to be affected by air pollution:

- » People with asthma – exposure to air pollution may worsen symptoms
- » People with lung disease – exposure to air pollution may worsen symptoms
- » Children (up to the age of 14) – higher risk given that lungs are still growing and developing, immune and metabolic systems are still developing and they are more active outdoors than adults; and
- » Older adults.

Pursuant to the Australian Institute of Sport guidelines on Smoke Pollution and exercise, short term exposure to low levels of pollution can be dealt with adequately by the respiratory tract. However, prolonged exposure to higher levels of air pollutants can result in inflammation of the tract which in turn can exacerbate medical conditions such as asthma. This is of increased concern in sports such as Rugby League where prolonged sessions of high intensity exercise can result in an increased volume of air intake and resultant increase in exposure to pollutants.

### Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an accepted method of objectively measuring air quality that can be used to assist in determining the risks of exposure to athletes training or playing in those conditions. The measure is monitored daily and can be used to identify the following:

- » Air pollution levels at your nearest monitoring site or region;
- » Common contributing pollutants; and
- » The overall health risk associated with a given rating.

The table below can be used to determine what, if any action should be taken to modify currently scheduled training or games according to the AQI in your region.

General Population, low intensity exercise		High Intensity Exercise	
AQI	Recommendation	AQI	Recommendation
<b>VERY GOOD</b> (0-33)	Enjoy Activities	<b>VERY GOOD</b> (0-33)	Enjoy Activities
<b>GOOD</b> (34-66)	Enjoy Activities	<b>GOOD</b> (34-66)	Enjoy Activities
<b>FAIR</b> (67-99)	<b>People unusually sensitive to air pollution-</b> plan strenuous outdoor activities for when quality is better	<b>FAIR</b> (67-99)	<b>Asthmatic athletes:</b> Should have medical review prior to training or playing. Consider moving training indoors
<b>POOR</b> (100-149)	<b>Air Pollution Health Alert</b> <b>Sensitive groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activities <b>Everyone:</b> cut back or reschedule outdoor physical activities	<b>VERY POOR</b> (100-149)	<b>Air Pollution Health Alert</b> Asthmatics or symptomatic non-asthmatics should not compete or train outdoors. Minimise exposure to pollutants for all athletes by training indoors or modifying rules of the game. (4 quarters, shortened game time etc)
<b>VERY POOR</b> (150-200)	<b>Air Pollution Health Alert</b> <b>Sensitive Groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activities <b>Everyone:</b> Cut back or reschedule outdoor physical activities	<b>HAZARDOUS</b> (150-200)	<b>Air Pollution Health Alert</b> Outdoor training should be rescheduled indoors. Games should be cancelled, and exposure minimized for everyone.
<b>HAZARDOUS</b> (>200)	<b>Air Pollution Health Alert</b> <b>Sensitive Groups:</b> Avoid strenuous outdoor activity <b>Everyone:</b> Significantly cut back on outdoor physical activities		

(Table modified from AIS recommendations, adapted from NSW Public Health Unit)



For the avoidance of doubt, all Clubs should follow the actions recommended for high intensity exercise when considering the impact of Smoke Pollution on their training and playing programs.

Information on the AQI in New South Wales can be found on the following link:

- » <https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/air-quality/current-air-quality>

Further information for you to consider includes:

- » Air quality information on this website updates hourly, but there can be some lag between official numbers and what you are seeing on the ground. This can cause difficulties when trying to decide on any action to take in your area however, as general rule of thumb, if smoke is affecting your visibility then it is likely the AQI will fall in the VERY POOR or HAZARDOS categories.
- » Consecutive days of exposure to pollution can have a cumulative effect and lower the threshold for symptoms. If your area has been affected for a number of days, this should be taken into account when planning activities and training sessions.
- » Increases in intensity or duration of training sessions also increases the exposure to air pollution and its associated impact on athletes. Again, this should be taken into consideration when planning training sessions.
- » Ensure that all asthmatic athletes have an updated Asthma Management Plan and consult the Club Doctor, or their personal doctor, prior to exercising in affected environments.
- » Recent respiratory tract infections increase the risk of developing smoke related symptoms, even in non-asthmatics.

Reference - [https://ais.gov.au/position\\_statements#smoke\\_pollution\\_and\\_exercise](https://ais.gov.au/position_statements#smoke_pollution_and_exercise)





### 4.3 Alcohol Sales and Supply

It is preferred that clubs do not sell alcohol at their playing fields when Community Rugby League games are in progress.

The right of clubs who, because of a Liquor License, are able to lawfully sell or supply alcohol at their playing fields to other club venues is acknowledged.

The sale and supply of alcohol at Community Rugby League grounds when games involving players aged Under 6 to Under 18 is not allowed under any circumstances and any club found to breach this policy may face strong disciplinary action.

The sale and supply of alcohol at Community Rugby League grounds when games involving the Under 19 or Open Age groups (i.e. A Grade) is not allowed prior to 12.00 noon on the day of the match and not until the conclusion of any junior age fixtures (18s and under). Any club found to breach this policy may face strong disciplinary action.

Should any incident occur at a Community Rugby League ground where alcohol is sold or supplied, and it is established that the sale or supply of alcohol by the Community Rugby League club is a contributing factor; the club concerned may face strong disciplinary action.

At Community Rugby League grounds where alcohol is sold and / or supplied in accordance with a Liquor License, the associated club is responsible to ensure the proper supervision of the situation. They are also required to display any signage as required by their Licensing Agreement.

Clubs need to follow and adhere to the Responsible Service of Alcohol guidelines.

Clubs that sell alcohol are encouraged to participate in the Good Sports Program.

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Member Protection Policy)



## 4.4 Ball Persons / Kicking Tee Runners

A maximum of two ball persons per sideline may be used by each club during matches.

Ball persons must place and leave the ball on the touchline at the point where the ball crossed the line and next to the Touch Judge. Ball persons **MUST NOT** under any circumstances, throw the ball into the field of play or to a player close to the touch line.

Ball persons who enter the field of play to deliver sand or kicking tees may only do so at a stoppage of play and must leave the field of play immediately.

The minimum age of a ball person shall be 10.

Kicking Tee runners are not permitted to take to the field when penalty goals are attempted, or retrieve the tee from kick-offs.



## 4.5 Biting, Gouging, Spitting or Vilification Allegations

When a participant indicates to the Referee that they have been bitten, spat at, eye gouged or subjected to verbal vilification (racial, sexual etc.) the Referee will:

1. Signal time off
2. Witness the injury (bite or gouge mark), or ask the participant to state the offending remark(s)
3. Ask the participant to identify the alleged offender
4. Call on to the field the Touch Judge who is situated on the official table side of the ground (or the Ground Manager if Touch Judge not assigned)
5. Call both Captains and the alleged offender to witness the injury (bite or gouge mark) and / or to hear the allegation
6. In the case of biting or gouging allegations, the Ground Manager shall be called on to the field to take a photograph of the injury
7. The Referee will ask the alleged victim if they wish to proceed with the allegation. If the response is affirmative the complaint cannot be withdrawn.
8. The Referee shall then inform players that he / she will complete a formal complaint form after the game regarding the incident
9. The Touch Judge on the official side of the ground (or Ground Manager if Touch Judge not assigned) will report the alleged offender's jumper number and the complainant's jumper number on the game sign on sheet
10. Play will then resume.

Following the match:

1. The Referee and Touch Judges will complete an Incident Report / Match Report form indicating the nature of the complaint, and in the case of vilification, state the alleged remarks.
2. The Referee will notify the Executive Officer of the Complaint that evening
3. The Executive Officer shall then forward the report to the relevant League Manager who will issue relevant Notice of Charge forms.



## 4.6 Blood Bin Procedure

The Referee may direct a player who is bleeding to leave the field for attention and if necessary change any part of their playing uniform.

When a player leaves the field for the Blood Bin, the letters BB should be endorsed in the replaced player's column on the sign on sheet.

If a player is replaced because of the Blood Bin rule, provided the player who replaced the affected player is in turn replaced by the Blood Bin player when he returns to the field, it will not count as a replacement.

Only the Referee can determine whether a player should be put in the Blood Bin. If a player is taken off without the knowledge of the Referee it will be deemed as a normal replacement in U6's to U13's competitions. That player cannot go back on the field except for Senior football where there is unlimited interchange.

Any player returning to the field of play after being in the Blood Bin must exchange places with the player that replaced them. If a different player comes off, that player shall be deemed to be a replacement.

Clubs are expected to provide proper receptacles for the collection of blood soiled bandages.



## 4.7 Change Room Policy

The NSWRL and all affiliated bodies have a duty of care to the participants within our game which will at times extend to issues around changing clothes within change rooms. Many children and young people are very self-conscious about their body. Many will choose to change at home prior to arriving at a game and so these issues may be minimised. Where change rooms are used by participating teams the following guidelines are to apply:

### Photography / Video Devices

There is to be no use of video devices inside the change rooms. Use of mobile phones is to be limited to emergencies.

### Exclusive Change Rooms

Where possible, each team should have exclusive use of their own change room. Where the facilities do not permit this then a schedule of times should be organised such that each team has a period of time allocated for them to have exclusive use of the change room.

### Mixed Gender Teams or Events

Due to the participation rules of Rugby League, mixed gender teams are not present except in children 12 years of age and below, many of whom change prior to arrival at a game. However, in the event that these teams wish to change at a venue, in the example of non-contact forms of Rugby League or during events with multiple teams of both genders participating, it is important to consider the associated issues. In these circumstances, solutions may include:

- » Each gender using a different room or facility
- » Each gender having distinct allocated time slots
- » Encouraging all players to change clothes prior to arrival at the venue

### Supervision

Supervision of players under the age of 18 within a combined space such as a Change Room should be provided by more than one adult.

It is appropriate that players be provided with appropriate time and space to dress themselves for the game with a degree of privacy. Should any of the coaching staff be of the opposite gender to the players, then they are not to enter the change room during this period. Supervision of the players during this time should take place by members of the club / coaching staff who are of the same gender as the players.

Should a team wish to remain in the change room or return to the change room in preparing for the game all coaching staff may enter the change room but there is to be a clearly defined time allocated for 'changing' when the players are aware that they should get dressed in preparation for the game.

### Referee Change Rooms

Suitable change rooms are to be provided for the referees officiating at all games. Where referees of both genders are in attendance, they should be provided with the opportunity to access the change rooms at separate times.



### **Strapping / Injury Treatment**

Strapping for injury prevention or the treatment of existing injuries can at times place a player in somewhat compromising positions. Where possible, a Sports Trainer / Medical Professional of the same gender as the players should be made available. The treatment of any injury which may place the player in a compromising position should be done within the change rooms whenever it is safe to transport the player there. Additionally, any injury treatment that takes place within the change rooms should take place in an open space within the change room in the presence of another adult (in addition to the Sports Trainer / Medical Professional).



## 4.8 Coach / Sports Trainer / Team Managers

### COACHES

Each team must have an appropriately accredited Coach in attendance before any match can commence.

#### Coaches on the Field

In specific age groups, coaches may remain on the field with participants during matches to give guidance to young participants.

Coaches are allowed to remain on the field in all matches until the year prior to competitive age groups. This will allow for coaches to remain on the field in all Under 6s and Under 7s matches.

At the discretion of Local Leagues, coaches may remain on the field in the Under 8s age group until 30 June.

### SPORTS TRAINERS

The minimum requirements for on-field safety personnel for each match are prescribed by section 1.2 of the NRL On-Field Policy. These vary for each age range and from the Under 16 age group upwards require there to be a currently accredited and registered sports trainer at the venue for each team playing in the match.

No match will start under any circumstances whatsoever without, as a minimum, the on-field safety personnel prescribed by the NRL On-Field Policy present and available at the match venue. Reference must be made to the NRL On-Field Policy, where these requirements are specified.

Please note: A Coach cannot act in the role of both an on-field safety person required under the NRL On-Field Policy and Coach during the same game, and vice versa, even if appropriately accredited. One individual is required for each role.

Further to the requirements of NSWRL Community Rugby League Policy 4.15 and this Policies & Procedures Manual generally:

1. The ground manager is required to, and must do all things necessary for the purposes of determining whether or not the persons required to be present at a match in order for that match to be allowed to commence are indeed present in the capacities required;
2. It shall be the responsibility of the ground manager to record (and the ground manager must record) in his or her match day report the names of, and all other details of each of the people identified as being present at a match in order for that match to have been allowed to commence;
3. The ground manager must, in circumstances where he or she is not satisfied that the on-field safety personnel prescribed by the NRL On-Field Policy are present, direct that the match not commence.

**FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF ANY DOUBT** it shall be considered an egregious and extremely serious breach, by each club participating in a match, to allow or be involved in allowing a match to commence or continue under any circumstances, where one or more of the people required by this Policy 4.8 and the NRL On-Field Policy to be in attendance at the commencement of and for the duration of that match is not in attendance or present, regardless as to the reason for the absence or non-attendance of that person. Without limiting the sanction that might be imposed on a club, the match will be deemed as a forfeit by any team that does not have the required personnel present.



**FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF ANY DOUBT**, the minimum qualification requirements for sports trainer and other roles specified in these rules are as set out in the applicable NRL Policies incorporated into this Policies and Procedures Manual, including in particular the NRL On-Field Policy.

Sports Trainers must remain quiet and seated at the bench unless they are undertaking their duties (as per the NRL On-Field Policy).

During Mini and Mod fixtures (Under 6 to Under 12) teams may utilise a maximum of two (2) Sports Trainers. In International fixtures (Under 13 and above) teams may utilise a maximum of three (3) Sports Trainers.

### **TEAM MANAGERS**

Team Managers should be properly registered as volunteers with their Club. There is an age requirement of 14 years for Managers for teams aged Under 6 to Under 12 and an age requirement of 18 years for Managers for teams aged Under 13 and above.

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL On-Field Policy)

NSWRL Policy 4.15 – Ground Managers





## 4.9 Compression Garments

Compression garments are defined as any technical garments worn under a players / match official on field uniform. These garments include upper body tops, shirts, tights and shorts.

In a match environment, compression garments may only be worn as follows:

- » Garments may not exceed past the knee, past the elbow or past the length of the playing socks
- » Compression garments **must** only be black or the skin tone colour.

In the event of a breach of this policy the following penalties will be enforced:

- » A player will be asked to remove the garment before entering the field of play
- » If the player refuses to do this, they will be removed from the field and action taken against the club.

In a training environment, compression garments of any nature may be worn by players and branding is not restricted.



## 4.10 Critical Incident Management

A crisis is defined as an out of the ordinary event, announcement, disclosure of set of circumstances which threatens the safety or wellbeing of employees and other stakeholders and / or the integrity, performance, reputation, and survival of the company and / or key partners.

It can also be described as, when an organisation, brand, company, institution or individual is subjected to the intense, critical and unwelcome spotlight of the media and public as a result of an incident, issue or circumstance that impacts and damages its reputation.

Examples at a Community Rugby League club may include, but not be limited to:

- » Catastrophic incidents and / or injuries to players, officials, spectators, minors or fans
- » Illegal activity related to property or person
- » Illegal behaviour involving children under the age of 18
- » Behaviours that may bring the game into disrepute and are contrary to the NRL Code of Conduct.

The NSWRL has developed a Critical Incident Reporting Framework which is designed to aid clubs in the immediate management of Critical Incidents as they occur.

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Critical Incident Management Forms)



## 4.11 Drawn Matches During Finals Series

When the scores are equal after the completion of any play-off, semi-final, final or grand final the referee will call the two captains together and advise that the game will go into extra time of two 10-minute periods for international games. A coin toss will give one of the team captains the option of either kicking off in extra-time or receiving the ball from the kick-off. The game will re-commence and continue until one of the teams scores:

- » In International Football (Under 13s to Open Age), either a field goal, penalty goal or a try.

The referee will then immediately terminate the game with the team scoring first declared the winner.

If neither team has scored at the conclusion of the first period of extra-time, the teams will change ends and the game will recommence with a kick-off from half-way.

In semi-finals and finals, in the event that neither team has scored following two periods of 10 minutes of extra-time in international games, the team who finished higher on the competition ladder at the conclusion of the regular competition rounds will be declared the winner and will progress to the next round of the finals series.

In Grand Finals, in the event that neither team has scored following two periods of 10 minutes in international games of extra time, the game will be declared a draw with both teams joint premiers.

Leagues may apply to vary these rules for their local competitions if required.



## 4.12 Electronic Communication Devices

The use of 'walkie-talkies', mobile phones or other electronic devices on the field of play OR within the playing area is prohibited for the purpose of communication between team staff and other team staff either within the playing area or outside of the playing area.

The only exception being the use of mobile phones or tablets to display Match Day Cards for player and team staff identification or for live scoring.



### 4.13 Football Boots

All types of football boots and studs are permissible. However, referees or touch judges shall check all boots before each match. If deemed unsuitable by the referee or touch judge the boots or studs must be repaired to the satisfaction of the referee or touch judge, or they shall not be worn during the match.

Players up to and including Under 9's shall be allowed to wear rubber soled shoes or boots.



## 4.14 Ground and Match Preparation Requirements

The **HOME CLUB** is responsible to ensure the following matters are provided to the satisfaction of the League Board:

- » Correct size and number of footballs (all teams must bring their own NSWRL allocated match football to each game)
- » Ball persons (if required)
- » Corner posts and goal post pads – **agility poles cannot be used as corner posts**
- » Correct ground / field markings in accordance with the Laws of the Game, any other applicable rules or regulations under which the applicable matches are played, and any directives of NSWRL and the NSWRL COMMUNITY FOOTBALL
- » Competition rules match day procedures manual
- » Time keepers (team managers) clock, siren or bell
- » Touch judges if not appointed. Must be over 14 years of age.
- » If selling alcohol an appropriate liquor license is obtained and that alcohol is not to be served until conclusion of any junior age games (18 years and under).
- » Match sign on sheets
- » Stretcher and first aid box
- » Receptacle for blood soiled dressings etc.
- » Clean dressing rooms and toilets
- » Canteen facilities for spectators
- » Easy access for ambulance and prompt medical contact
- » Keep unauthorised persons outside spectator fence
- » Only use approved Kicking Tees
- » Field marker cones should be soft and collapsible
- » Inspect playing field and surrounds to ensure all safety measures are in place and there are no foreign or dangerous articles or implements protruding or evident.

The **VISITING CLUB** is responsible to support and assist the home club in relation to the provision of the above (if possible) and the following:

- » Control of their own spectators, supporters and parents
- » Good behaviour of their players and team support staff
- » Provide a time keeper (team manager)
- » Assist home club to keep unauthorised persons outside spectator fence
- » Proper medical procedures for care of own players



## 4.15 Ground Managers

The Ground Manager should be a person of maturity (18 years or older) who is visible and alert and aware of activity inside the spectator fence or rope and they should do everything possible to ensure the wellbeing and safety of patrons. They should have a good knowledge of the crowd and ground control rules and policy that applies and utilise the Community Rugby League incident reporting process that is in place.

### Training, Policy and Administrative Requirements

Because of the complex nature of the ground manager's tasks and responsibilities and the threat of litigation and the possible exposure of the club to legal action should a serious incident occur, it is important the ground manager is well prepared and aware of the responsibilities that are involved and complies with them.

The key tasks of a ground manager are:

- » All Ground Managers should ensure that they are wearing an appropriate NSWRL Ground Manager Vest at all times while undertaking their duties and are not to enter the field of play without wearing a vest so they can be easily identified by Referees, Team Staff, players and spectators
- » **ENSURE ANY PLAYERS REMOVED FROM THE FIELD WITH A SUSPECTED HEAD INJURY OR CONCUSSION ARE TO BE MARKED ON THE SIGN ON SHEET WITH HIA NEXT TO THE PLAYERS NAME**
- » Have a good knowledge of the club and league disciplinary procedures and rules that apply to both the home and visiting clubs.
- » Do everything possible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of patrons whilst they are at the venue.
- » Attend meetings and co-operate with the district or regional league manager.
- » Observe and support district or regional club crowd and ground control requirements and report any exceptions.
- » During game day duties, check appropriate accreditations and player identification
- » **DO NOT ALLOW GAMES TO COMMENCE WITHOUT THE NECESSARY TEAM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE AS PER THESE POLICIES & PROCEDURES**
- » Have a list of Local Hospital Emergency Departments or Local Doctors or Medical Centres available to assess injured players

### Sports Trainers in Attendance

Ground Managers are responsible for ensuring that each venue or team has appropriately accredited Sports Trainers in attendance before any match can commence. These requirements are outlined in the NRL On-Field Policy.

Ground Managers must identify Sports Trainers through Match Day Cards and their accreditation verified using the same process. Sports Trainers should be marked on the sign on sheet and their signature is required prior to the commencement of the game.

Should a team present without the required Sports Trainer the Ground Manager must direct that the match CANNOT start. All persons must comply with the direction of the Ground Manager that the match not start and it shall be deemed a forfeit.



## **Community Rugby League Semi-Final Series**

The league will offer selected club ground managers an opportunity to be part of the league, district or regional crowd and ground control management operation during the end of season semi-finals, finals and grand finals.

### **Communication and Awareness**

Because of the time involved, multiple grounds being used and the number of games that are played at some venues, ground managers are not expected to be able to witness every breach or exception that occurs but are encouraged to have a general overview of the majority of club activity on the clubs' home ground when matches are played and have effective reporting and communication processes in place to keep themselves informed of various developments.

### **Evaluate and Report Incidents**

The ground manager will be expected to evaluate incidents that occur and report appropriate rule breaches and issues to the League Administrator, without delay by way of e-mail, telephone or personal visit to the league office.

### **Support from League**

The League will support, co-operate and assist all clubs and ground managers and do all reasonable things to protect the interests and wellbeing of everyone involved in managing and over viewing the league rules, codes of conduct and good behaviour rules.

### **Home Club Responsibility**

The home club will be responsible for the control of spectators and supporters and should do everything possible to ensure there are no breaches or breakdown of the league and club codes of conduct and good behaviour rules.

### **Match Day Requirements**

Utilise league incident report forms – a club ground manager or other official shall utilise the league incident report form and report all available information, regarding serious breaches of the league rules, prior to 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the incident. See following examples:

- » The identity of any person who makes an unauthorised entry inside the spectator fence or onto the playing field, including players, coaches, trainers and managers.
- » All assault matters and the identity of those involved.
- » Abusive, insulting, threatening language or harassment of any referee, touch judge, official or other person.
- » Crowd disturbance, riots, brawls etc. and the cause.
- » Any person under influence of intoxicating liquor.
- » Other serious breaches of league rules.

The home club ground manager shall ensure written records of the names of authorised persons (except coaches, trainers, team managers and players) allowed inside the spectator fence are kept and present same upon request to the league when required.





### Identification of Volunteers / Spectators

The ground manager or official performing that role is authorised to take the following action to ascertain the identity of any person who has committed a breach of the league rules.

- » Approach the coach, trainers and team manager of the team the offending person is supporting and request the offender's name.
- » If the coach, trainers or manager refuses, hinders or harasses efforts to obtain that information, they will be in breach League rules.
- » The penalty may be loss of competition points for the team and/or other penalty.

### Checking the Playing Surface / Facilities

Check playing field and surrounds to ensure all safety measures and requirements of the league and the home club have been observed and there are no major depressions, foreign or dangerous implements or articles protruding or evident.

Fields without permanent fencing are required to be "roped-off" to keep spectators a safe distance from the field of play. It is recommended any temporary fencing or "roped-off" area of a playing field should be constructed at a minimum three metres from the external perimeters of the field of play.

### Breach of League Rules

Any person (includes player, coach, trainer, manager) official, parent, spectator, supporter or other person shall be in breach of the league rules, codes of conduct and good behaviour rules, if they assault, threaten, harass, intimidate, abuse or otherwise cause serious inconvenience to another person at any league venue or playing field.

### Terminating a Match

The Ground Manager has the authority to request the termination of a match by the Referee due to safety or security reasons.

If there is extreme inclement weather (such as lightning or hail), or if there are repeated breaches of the NRL National Code of Conduct that cannot be rectified, the Ground Manager should approach the nearest Touch Judge and ask them to alert the Referee to stop the game. The Ground Manager should then discuss the issue with the Referee and ask them to make a determination on whether to continue with the match.

If a match is terminated for any reason, the Ground Manager should complete an Incident / Code of Conduct report and ensure that the local League is aware of the circumstances surrounding the termination of the match.

### Report to Police

It is standing league policy to report all assaults and serious altercations to the police and to firmly support any action that is taken. There will be no hesitation to provide documentation and records to the authorities and do everything reasonable and possible to assist with the identification and prosecution of offenders. Any person who is seriously threatened or assaulted who doesn't report the matter to police will be in breach of League Rules.



## Serious Incident, Serious Injury or Death

Give immediate assistance to those injured or in distress. If waiting for an ambulance or other services, move them away from any danger or further harassment. Obtain urgent medical or other support by telephoning 000 for Ambulance, Police or Fire Brigade. Every club has trained medical trainers who can be utilised in an emergency.

Protect and secure the victim's property and possessions and provide a safe and secure environment if children are involved or with victim.

A copy of the guidelines (this document) is contained in the competition rules match day procedures manual on the official table. If in doubt, contact the League Manager and ask for advice.

Make a note of circumstances of the incident. The time it happened, what happened, the cause if known and who was involved.

Identify any offenders and detain if possible. Whilst waiting for the Police, Ambulance or other services, identify any witnesses who were present and ask them to wait and assist with enquiries.

Co-operate and assist the emergency service teams when they arrive.

Contact the League Administrator and advise details. If necessary, they will make immediate arrangements and take action to assist the Ground Manager.

Follow up by assisting the victim, or family or relatives: -

- » Advise them the matter will be followed up by the League Manager
- » Give them the contact number of the League Manager
- » Visit hospital or doctor's surgery with them
- » Telephone victim(s) later that night to see how they are
- » Find out what can be done to assist them

In very serious cases (serious injury or death) it might be necessary to arrange a counsellor (the League Manager can assist with contact numbers) and get that person to conduct a counselling session as soon as possible with family members, team members, close friends and club members etc.

Follow up by submitting a written report to the League Manager.

### Please Note:

*Irrespective of what happened and who is involved, the first and most important action is to go to the aid of injured and/or distressed persons. Keep a copy of these guidelines on hand at all times. Ensure your club secretary and ground manager are aware of the procedures that are outlined above.*

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.1 – Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines (NSWRL Critical Incident Management Forms)

Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL On-Field Policy)



## 4.16 Hearing Aids

Hearing impaired players are warned of the potential increased risks of participating in body contact sports.

Players wearing behind the ear devices are required to remove the devices before participating in contact sessions.

A medical certificate from an ear and throat specialist is required for players who have cochlear implants, intending to participate in body contact sessions or games.



## 4.17 Head Injury and Concussion Guidelines

The NSWRL has adopted and fully endorses the NRL Community Rugby League Policy and Guidelines for the Management of Concussion. Link to the full guidelines is listed below.

[2025-04-09-community-concussion-policy-final.pdf](#)

---

**Reference Documents** Appendix 10.2 – Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines (NRL Community Rugby League Policy and Guidelines for the Management of Concussion)



## 4.18 Interchange

### U6's to U9's Junior League

Each player is to play a MINIMUM OF TWO UNBROKEN PERIODS of eight (8) minutes.

A player, having played an UNBROKEN period of play and been replaced, may be used at a later period as a replacement for a player who has also completed an unbroken period of play and not been replaced, or, for a player who has been injured or suspended.

This means that, players are able to be replaced in any quarter of the match, however, if a player replaces another player during the first half of a match, both these players must ensure they play two full quarters in the remainder of the match. A player may be temporarily replaced if injured – but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three-minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent. The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play.

### U10's to U12's Junior League

Each player is to play a MINIMUM OF ONE UNBROKEN HALF of a match (i.e. twenty (20) minutes).

A player, having played an UNBROKEN half of a match and been replaced, may be used at a later half of a match to replace a player who has also completed an unbroken half or for a player who has been injured or suspended.

This means that, players are able to be replaced in either half of the match, however, if a player replaces another player during the first half of a match, both these players must play the entire second half of the match.

A player may be temporarily replaced if injured – but, for a maximum of three (3) minutes at any one time. If the three-minute period is exceeded the replacement is permanent. The replacement player shall play another unbroken period of play.

### International Football (U13's to Opens)

Interchange rules are as per the Laws of the game. In International Rugby League matches local leagues will have the jurisdiction to formulate the number of interchanges per game. This should be reflected in the Leagues By-Laws.

The following rules need to be followed when interchanging players:

1. Interchange may only occur during general play (i.e. when the ball is in motion), after any scoring has been completed, or if play has been temporarily suspended by the Referee (e.g. injury or caution)
2. Maximum of two (2) interchange of players may take place at any one time
3. A replaced player MUST CROSS THE TOUCHLINE or DEAD BALL LINE prior to their replacement taking the field
4. Interchange must not be made after the referee has ordered a scrum until the scrum has been completed. Unless it is to replace a bleeding player and the referee has:
  - » Signalled a stoppage in play
  - » The trainers have first advised the referee that an interchange is to take place



- » The scrum is a result of a touchline stoppage.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 4.19 Kicking Tees

Kicking tees may be used provided they are a product which has been officially approved and is commercially available for purchase i.e. an NRL Licensed Product

Such kicking tees may be used for kicks at goal and starts or restarts of play from the halfway line.



## 4.20 Making Changes to the Duration of a Game

The duration of a game can only be interfered with if the disruption was for more than thirty (30) minutes. If the disruption was for less than thirty minutes, the schedule of games should be maintained as per the draw. If the disruption was more than thirty minutes, the following procedures should be observed:

- » The Ground Manager should estimate the finishing time of the last match and consider the expected standard of light at the time
- » If there is concern that falling or bad light could be a problem, for the last and / or second last game, the question of playing under lights should be considered and arranged if possible
- » If games are played under lights, it is suggested that games should not start after 5.30pm unless both coaches agree
- » If playing under lights is not an option, the Ground Manager should liaise with both coaches and the referee and arrange for five (5) minutes to be deducted from each half of the remaining matches, until the lost time has been made up
- » If there are insufficient matches to enable lost time to be made up, the Ground Manager should telephone the League Administrator and seek a direction from them on how to proceed
- » If there are no options other than to cancel a game(s) the League Administrator will later contact the clubs involved and discuss possible replays
- » All teams involved in games that are delayed and played under this rule will be in breach of the rules if they refuse to play
- » Minimum time played must be observed when altering the duration of a game (the Competition Handbook will dictate minimum times to be observed)





## 4.21 Match Ball Sizes

The following ball sizes should be used in the associated competitions.

Under 6	Mini
Under 7	Mini
Under 8	Mini
Under 9	Mini
Under 10	Mod
Under 11	Mod
Under 12	Mod
Under 13	International
Under 14	International
Under 15	International
Under 16	International
Under 17	International
Under 18	International
Under 19	International
Under 20	International
Under 21	International
Under 23	International
Open Age	International



## 4.22 Mercy Rule

All matches in all competitions, including Blues Tag matches, will stop immediately when there is a points differential of 60 points.

Officials at official tables will sound the siren at the appropriate time.

Should the Referee and both team Coaches agree, play may continue to full time if it is deemed safe. All must agree for the game to proceed.

If the game does proceed, no further scores will be recorded.

The maximum score differential that will be recorded for a match is 60 points for all competitions.



## 4.23 Needle Stick Injury Management

In the event of a Needle Stick Injury

- » Remove contaminated clothing
- » Wash the area gently with soap and running water as soon as possible
- » Apply an antiseptic and a clean dressing
- » Place the needle in a rigid plastic container and take it with you to the Doctor
- » All participants who sustain a needle stick injury should attend a general practitioner for assessment, advice and if necessary, counselling
- » An incident report should be completed and given to your club
- » Inform Local League Administrator



## 4.24 Number of Players on the Field

The following policies are to be read in conjunction with the Laws of the Game for the respective age group with emphasis on understanding and fostering participation.

International Grades	Minimum nine (9) players
Under 12's Junior League	Minimum eleven (11) players
U10's to U11's Junior League	Minimum eight (8) players
U8's to U9's Junior League	Minimum six (6) players
U6's to U7's Junior League	Minimum four (4) players

In the event of any team playing with less than the minimum amount of players (as listed above), it shall be the duty of the opposing captain or club official to draw the referee's attention to that fact.

In the event of a team having less than the minimum amount of players (non-development competitions), the game shall be terminated immediately and the match awarded to the opposing team.

The only exception being in International Grades, if the ninth available player for a team is in the Sin Bin the game can continue as the player will retake the field when his penalty is completed.

Should the referee or League Administrator (or adjudicating sub-committee) become aware of and satisfied that a team has more than the authorised number of players on the field, any points scored whilst the additional player(s) were on the field shall be deducted. The referee may order the removal of the additional player(s) from the field and if that order is not observed immediately shall award the match to the non-offending team.

Any infringement of this rule must be written clearly on the sign on sheet. Clubs should be reminded that protests to the outcome of any match must be submitted no more than 15 minutes after the completion of the match. Both Coaches, Team Managers and the Ground Manager should acknowledge the complaint by way of signing the sign on sheet where the infringement has been outlined.

Any appeal or protest under this rule will be dismissed if evidence supports the fact that the appellant club's captain and/or team support officials were aware of the breach during or immediately after the match and failed to bring it to the notice of the referee at the time by reporting the matter to the official table.

When arriving at a decision the adjudicating subcommittee or the League Administrator will take into account the amount of time the additional player(s) were on the field and the impact that it had on the outcome of game and specifically, address that issue in its adjudication.

Should a team begin a match with less than the prescribed number of players, it may fill the vacant place(s) at any time during the match, provided the on-field duration rule/time for the mini and mod players is observed. If a team should begin a match with a full complement of players, substitutes can be introduced to take the place of other players during the match in accordance with the replacement rules and the referee must be notified.

If a team is short of players at the time when the game is due to commence, it will be allowed fifteen minutes to allow missing players to arrive at the ground and then take the field, however, when the minimum number of players have signed on, the team shall take the field and commence the game, irrespective if there are still other players missing. If the team refuses to take the field when the minimum number of players is available, the game will be forfeited to the opposing team.

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.15 – Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 4.25 On-Field Injuries

Player injury can only be determined by a qualified First Responder – that is a League First Aid, Level 1 Sports Trainer or Level 2 Sports Trainer.

No player with suspected head or neck injuries is permitted to be moved from the field except where further risk injury may occur and only under the supervision of a suitability qualified persons(s). An Ambulance shall be called immediately to take charge of the care of the injured player.

Any player with a neck injury who is removed by Ambulance may not resume playing until an appropriate medical clearance is obtained and sighted from medical personnel.

### Junior League (U6s to U12s) Injuries

An injured player leaving the field must returned to the field within 3 minutes or take no further part in the game – as determined by a qualified person.

The replacement player used for the injured player (mini) must play a complete period of the game (i.e. 8 or 10 minutes).

The replacement player used for the injured player (mod) in the first half of the game must play the complete second half of the game (i.e. 20 minutes).

### Procedures for games Delayed due to Injury or Other matter

#### Normal Procedures

- » No time off in the first half – all ages
- » No injury time in Junior League games (do not stop clock)
- » No injury time in International unless indicated in your Competition By-Laws.

#### Extraordinary Situation Procedures

If the second half of a match is commenced but the game is terminated early due to unforeseen circumstances which includes, but is not limited to, injury or weather conditions, the game shall be declared as 'played' and points awarded accordingly.

#### Injury Reporting

All injuries should be reported to clubs on the appropriate forms.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 3.1 – Abandoned Matches Due to Injury, Inclement Weather or Foul Play



## 4.26 Player Equipment

A player must not wear any item that may prove dangerous to other players. If in doubt a player is required to have any such item approved by the referee prior to the commencement of the match.

A player's normal gear shall consist of a jersey of distinctive colour and/or pattern (numbered), the numbering should be clear and legible from a distance, a pair of shorts, socks of distinctive colour and/or pattern and studded boot or shoes.

Protective equipment may be worn provided it contains nothing of a rigid nature.

### Dangerous Equipment

The referee may order a player to remove any item or any part of his equipment which might be considered dangerous and shall not allow the player to take any further part in the match until the item or equipment is removed (i.e. piercings)

Such a player must retire from the playing field to remove the offending item if the start or restart of the match would otherwise be delayed.

The referee or touch judge should check all equipment prior to the commencement of each match.

### Apparel

Jerseys must be a type, style and fabric approved by the League.

The use of gloves or mittens is prohibited.

Jerseys may not be beaded or knotted.

---

**Reference Documents** NSWRL Policy 2.15 –Blues Tag Competition Rule Modifications



## 4.27 Playing an Unregistered Player

All players that take the field in any match scheduled by Local Leagues (competitive or non-competitive), should be properly registered with their Club in the MySideline national database.

Their registration must be complete and approved by the League Administrator before they take the field. A pending registration is not considered a complete registration for the purpose of this policy.

Registration must include the provision of an approved form of identification as well as an appropriate photo for game day identification, as per the NRL National Registration Policy.

Local Leagues have the ability to fine a Club, or deduct competition points, or penalise Clubs if they breach this policy.



## 4.28 Pre-Match Heritage or Cultural Performances

Approval to conduct any pre-match ceremonial or cultural performances (e.g. Haka, Celebrity Kick-Off etc.) must be sought in writing from the League Administrator and approved before such performance shall be permitted.

The League Administrator may either grant or refuse such approval but, if approved, such performances must be factored into match day programming.





## 4.29 Referees

It is the firm policy of the NSWRL not to interfere with the result of a match due to a referee error on the field. Any complaint received about a referee or match official will be forwarded to the local Referees Association.

### Condition of Ground

Where there is doubt regarding the fitness of a ground where a competition match is to be played, consultation between the referees, two captains and senior officials from each club should take place with the final decision resting with the referee.

### Referee Terminating a Match

The referee, in consultation with the Ground Manager, has the discretion to terminate a game whenever by reason of climatic condition, interference of spectators or other causes where the referee deems it necessary. In all cases in which a game is terminated the referee shall advise the League Administrator through the Secretary of the Referees Association prior to 5.00pm on the following Monday by submitting a written report.

Should the Referees Association have prior warning or opinion regarding the alleged condition of a ground, the matter should be brought to the attention of the League Administrator as a matter of urgency prior to any action being taken.

### Referees Appointments

The Referees Appointments Board shall appoint referees to games.

In the event the Referees Association fails or refuses to appoint referees, the League Administrator may carry out that function.

### Referee Not in Attendance at a Game

In the event of the referee so appointed not attending within fifteen (15) minutes after the time set down to commence, then any qualified referee may be appointed by the Secretaries or Officials of the opposing clubs. A written report in this instance is to be forwarded to the League Administrator from the home team Secretary. The match result shall stand.

If agreement cannot be reached and a referee is not appointed, the game should not be played and the matter reported to the League Administrator.

### Approaching a Referee or Touch Judge

It is a breach of the NSW Community Rugby League Rules for a player, coach, trainer, manager or other official to 'approach' a referee or touch judge before, during or following a game to seek a rule explanation or for any other reason directly relating to a game.

Breaches of this rule may, upon conviction, result in loss of points, suspension or other penalty and result in Coaches and / or Trainers having their qualification / certificate suspended or cancelled.

### Complaints by Referees

All complaints by referees must be submitted to the League Administrator by 5.00pm on the Monday following the match.



Any club Official who is qualified to referee and is appointed to games by the Referee's Association, must declare a conflict of interest if appointed to games involving teams from that person's club. The League Administrator is entitled to request the Referee's Association to change any such appointments.

### **Abandoned Games**

In the event of a game being abandoned by the referee, or if for any other reason a game was not completed because of an on-field incident(s) and/or behaviour by players, the incident will be referred to the Code of Conduct Panel and an adjudication will be made.

Any club who feels their team has been unfairly dealt with or harshly treated by this adjudication may make representations to the board however severity of sentence cannot be used as a defence.

### **Unauthorised Entry – Preventing Games Continuing**

The referee shall not allow any person apart from the players and authorised team support officials onto the playing area without permission (this includes coaches, parents, spectators and others) and should anyone make an unauthorised entry onto the field they will be in breach of the league rules and codes of conduct.

If a parent, coach or other person during the game became aware of any circumstances deemed contrary to the welfare and interest of the referee, a player or any authorised person on the field, the matter should be brought to the attention of the ground manager in a civil and courteous manner. The ground manager will evaluate the information and if deemed necessary bring the matter to the attention of the referee via the official touch judge. If there is no official touch judge the ground manager may enter the field of play and approach the referee.

Any person acting contrary to this clause will be in breach of league rules and codes of conduct.



## 4.30 Score / Official Table Requirements

The following is required to be provided at the Score / Officials table.

- » 5 chairs, 1 for ground manager, 2 for opposing managers and 2 for sin bin
- » 1 table
- » Working pens
- » 2 Touch Judge flags (optional)
- » 1 bell or hooter to signal players to field, half time and end of play
- » 3 Time clocks:
  - 1 official game time clock
  - 1 recording time off in second half and
  - 1 sin bin clock this can also be used as half time clock.
- » Referees Dismissal report book
- » Referees Judiciary report book
- » Rules of the Game (NRL Laws of the Game)
- » Incident book
- » Appropriate team sign on / score sheets for each fixture
- » NRL Code of Conduct
- » Safe Play Code
- » Tough Love Guidelines
- » Players and official's identification cards / sheets for each participating team
- » First Aid Kit
- » NSWRL Ground Managers Folder
- » Electronic access to NSWRL Policies & Procedures Manual



### 4.31 Send Offs

Any player who has been dismissed from the field of play / sent off, shall vacate the playing enclosure and will remove their playing jersey / resume ordinary attire, and shall be suspended from playing until they appear before the Judiciary and the matter has been fully dealt with.

The offending player may not re-enter the roped off playing area at any time.

Referees shall obtain the name of any offending player from the team captain or club official who is responsible for the team. Failure of the captain or club official to supply each player(s) correct name shall be deemed misconduct, for which the person(s) concerned shall be reported by the referee to the League Administrator.

When a player has been “sent” from the field by the referee, the referee is obliged to complete a report. The offender’s team manager should be issued with a duplicate copy of this report. The Referee must also complete the on-line Match Officials Report.

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/NewSouthWalesRugbyLeague/MatchOfficialsReport>

It is the responsibility of the club to know the identity of all players representing their club in all matches, including trial games.

Players sent from the field during trial matches will have to appear at Judiciary.

#### U6s to U12s Junior League

U6s to U12s Junior League players may be dismissed from the field of play in one of the following ways:

- » Referee dismissed the player instantly for misconduct. Player can be replaced immediately. Referees report will be sent for review to Local League with potential Code of Conduct action available to the League.
- » Referee requests captain to replace player for remainder of the game. No further penalty to player sent off.
- » Referee requests captain to replace player for remainder of the quarter or half. No further penalty to player sent off.
- » Any misconduct in U6s to U12s Junior Rugby League should be officially reported in the same way as misconduct in an international grade game is reported



## 4.32 Offensive Songs

If a team sings (or plays a song on a speaker/AV system) with indecent or suggestive language, every player in the team who has signed the sign on sheet for that game will be held responsible and any action taken will involve all of those players, unless there are extenuating or acceptable evidence which clearly indicates a certain player(s) was not involved.

Upon receipt by the League of a complaint, the Secretary of the club concerned (the club complained against) will be contacted and advised accordingly.

A full investigation into the complaint will take place and the matter will be referred to the Conduct Review Panel.

Any person who fails to provide information upon request may be suspended.

Any person who makes a complaint that is found to be groundless or frivolous may be called before the Conduct Review Panel on a charge of misconduct.



### 4.33 Team Benches

During any match, the following team staff / players are permitted to be seated at a team bench:

- » Maximum of two (2) Coaches (Coach and Assistant Coach)
- » One (1) Team Manager
- » Up to three (3) Sports Trainers
- » Doctor (if available)
- » Up to seven (7) interchange players (depending on Local League interchange rules)
- » Up to two (2) ball persons per team

Coaches must hold an appropriate Coach Accreditation. At least one Coach must hold an age appropriate accreditation for the team playing. Any Assistant Coach must only hold a current Coach Accreditation without a requirement for it to be age specific.

Sports Trainers should also hold an appropriate accreditation for the age of the participants. They should ensure that they have met the minimum standard as outlined in the NRL On-Field Policy. A minimum requirement of a League Safe accreditation is needed to take the field in the capacity as a Sports Trainer.

No injured players from a participating team, or unregistered non-participants, are allowed to be inside the playing enclosure and sitting at team benches.



#### **4.34 Teams Not Ready at Kick-Off**

Any team not prepared to commence a match within 15 minutes of the time directed shall be deemed to have forfeited unless satisfactory reasons for the delay are given to the League Administrator.

The result of the match shall be declared in accordance with the applicable competition rules that apply to that match. A club forfeiting a match shall be subject to sanction in accordance with the rules and regulations of the NSWRL.



## 4.35 Touch Judges

It is the recommendation of NSWRL that Community Referees Associations appoint official touch judges to all matches ages Under 16s and over in tackle competitions.

Clubs should be aware of Referees and Touch Judges appointed to matches if they are hosting games at their home ground.

In the absence of official Touch Judges in competition matches under the age of 16, or in Blues Tag matches, if the Referee requests un-official Touch Judges, those volunteers undertaking this role should be reminded that the only requirements of the position is to alert the Referee if a player, or the ball, crosses the sideline, or indicates a successful conversion kick. Both of these indications are made by raising a flag.

The minimum age requirement for an un-official touch judge is fourteen (14).

An un-official Touch Judge should not communicate with players while undertaking their role and should not enter the field of play.





## 4.36 Unauthorised Person Inside the Spectator Fence (Playing Area)

It is a breach of the Rules for any spectator or unauthorised person to be inside the spectator fence, rope or barrier at any Community Rugby League ground without the approval of the Ground Manager.

If the Ground Manager refuses to support a person being inside the spectator fence, rope or barrier, the person concerned should leave the area immediately.

Only the following persons are authorised to be inside the spectator fence, rope or barrier at any Community Rugby League playing field:

- » Players who are actively involved in the current fixture
- » The Coach, Trainers and Manager of each team
- » Approved medical support personnel
- » Club Officials or representatives authorised to perform crowd and ground control (i.e. Ground Manager/s)
- » Referees, approved touch judges and Referee Appointment Board representatives
- » Authorised persons who have been given authority by the Ground Manager or have legitimate reasons to be there (i.e. unofficial touch judge)

Persons refused entry may complain to the League Administrator.

The home club Ground Manager should be aware of the identity of authorised persons allowed inside the spectator fence, rope or barrier and advise same upon request to the League Crowd and Grounds personnel or the League Administrator.

Before each game commences, each Team Manager shall check to ensure the procedures in relation to identification cards for all players, Coaches, Trainers, Managers, unofficial touch judges etc., are being observed and the names of unofficial touch judges, coaches, trainers, manager of each team have also been properly recorded on the sign on sheet.

*SECTION 5*

# **RULES OF THE GAME**

[nswrl.com.au](http://nswrl.com.au)



## 5.1 District and Regional Local Rules

Any District or Region which for special circumstances wishes to vary Rules, Policies or Laws of the game, must prior to the introduction of any variations, seek approval from the NSWRL.

When approval for variation of rules is granted, the NSWRL will notify each District, League or Region and associated Referees Associations.



## 5.2 National Safe Play Code

The Safeplay Code was developed to emphasise safety and good conduct within the game of Rugby League by creating the best possible on-field environment and actively controlling undesirable actions. It applies to all players up to and including the Under 15 years age group. To implement the Safeplay Code:

**Promoting the Code:** All parents, players, coaches and referees should familiarise themselves with the “Safeplay Code” before the commencement of the season and subsequent matches. A copy of the Code should be available and prominently displayed at match venues and training sessions.

**Referees:** The Referee’s total implementation of the Safeplay Code is the key to its success. Referees must be fully briefed on the detailed workings of the “Safeplay Code”. The most suitable personnel to do this are the appointed Coaching and Development Staff or Referees’ Co-ordinators/Providers/Coaches.

**Coaches:** Coaches are the other vital factor in ensuring that the Code is applied successfully. All coaches must ensure that their players are aware of, and fully understand, the “Safeplay Code” and observe it “to the letter.”

**All Matches:** To ensure that all parties fully understand the Safeplay Code, a pre-match meeting may be held, at International Law games, between the match Referee, Coaches, Ground Officials and where possible, team Captains. It may take a few matches for Referees and players to become accustomed to the Code. However, the right balance will soon be achieved as long as all concerned work together and realise that the code will benefit all players and the game.

Download a copy of the Safeplay Code.

<https://www.playrugbyleague.com/referee/laws-of-the-game/safeplay-code/>



## 5.3 NRL Code of Conduct

The NSWRL fully endorses and has adopted the NRL Code of Conduct which provides all participants – players, parents, coaches, referees, spectators and officials – with some simple rules that assist in delivering a safe and positive environment to everyone involved in the game.

Within that safe environment, every Rugby League participant has the best chance to enjoy the game. By accepting the standards of behaviour in the Code, we provide opportunities for all participants to grow on the field - we build good players, good citizens and good communities in which Rugby League is a social asset. It is strongly recommended that everyone connected with Rugby League embraces these rules as an essential part of the way they contribute to our great game.

According to the general principles of the code, participants are encouraged and expected to:

- » show positive acts of sportsmanship,
- » demonstrate the greatest levels of respect
- » lead by positive example
- » celebrate the “good news” stories
- » accept that the integrity of the sport is of paramount importance.

To view or download a copy of the code please click below:

[Policies and Guidelines - Play Rugby League](#)



## 5.4 Tough Love in League Policy – Curbing Violence in our Game

The Tough Love in League Policy (**TLIL** and the **Policy**) applies to all age groups from Under 13s to Open Age Community Rugby League competitions (**Community Rugby League Competitions**). A zero-tolerance approach to abuse and violence is implemented and does operate across all NSWRL Community Rugby League Competitions.

TLIL penalties may apply instead of, or in addition to any penalties otherwise applicable or imposed under the NSWRL Judiciary or Code of Conduct Schedule.

### DEFINITIONS

**CoC** –NRL Code of Conduct.

**Field of Play** – the area which is demarcated, line marked or otherwise identified as an area on which a game of rugby league subject to this Policy is being played.

**Match Official** – Those undertaking the role of Referee, Ground Manager, Touch Judge or other role as defined under the NSWRL Policies and Procedures, NRL On Field Policy and Local By Laws and who are fulfilling that role at the time of the offence during a game of rugby league which is being played and to which this Policy applies.

**Match Official Report** – any report submitted by a Match Official which is used to notify the relevant League or NSWRL of an offence and/or potential offence which occurs during a game of rugby league which is being played and to which this Policy applies.

**Offender** – any individual charged with any offence under Code of Conduct and/or the NSWRL Offences Index or other NSWRL or League policy to which this Policy applies.

**Off Field** – any area outside the Field of Play or Playing Area.

**Playing Area** – the area which is demarcated, line marked or otherwise identified as the area immediately surrounding the Field of Play and where Team Officials, Match Officials and Players are located immediately before, during and immediately after a game of rugby league which is subject to this Policy. This includes the team bench area and any area occupied by Team Officials who are not On-Field.

**Player** – an individual who is actively participating in a game of rugby league subject to this Policy (regardless of whether the Player is On-Field or Off-Field at the time of the offence).

**Spectator** – Any observer of a game of rugby league, which is being played at the time of any offence, to which this Policy applies.

**Team Official** – Trainers, Coaches, Team Managers or other like persons as defined under the Laws of the Game, NSWRL Policies and Procedures, NRL On Field Policy and Local By Laws who is at the time of the offence, fulfilling a role in relation to a game of rugby league which is being played and to which this Policy applies.



### **On Field Striking / Punching**

1. Any Player who throws a punch or “strikes” another during a match will be automatically sent from the Field of Play. If that Player is subsequently found guilty through a Judicial process, (in the absence of mitigating circumstances), the MINIMUM penalty will be a one- week suspension.
  - 1.1. The Player(s) deemed to be the Aggressor in throwing a punch / punches will have their Judiciary charge graded as Medium/Grade 2 (at minimum).
  - 1.2. Any Player found guilty of breaching rule 1.1 for the second time in a season will incur an automatic MINIMUM 12-month suspension from the game.

### **Referee / Match Official Abuse**

2. Any Player / Team Official / Spectator found guilty of touching a referee or official in an aggressive or inappropriate manner will be disqualified from the game for a minimum period of 12 months. Further, the team in which the person concerned is playing for, supporting or assisting will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.
3. Any Player who is dismissed from the Field of Play and is subsequently charged under 15.1F (offensive language directed towards a Match Official) with a grading of serious/Grade 4 (referred directly to the Judiciary) and is found guilty of the charge and grading, will incur a minimum penalty of a 12-match suspension. Further, the team in which they represented will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.
4. Any Team Official / Spectator who is charged with a High-Grade Code of Conduct Breach, and subsequently found guilty of abusing a referee will be disqualified from the game for a minimum period of a 12 months. Further, the team in which the person concerned is supporting or assisting will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.
5. Should any Player be found guilty of, or accept an early guilty plea for a charge of 15.1.f Offensive Language Directed towards a Match Official, the following competition point penalty will be applied to the Player’s team:
  - 5.1. Low grade charge – team will lose 1 Competition Point
  - 5.2. Medium grade charge – team will lose 2 Competition Points
  - 5.3. High and / or Serious grade charge – team will lose 3 Competition Points

### **Team/Game Official or Replacement Players**

6. Players who enter the Field of Play illegally will automatically be sent from the Field of Play.
  - 6.1. If a player enters the Field of Play and the breach is considered incidental, the Player should be dismissed from the Field of Play. This Player should be charged with 15.1.i (Behaves in a way contrary to the true spirit of the game) with a minimum LOW grading.
  - 6.2. If a player enters the Field of Play the player should be dismissed from the Field of Play. This Player should be charged with 15.1.h (Re-enters the Field of Play). Rule 6.5 will also apply.



- 6.3. If a Team/Game Official enters the Field of Play and the breach is considered incidental, the Team/Game Official should be dismissed from duties within the Field of Play. This Team/Game Official should be charged under the code of conduct with B or E in the summary of offences with a LOW Grading.
- 6.4. If a Team/Game Official enters the Field of Play the Team/Game Official should be dismissed from the Field of Play. This Team/Game Official should be charged under the code of conduct with B or E in the summary of offences with a HIGH Grading.
- 6.5. The offending Player's or Team/Game Official's team will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) for each person that breaches Rule 6. For example, if three Players are found guilty of entering the Field of Play illegally, their team will be penalised nine competition points where a win is awarded 3 competition points.

### **Players or Team Official Leaving the Playing Area**

The following penalties will apply for any Player or Team Official that leaves the Playing Area to become involved in any altercation or melee. Penalties will be imposed on both the Player(s), Team Official(s) and team(s) concerned:

7. Any participant (being a Player or Team Official) who leaves either the Playing Area or the team bench to become involved in any altercation or melee that is occurring outside the Playing Area (behind the fence or rope where Spectators are located) will automatically be sent from the Field of Play.
  - 7.1. Players or Officials found guilty of any breach of Rule 7 will be suspended for a minimum of six weeks; and
  - 7.2. The offending Player or Team Official's team will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) for each Player that breaches Rule 7. For example, if three Players are found guilty of entering the Field of Play illegally, their team will be penalised nine competition points where a win is awarded 3 competition points.

### **Abandoned Games**

8. In the event of a match being abandoned due to foul play the match will be deemed as completed. The team that is determined by the Match Officials to have instigated the foul play will be deemed to have forfeited the match. In the event that the Match Officials determine that both teams are equally responsible for the match being abandoned, neither team will be eligible to be awarded any points for participating in the match. The match will not be replayed. Both teams will be required to attend a Code of Conduct Hearing.

### **Finals Series Matches**

9. At the discretion of the relevant League, any breach of rules 6, 8, 11-14, occurring in finals series matches, will result in the offending team or teams being disqualified from the relevant competition. Teams disqualified following misconduct in finals series matches will not be eligible for any premiership honours for that season.

### **Suspended Players**

10. Participants are responsible for ensuring they do not take to the Field of Play whilst they are serving any rugby league-related suspension. Should a suspended Player take to the Field of Play whilst they are so suspended, the Player concerned will be issued an automatic and fixed further 12-month suspension which





will be added to the end of the original suspension expiry date. The coach, team manager or other team staff will also be issued a 12-month suspension.

### **Spectator Field Intrusion**

11. Any Spectator who enters the Playing Area or Field of Play with intent, or without the permission of the Ground Manager, will automatically be banned from attending Community Rugby League matches for a minimum period of 12 months.
12. Should a Spectator contravene any such penalty, the League reserves the right to suspend any children / siblings of the parent or family involved from playing in NSWRL-related competitions. A bond / fine may be attributed to the Spectator to allow them to resume attending matches after the expiry of the suspension imposed.
13. Failure to Identify - Should a Club refuse, fail or neglect to identify any person(s) who has breached Rule 5, the League reserves the right to suspend the team the Spectator was supporting, until such time as the person is identified.
14. Teams and Clubs are liable for the behaviour of their Spectators. If any breach of Rule 5 has been identified, the team concerned will be penalised the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points), and the match concerned will be deemed as a forfeit to the opposition team.

### **Spectator Unsportsmanlike Comments (to participants / Match Officials / volunteers or other Spectators)**

15. The following process will be followed when a Spectator is identified as directing negative or demeaning comments towards any Player, Match Official or other Spectator.
  - 15.1. Should any Spectator be identified making unsportsmanlike comments during a match, the Referee has the authority to stop the game. The Referee will direct the Ground Manager to ask the coaches of the respective teams to speak to the supporters and ask them to refrain from making any further comments that may be deemed unsportsmanlike. The Referee will then resume the game.
  - 15.2. If there is a second instance of unsportsmanlike behaviour from the same identified Spectator, the Referee will then have the authority to abandon the match at their discretion.
  - 15.3. The Spectator deemed responsible will be issued a Code of Conduct Breach Notice. Should they be found guilty, the opposing team shall be awarded a win on forfeit the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) will be deducted from the offending team.
  - 15.4. The offending team will be placed on a \$1,000 bond for the remainder of the competition season.
  - 15.5. Should there be a second offence related to any team, they will be disqualified from the competition.
  - 15.6. Any Spectator who is charged with a High-Grade Code of Conduct Breach and is subsequently found guilty will be disqualified from attending any games for a minimum period of 12 months. Further, the team with which the person concerned is supporting will have the number of competition points that constitutes a win (2 or 3 competition points) deducted from their competition points score.



### **Suspended Persons**

16. Community Rugby League Clubs are responsible for ensuring any suspended person who is associated with their club, does not act in any capacity which is contrary to the terms of such a suspension. Terms of suspensions are issued with all Judiciary and Conduct Notices of Outcome.
17. Should a suspended person be found to be acting in breach of or contrary to the terms of their suspension, the Club concerned will be deemed liable. The Club will be fined \$1,000.00. Further, if the person concerned is associated in any capacity with a particular team within the Club, that team will be ineligible to play in any Finals Series Matches.
18. The NSWRL reserves the right to de-register any children / siblings or relatives of a suspended person, should that person to be found to be acting contrary to the terms of such suspension.

### **Open Age Competitions**

19. Leagues must apply to NSWRL if they do not wish the Tough Love and League Policy and associated penalties to apply in their Open Age Competitions.



Type of Offence	Suggested offence	Minimum Penalty	Team / Club Penalty
On Field Striking / Punching	15.1.a	1 Week	
Referee / Match Official Abuse	15.1.i or 15.1.f or CoC C	12 Months	Deduct the number of competition points that constitutes a win (Per Participant)
Participants entering the Field of Play	15.1.i or 15.1.h or CoC B or E	Player 2 Weeks	Deduct the number of competition points that constitutes a win (Per Participant)
		Team Official 12 Months	
Participants leaving the Playing Area to get involved in an altercation or melee	CoC E or CoC F	Player 6 Weeks	Deduct the number of competition points that constitutes a win (Per Participant)
		Team Official 12 Months	
People Participating whilst Suspended		12 Months	The coach, team manager and other team staff will also be issued a 12-month suspension
Spectator Field Intrusion	CoC B	12 Months	Deduct the number of competition points that constitutes a win (Per Player/ official)
Failure to Identify			The Team is suspended until the person/s are identified
Spectator Unsportsmanlike Comments (to participants / Match Officials or other Spectators)	CoC C or CoC E		The opposing team shall be awarded a win on forfeit and deduct the number of competition points that constitutes a win. The offending team will be placed on a \$1000 bond for the remainder of the season.
Abandoned Games		In the event of a match being abandoned due to foul play the match will be deemed as completed. The team that instigated the foul play will be deemed to have forfeited the match. If both teams are equally responsible for the match being abandoned, neither team will be eligible to be awarded any points for participating in the match. The match will not be replayed. Both teams will be required to attend a Code of Conduct Hearing.	
Finals Series Matches		At the discretion of the League, Any breach of the noted offences occurring in finals series matches will result in the offending team or teams being disqualified from the Competition.	

*SECTION 6*

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**



## **6.1 Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures**

### **1. Code of Conduct Discipline Procedure**

- 1.1 All players, coaches, trainers, managers, match officials, parents and spectators are required at all times to observe and respect the NRL Code of Conduct and behave in a decent and professional manner and not engage in any conduct that is considered detrimental to the welfare, image or best interests of the game of Rugby League or the policies of the New South Wales Rugby League.
- 1.2 Any player, official, club or other person who directly or indirectly takes any action, or aids or abets another person/s to take any action, or who encourages any other player, official, club or other person(s) to engage in any activity that is considered by the Board to be against the welfare, interests or policies of the League rules will be in breach of the NRL Code of Conduct and the New South Wales Rugby League rules.

### **2. Notification to Attend Hearing**

- 2.1 Any player, club official or other person that is required to attend a hearing of the Code of Conduct Tribunal (the Tribunal) will be advised by way of an email sent to their club Secretary. It will then be the responsibility of that club Secretary to inform the person concerned of the Tribunal hearing date and time. Failure of the club to advise the person concerned to attend is not a defence against non-attendance.
- 2.2 Persons appearing before the Tribunal must familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures set out in this manual.

### **3. Refusal to Attend Hearing / Giving False Information**

- 3.1 Any player, official, supporter, parent, volunteer or other person associated with the League or any affiliated club, who has been requested to attend a Code of Conduct Tribunal Hearing and either refuses to attend or fails without reasonable cause to attend and give evidence after having been requested to do so shall be in breach of the New South Wales Rugby League Rules.
- 3.2 Any person who attends any enquiry and gives evidence or information to the Code of Conduct Tribunal which is, in the opinion of the Tribunal or the League Administrator/Secretary, false or misleading shall be in breach of the New South Wales Rugby League Rules.

### **4. Non-Attendance at Hearings**

- 4.1 Any player, official, supporter, parent, volunteer or other person associated with the League or any affiliated Club, who has been requested to attend a Tribunal hearing and is unable to be present at the time appointed for the hearing must submit a declaration setting out the reason for non-attendance and include either:
  - a) The person's consent to stand down from representing their Club in a playing and / or official capacity until such time they are able to appear before the Tribunal; or
  - b) The person's consent to the Tribunal investigating the report in their absence and the person's undertaking to abide by the finding of, and any penalty imposed by the Tribunal in



their absence. Any written material sent to the person or Club, or received from the person or Club which addresses the incident in question shall be tabled and the Hearing duly conducted.

- 4.2 A reported person who is not present at the time appointed for the hearing and who fails to submit a declaration as required by rule 6.1 shall be in contempt of the Tribunal, which shall then be empowered to investigate the report in the absence of the reported person and to deal as it deems fit with the contempt and the report if found proved.
- 4.3 A referee or reporting person who fails to appear at a hearing without notice or reasonable excuse may be in contempt of the Tribunal, but the report shall not for that reason only be dismissed.

## 5. Onus of Proof

- 5.1 In every hearing, the Tribunal bears the onus of proof on the balance of probabilities on whether a reportable offence or other charge has been sustained.

## 6. Public Comments

- 6.1 A player, coach, trainer, team manager or official of the League or Community Rugby League club shall not comment publicly on any matter which is, or is likely to be, the subject of an official inquiry by the League or a committee of the League.
- 6.2 A player, coach, trainer, team manager or official of the League or Community Rugby League Club shall not make any unfair, unreasonable or excessive public criticism of, or comment on a decision of the Tribunal or any Tribunal member or any matter touching or concerning the Tribunal, or a determination made by it.
- 6.3 The League Board or Competition Committee shall determine in their absolute discretion whether any public criticism or comments is unfair, unreasonable or excessive.
- 6.4 Where a person contravenes this rule, the person and their Club may be liable to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

## 7. Published Comments

- 7.1 A player, coach, trainer, team manager or official of the League or Community Rugby League club shall not publish, or cause to be published, any comments or material that is considered by the League Administrator / Secretary to be detrimental to the policy, or prejudicial to the interests, welfare, or image of the League or the game of Rugby League.

## 8. Police to be Advised

- 8.1 Any person who has been assaulted or seriously threatened is encouraged to report the matter to police within 24 hours of any incident and should support any investigation that follows.

## 9. Rough and Foul Play

- 9.1 The referee or any official of the League shall report any instances of rough or foul play, or any instances of misconduct occurring prior to, during or after a match.



## 10. Breach of Rules

- 10.1 It will be a direct breach of these rules for any person, team or club to:
- a) Engage in any dishonest, corrupt, fraudulent, improper, unprofessional or dishonourable behaviour
  - b) Offer money or any other advantage to any official to neglect his/her responsibilities and/or duties
  - c) Obstruct, intimidate, hinder or in any way interfere, prevent or try to prevent any official in respect to his/her duties
  - d) Fail to obey, carry out, respect and conform to any reasonable direction, order or requirements made by any official in the normal exercise of that person's duties
- 10.2 If any person, team or club objects or wants to complain about any direction, request, order or requirements made to them, they should immediately direct their concerns to the League Administrator / Secretary.

## 11. Behaviour at Hearings

- 11.1 It will be a breach of these rules for anyone appearing before any League Committee or the League Administrator / Secretary, to ridicule, insult, belittle or otherwise make any unreasonable or unnecessary critical comments about the Committee or the proceedings that are underway or completed.
- 11.2 The definition of the words ridicule, insult, belittle or critical will be given their ordinary meaning.

## 12. Identification of Offenders

- 12.1 It will be a breach of these rules for any coach, trainer, team manager or other club official(s) to refuse to identify or fail to advise the name of any player or team official to the Ground Manager, referee, touch judge or any other authorised person.



## 6.2 Code of Conduct Procedure



### Conduct Review – Code of Procedure

#### NRL National Code of Conduct

All competition matches, and Rugby League activities sanctioned and/or run under NSW Community Rugby League are subject to the conditions as laid out in the official National Rugby League (NRL) “National Code of Conduct” See Section 5.3 of this manual.

**Important** – every person who attends a Rugby League match does so with the permission and license of the home club and/or League. Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in penalties up to and including a fine, loss of team match points and/or suspension of the perpetrator and/or child. **Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/careers, coaches, officials and spectators.**

#### 1. Objectives

- 1.1 Provide fair and just procedures, conducted expeditiously and in compliance with natural justice to hear and determine charges and for imposing penalties.
- 1.2 Proceedings are in good faith and on applicable merits in each case and promote uniformity and consistency of approach in sentencing.
- 1.3 Provide a safe system of procedures for the protection of all persons appearing at hearings.
- 1.4 Recognise and enforce disqualifications, suspensions, and penalties imposed on persons in all competitions and activities.

#### 2. Amendments to Policy Statements

- 2.1 The provisions of this code may be amended by the NSWRL from time to time and policy statements regarding operations and provisions of this code issued in such manner as the NSWRL sees fit.
- 2.2 Without limiting the scope of clause 2.1 above, the NSWRL may implement amendments to this Code from time to time in order to facilitate the operation of this Code in relation to rugby league competitions, matches and related activities conducted in regional and rural areas of NSW and the ACT. These measures may include, without limitation, the defining of the roles and functions of the Regional Area Managers, to be performed in respect of the implementation and operation of this Code.

#### 3. Chairperson and Conduct Review Committee

- 3.1 As soon as practicable after the Annual Competition Review meeting each year, the Committee of the competition and/or board of the League will appoint a Conduct Review Committee and appoint one of the members as Chairperson.





#### 4. Functions of Conduct Review

- 4.1 The functions of the Conduct Review Committee are to hear and determine such charges for an offence and such investigations as are referred to it for decision and in the discharge of its functions shall at all times act independently, impartially, fairly and openly, except where to do so would be unfair to the person appearing.

#### 5. Conduct Review By-Laws

- 5.1 Conduct Review By-Laws that are appended to this Code is a guide only for the Conduct Review Committee with the Chairperson when necessary, having the discretion to interpret such guidelines as he/she thinks fit.

#### 6. Administration

- 6.1 The Incident Review Coordinator (to be appointed by the League Board and/or Competition Committee) will be responsible for the administration of the Conduct Review Code of Procedure and the following duties:
- 6.1.1 Review all acts of misconduct and other incidents and breaches of the NRL National Code of Conduct.
  - 6.1.2 Investigate, examine and consider any conduct by a player, official or other person(s) that may constitute an offence.
  - 6.1.3 Recommend and/or take action where considered appropriate.
  - 6.1.4 Report exceptions, concerns and matters in interest to the Competition Committee and/or League Board.
  - 6.1.5 Generally, proceed in accordance with the requirements of this rule.
  - 6.1.6 Grading of any charges.

#### 7. Guidelines for the Incident Review Coordinator

- 7.1 The Incident Review Coordinator will review all incidents of misconduct involving and surrounding players, officials and other persons and where necessary shall ascribe adjudication (which could include penalty issued via an Adjudicated Breach Notice) for each one having regard to the following:
- a) Whether there is substantial and reliable evidence to justify a charge.
  - b) The extent to which the person is to blame for the incident is considered.
  - c) The seriousness or conversely the triviality of the persons conduct.
  - d) Whether any other person was injured in the incident.
  - e) Whether the offending person was provoked.
  - f) The previous conduct of the offending person.



- g) Any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

### General Offences

- 7.2 For the purpose of this Code, an offence is constituted by any instance of misconduct and such other conduct as may, from time to time, be deemed by the Incident Review Coordinator or Conduct Review Committee to constitute an offence.

### Consequences

- 7.3 A person will be deemed to have been charged with an offence immediately when such person is informed (verbally, in writing or electronically) by the Secretary of that person's club (or the club that person has some connection with) or by the local League Administrator with the Incident Review Coordinator having absolute discretion in determining the definition of the words 'some connection'.

### Grading of Charges

- 7.4 The Incident Review Coordinator will determine the grading of charges as either 'Low', 'Medium' or 'High' taking into account rules 6.1 – 7.1 inclusive.

### Notification of Charge

- 7.5 Following receipt by the club of the person's charge by email from the Local League Administrator, it will be the responsibility of the club Secretary (or designated person) to contact the person concerned and communicate details of the charge, the hearing arrangements and other relevant information to the person.

### Details of Charge

- 7.6 In the notification of charge (Notice of Charge Appendix 2) email sent from the Local League Administrator to the person's club Secretary, brief details of the charge against the person and the date and venue the incident occurred will be provided including hearing arrangements. Full details of the complaint will be provided to the person at the hearing, together with ample opportunity to ask questions and to cross-examine witnesses, should that be necessary.

### Response to Charge and Breach Notice

- 7.7 Following notification of the charge or the issuing of an Adjudicated Breach Notice, the person charged may respond by:
  - 7.7.1 Taking an **early guilty plea** which overcomes the need to appear before the Conduct Review Committee.
  - 7.7.2 Pleading guilty to the offence but dispute the grading, (or in the case of an Adjudicated Breach Notice the penalty issued).
  - 7.7.3 Pleading not guilty and have the matter go before the Conduct Review Committee.



If the person elects to plead not guilty, the person, the complainant and witnesses will be required at the hearing and the matter will go into evidence.

Persons pleading guilty to an offence but disputing the grading will be required to appear before the Conduct Review Panel to explain their actions, advise of any extenuating circumstances that existed and discuss the disputed grading and or penalty. The complainant and witnesses will not be required to attend the hearing.

### **Reasonable Time to Respond**

- 7.8 In regard to Medium or Low-Grade charges at least five (5) days' notice of the proposed hearing will be given to enable the person charged to consider all options, and if necessary, prepare for a hearing and to enable the Competition League to deal with the matter as soon as possible. For High or Serious Graded charges an extended minimum period of notice may apply. A person under investigation or charged maybe subject to provisional action as set out in Section 7.15.

### **No Contest**

- 7.9 When a person elects not to contest the offence charged, the making of that election does not constitute an admission on their part that the alleged offender is guilty, or otherwise responsible for, the conduct charged but, rather it is an indication that alleged offender has chosen for one reason or another not to contest the charge. The Conduct Review committee may adjudicate on the matter in the absence of that person as set out in Section 6.1 of the Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures.

### **Merit Opportunity (Deduction) of Penalty**

- 7.10 Should a person charged elect to plead guilty and that person advises such intention to the Incident Review Coordinator within timeframe, the following deduction of penalty will be considered:
- 7.10.1 The penalty maybe reduced by the Conduct Review Committee by one match.
  - 7.10.2 A further reduction of one match may be applied if the person has no prior convictions during the past two (2) years.
  - 7.10.3 The discounts applicable for early guilty plea and clean record have been factored into the schedule of offences.

### **Persons Failing to Respond or Attend Conduct Review Hearing**

- 7.11 Should a person fail to respond by the time limit prescribed, the charge will be automatically set down for hearing before the Conduct Review Committee. The committee will be so informed and any merit opportunity (i.e. deduction of penalty) no longer available.
- Should a person be charged with an offence fail to appear, the committee may proceed to hear and determine the charge and the penalty in the absence of the person as set out in Section 6.1 of the Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures.



The committee reserves the right to suspend the registration of a player whose parent or legal guardian commits an offence and fails to appear.

### **Proceedings Not to Be Invalidated**

- 7.12 Proceedings shall not be invalidated or subject to appeal, merely due to any defect whether of substance or form in any notice or because of non-compliance by the Competition / League with any provision of this Code, unless the Chairperson so directs.

### **Documentation**

- 7.13 The following documentation (electronic and/or hard copy) will be recognised and retained by the Incident Review Coordinator and League Administrator:

- Form 1 Letter(s) of complaint or Incident Report(s) to League.
- Form 2 Notice of Charge from Competitions/League Administrator to club.
- Form 3 Response from club or person to League.
- Form 4 Conduct Review hearing (record of evidence at the hearing).
- Form 5 Conduct Review report (results of matters circulated to clubs).

### **Primary and Alternate Charges**

- 7.14 In all matters, the Incident Review Coordinator has an option to issue both a primary and alternate charge with regards to any Incident Report received.

### **Provisional Action**

- 7.15 Provisional Action is designed to keep members safe by removing or monitoring a person from Community Rugby League who may pose a potential risk of ongoing harm to others. Provisional Action can be taken at any time during the incident review process at the discretion of NSWRL.

## **8. Code of Conduct Review By-Laws**

Conduct Review hearings are held weekly commencing at 6.00pm (on a day determined by the Local League). A quorum for a hearing is three (3).

All Conduct Incident reports must be received by the League/Competitions Administrator by no later than 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the incident. The Conduct Review Coordinator reserves the right to seek further evidence, reports and statements following on from an initial incident report or notification with no restrictions on time frames.

Disciplinary proceedings before the Conduct Review Committee are not bound by the rules of evidence usually applicable to proceedings in the court of law.

- 8.1 The Conduct Review Committee adjudicates on disciplinary matters such as breaches of the NRL National Code of Conduct, other than judiciary matters. When a player, coach, trainer, manager or other official is in breach of the NRL National Code of Conduct, the person concerned may be required to appear before the Conduct Review Committee.



- 8.2 If a referee is a complainant, the referee will advise the Incident Review Coordinator of his/her local district or regional Referees' Association of the incident. The Secretary will, in-turn, advise the League Administrator. If the complainant is a club official or other person, it should be sent through the complainant's club Secretary.
- 8.3 Clubs should appoint at least one responsible person to be their representative at Code of Conduct Review hearings. On some occasions, a player's coach may also attend and if the player is under 16 years of age, the player's parent or guardian may attend, however, only one person may represent the person appearing during the hearing proceedings.
- 8.4 There is no objection to a solicitor or other legal representative attending the hearing with the defendant, however, that person is there at the discretion of the Chairperson and is unable to cross-examine or question witnesses and is in attendance in an advisory capacity only.
- 8.5 A party may attend in person, or if that is impractical, the party may attend via an electronic platform (Teams / Zoom / Webex etc).
- 8.6 In the event that the Code of Conduct Review Committee cannot convene on normal hearing nights, the person appearing may be allowed to continue with an active League involvement pending appearing on another date, unless the Incident Review Coordinator or Conduct Review Committee Chairperson decides otherwise. The Chairperson may, from time to time, adjourn a hearing in such a manner and upon such terms as the Chairperson deems fit.
- 8.7 A person must have a reasonable excuse for asking for an adjournment of a hearing, in which case, the committee may use its own discretion. If an adjournment is agreed to, the person concerned may not continue with an active League involvement until the matter is heard, unless the Incident Review Coordinator or Conduct Review Committee Chairperson decide otherwise.
- 8.8 The Code of Conduct Review Committee may cite any player or person for misconduct or other breaches they become aware of during the taking of evidence at hearings.
- 8.9 Conviction records are checked prior to each hearing and adjusted after the hearing has concluded. A list of all persons who appeared together with the adjudication results is communicated to all clubs following the hearing.
- 8.10 It is League policy not to call children of tender years (Under 12) to hearings unless it is absolutely necessary. The Chairperson has discretion in deciding if a child of tender years should be called to a hearing, and in lieu of such attendance, may admit documented evidence if it is available and direct the committee to evaluate such evidence at the appropriate time.
- 8.11 It is League policy not to admit video, DVD, laptop (or similar) electronic evidence into a hearing or investigation unless it has a direct bearing on the matter being investigated. The Chairperson has discretion in deciding if such evidence should be admitted, and in lieu, may admit documented or verbal acknowledgement of the content of such evidence and direct the committee to evaluate such evidence at the appropriate time.



- 8.12 It is policy not to support an excessive number of witnesses attending hearings on behalf of the defendant or the complainant. The Chairperson has the discretion to restrict the number of witnesses to a reasonable number and to acknowledge the evidence such witnesses may provide and to direct the committee to evaluate such evidence at the appropriate times.
- 8.13 Witnesses who are identified in the letter of complaint or other documents may be called to give evidence at a hearing. It is a breach of the rules for a witness after being summoned to refuse or not attend a hearing.
- 8.14 The Chairperson, when necessary, has the discretion to interpret the Code of Conduct Review Guidelines and By-Laws as he/she thinks fit.

## 9. Code of Conduct Review – Hearings Procedure

- 9.1 The club representative and person appearing are called into the hearing room where the Chairperson explains the purpose of the hearing.
- 9.2 The person appearing is made aware of details of the complaint and is asked for a plea by the Chairperson.
- 9.3 If the person appearing pleads 'Guilty', the complainant and witness(s) may not be called. The person appearing will have an opportunity to offer an explanation and any other constructive and character information of his/her choice.
- 9.4 If the person appearing pleads 'Not Guilty', a full hearing of the complaint will take place with evidence taken from all witness(s), the complainant and the defendant.
- 9.5 Witnesses shall remain outside the hearing room until called upon by the Chairperson to give evidence
- 9.6 Following the taking of evidence in a not guilty matter, the committee will first decide on the guilt or otherwise of the defendant and then decide the penalty.
- 9.7 Prior to the committee retiring to consider guilt or otherwise and penalty, the defendant will have an opportunity to advise of character information and other evidence on his/her behalf.
- 9.8 The Chairperson will not allow anyone to interrupt (or talk over), belittle, insult or ridicule another and will insist on everyone receiving natural justice and being treated in a decent and fair manner. Anyone in breach of this clause may be called before the Code of Conduct Review Committee on a complaint of misconduct.
- 9.9 Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Code of Conduct Review Committee may appeal therefrom to the Appeals Committee, by forwarding a Notice of Intention to Lodge a Leave to Appeal Application to the Judiciary Administrator by 5.00pm on the next business day following receipt of the Notice of Outcome, on one or more of the following grounds:



- a) **With respect to the issue of guilt:** that there was an error of law or that the decision was unreasonable or insupportable having regard to the evidence presented to the Code of Conduct Review Committee in the hearing.
- b) **With respect to the issue of penalty:** that the penalty imposed by the Judiciary was manifestly excessive.

In relation to all such appeals:

- c) A person who wishes to appeal from a decision of the Code of Conduct Review Committee must first obtain leave to do so from the Appeals Committee Chairperson.
- d) The Appeals Committee Chairperson shall not grant leave for the person to appeal unless he/she forms the view in their absolute discretion that the person has good prospects of success on the hearing of that appeal.
- e) Unless otherwise ordered by the Appeals Committee Chairperson, neither an application for leave to appeal nor an appeal by a person to the Appeals Committee shall operate as a stay of the decision of the Code of Conduct Review Committee which is the subject of the appeal or the application for leave to appeal.
- f) Proceedings shall not be invalidated or subject to appeal, merely by reason of any defect whether of substance or of form in any notice or by reason of non-compliance by the Competition/League with any provision of this Code, unless the Chairperson so directs.
- g) The Appeal Fee is \$500.00 and should be attached to the completed NSWRL Community Football Appeal Application Form when it is lodged. The fee can be paid in cheque, by cash or direct debit and is only refundable at the discretion of the Appeals Committee if the appeal is upheld.

9.10 Where the reported person has in a request in writing consented to the Tribunal's investigating a report in their absence, the following additional rules shall apply where applicable:

- a) The presiding Chairperson shall pronounce a plea on behalf of the reported person as the request in writing directs.
- b) The request in writing shall be read to the Committee.
- c) The committee will retire to consider guilt or otherwise and the penalty to be imposed.

## 10. Code of Conduct Review – Penalties

- 10.1 Where the penalty is, or includes, a period of suspension, the period of suspension may be expressed as either a number of competition matches, or alternatively a period of time during which the person is suspended from participating.



## CODE OF CONDUCT TIME FRAME GUIDELINES

### (Appendix 1)

#### NSWRL Community Rugby League Code of Conduct – Timeline and Process

##### Time Deadlines

##### Actions

**Note:** Any person who is charged with a 'HIGH' graded Code of Conduct offence shall be subject to Provisional Action and will be suspended from all Rugby League activities until they appear before the Conduct Review Panel. For charges graded other than 'HIGH', the Incident Review Coordinator shall determine the eligibility of a participant to take part in matches whilst a Code of Conduct case outcome is pending.

1	<b>At the completion of the match</b>	Ground Manager takes note of the incident. Ground Manager completes "Online Code of Conduct Incident Report Form"
2	<b>Code of Conduct Report Deadline 4.00pm Tuesday</b>	Code of Conduct Report forms should be completed for reporting and submitted by <b>4.00pm Tuesday</b> following the match.  Should the League require further incident reports, Club & Competition Coordinators will follow up with relevant parties in consultation with League Administrators.
3	<b>Incident Review Tuesday / Wednesday</b>	Incident review co-ordinators will review reports and conduct further investigation if necessary.
4	<b>Notice of Charge 5.00pm Wednesday</b>	Charges and gradings will be allocated to offences. Warning letters, breach notices, medium and high grade Notice of Charges will be issued directly to the Club Secretary with District Administrators and Club & Competition Coordinators copied in. <b>NOTE:</b> For matters that require further investigation time frames may vary.
5	<b>Response to Notice of Charge 1.00pm Friday</b>	Clubs respond to issued Notice of Charges via email If Notice of Plea is not received by deadline, guilty plea will be enforced. The early plea discount will be forfeited.
6	<b>Contesting a Grading 1.00pm Friday</b>	For breaches where the alleged offender(s) are contesting the grading of a particular charge, the hearing will take place on a day determined by the Local League following the issuing of charges. The NSWRL must be informed of a challenge to any grading by 1.00pm on the Friday following the issuing of the Notice of Charge. For all HIGH charges, hearings will also be held on a day determined by the Local League following the charge being issued.
7	<b>Hearing From 6.30pm Wednesday</b>	A plea of guilty or not guilty will be required. If a plea is not received, an automatic plea of guilty will be entered. Hearings are held at venues and dates determined by Local Leagues.
8	<b>Notice of Outcome 4.00pm Friday</b>	Following any hearing, a Notice of Outcome will be issued to the Secretary of the Club concerned with the League Administrator and Club & Competition Coordinator copied in.





## PENALTY SCHEDULE (Appendix 3)

### Code of Conduct Penalty Schedule

#### Penalty applicable for early plea and clean record in brackets

Offence	Low	Medium	High
A) Uses offensive or obscene language to any participant	Adjudicated Breach Notice	8 matches (6 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
B) Enter the Field of Play or the Playing Area during the course of a match without the prior approval of the Ground Manager appointed by the home club and/or League	Adjudicated Breach Notice	8 matches (6 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
C) Excessively disputes the decision of a referee or touch judge either during or after the match	Adjudicated Breach Notice	6 matches (4 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
D) Assault or act with aggression to any person/s	Adjudicated Breach Notice	12 matches (10 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
E) Behaves in a way contrary to the Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game	Adjudicated Breach Notice	6 matches (4 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
F) Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of a match, function or event by any other person/s, or brings discredit to the home club and/or league	Adjudicated Breach Notice	6 matches (4 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
G) Act in such a way as to exhibit racial intolerance by language or other conduct, to any person/s	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
H) Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Ground Manager, official of the team/club which that person is supporting, or official of the home club and/or League	Adjudicated Breach Notice	6 matches (4 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee
I) No person/s may make comment or take actions that bring discredit to any person, Club or League through any social media outlet	Adjudicated Breach Notice	6 matches (4 matches)	Referred Directly to Conduct Review Committee

**Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials and club supporters.**

Breaches of the Rugby League Code of Conduct may result in penalties, including but not limited to:

- Suspension of a match and/or
- Termination of a match (including potential forfeiture of competition points) and/or
- Monetary fines and/or
- Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis and/or
- Suspension of a Club, League or Association on a temporary or permanent basis.



### 6.3 Publication on MySideline

Once an authorised plea has been received or a hearing has been held, any outcome(s) will be recorded on the members MySideline tribunal record.

The following details will be recorded:

- » Team/Competition of Participant
- » Grade
- » Charge/Offence (list all charges)
- » Charge Date
- » Charge Grading
- » Reporter
- » Outcome
- » Penalty (Units)
- » Penalty (Type)
- » Penalty Start Date
- » Penalty Expiry Date
- » Suspended Penalty (Units) – if applicable
- » Suspended Penalty (Type) – if applicable
- » Suspended Penalty Expiry Date – if applicable

This information will be recorded to ensure that the judicial history of a player transferring to a different District or Region is known in the event of a repeat charge / offence, and also to ensure that suspensions are upheld in Districts or Regions other than where the suspension was issued.

*SECTION 7*

# **JUDICIARY**



## 7.1 Judiciary Code of Procedure



### NSWRL COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE JUDICIARY Judiciary Code of Procedure

#### 1. For the League

- 1.1 The Judiciary Code of Procedure shall apply to and govern all procedure and proceedings involving a Player in respect of conduct constituting an offence and a Charge.
- 1.2 For the avoidance of any doubt, the provisions of this Judiciary Code of Procedure shall be in full force and effect for each Match played in the League and any Community Rugby League Competition.
- 1.3 The provisions of this Judiciary Code of Procedure may be adapted or amended from time to time for the purpose of efficiency and practicality, in the best interests of rugby league and its participants. Without limiting the scope of this clause, this Judiciary Code of Procedure may be modified from time to time in order to facilitate the operation of this Judiciary Code of Procedure in relation to rugby league competitions, matches and related activities conducted in all areas of NSW and the ACT.

#### 2. Judiciary Counsel

- 2.1 The Judiciary Administrator shall appoint a person to act as Judiciary Counsel (where available).
- 2.2 The Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall be a person who is a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, however being so qualified shall not be a mandatory requirement in relation to rugby league played in rural and regional areas of NSW and the ACT (on the basis that a person so qualified may not be easily identified and engaged). The governing body in question must apply to the NSWRL for an exemption, should that governing body propose engaging a Judiciary Counsel (where available) who is not a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.
- 2.3 The role of the Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall be to, where a Charge proceeds to a hearing before Judiciary:
  - 2.3.1 Appear at that hearing and present evidence relied upon in support of the Charge;
  - 2.3.2 Test the Player's case; and
  - 2.3.3 Address and make submissions to the Judiciary.



- 2.4 The Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall at all times in the discharge of his/her functions and responsibilities:
  - 2.4.1 Act independently, impartially and fairly; and
  - 2.4.2 Be aware of and proceed with due respect for the necessity to preserve the independence of the Judiciary.
- 2.5 Proceedings cannot be deemed null and void at the failure of the League to provide a Judicial Counsel.

### 3. The Match Review Committee

- 3.1 The Judiciary Administrator shall appoint at least one (1) and not more than three (3) persons to serve as Match Reviewers on the Match Review Committee. The Judiciary Administrator shall appoint one (1) of the Match Reviewers as the Match Review Committee Chairperson, and if only a single person is appointed, then that person shall be the Match Review Committee Chairperson. A Match Reviewer shall:
  - 3.1.1 Be a former Rugby League player or referee;
  - 3.1.2 Not be a current Player or referee; and
  - 3.1.3 Not be a coach or a member of the coaching staff of any club.
- 3.2 The Match Review Committee shall, as directed by the Match Review Committee Chairperson, review video footage and other evidence derived from, or in connection with, Matches for the purposes of examining and considering any conduct by any Player in any Match which may constitute an offence.
- 3.3 Further to Rule 3.2, the Match Review Committee shall review and consider Match Officials Incident Reports and requests received from clubs in accordance with Rule 6.2.

### 4. The Judiciary Chairperson and Panel

- 4.1 The Judiciary shall be constituted by the Judiciary Chairperson and two (2) Judiciary Panel Members empanelled from the Judiciary Panel Pool in accordance with Rule 7.12.
- 4.2 The Judiciary Administrator shall appoint the Judiciary Chairperson. The Judiciary Chairperson shall be a person who is a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, however being so qualified shall not be a mandatory requirement in relation to rugby league played in rural and regional areas of NSW and the ACT (on the basis that a person so qualified may not be easily identified and engaged). The governing body in question must apply to the NSWRL for an exemption, should that governing body propose engaging a Judiciary Chairperson who is not a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.
- 4.3 The Judiciary Administrator shall appoint the members of the Judiciary Panel Pool. The Judiciary Administrator may appoint more than two (2) persons as members of the Judiciary Panel Pool, and



if this is the case, the composition of the Judiciary Panel to hear any particular case brought before the Judiciary shall be selected by the Judiciary Administrator from the Judiciary Panel Pool in accordance with Rule 7.12.

- 4.4 A Judiciary Panel Member shall be a former Rugby League player or referee.
- 4.5 The Judiciary Administrator of the Judiciary is permitted to be the administrator of the League/Competition Manager or delegate, whose role will be to perform all procedural and administrative tasks so as to ensure the fair, impartial and efficient conduct of the business of the Judiciary.

## 5. Offences

- 5.1 For the purposes of this Judiciary Code of Procedure, an offence is constituted by any instance of conduct, acts or omissions of the nature set forth and described in Appendix 2 to this Judiciary Code of Procedure.

## 6. Match Review

- 6.1 Where, during a Match, any conduct of a Player which may constitute an offence is observed or otherwise comes to the attention of a Match Official who officiated in that Match, and where that conduct, in the opinion of that Match Official, warrants consideration by the Match Review Committee, then:
  - 6.1.1 In the case of a Match Official other than the Referee, that Match Official shall, immediately after the conclusion of the Match, complete a Match Official's Incident Report specifying all particulars required in that Report, and then provide that Report to the Referee; and / or
  - 6.1.2 In the case of the Referee, he / she shall complete a Match Official's Incident Report specifying all particulars required in that Report and then shall forward that Report, together with any other Referee Dismissal Reports, to the Referees Association immediately. The Referees Association should then forward onto the Judiciary Administrator by no later than 10:00am the following business day after the match, ensuring the League Administrator is included on all correspondence. This is to allow the Match Review Committee adequate time to review the reports.
  - 6.1.3 In the case of a Match Official or Referee, they may complete the Match Officials Incident Report specifying all particulars of the incident through the online form distributed via your local league administrator.
- 6.2 Further to Rule 6.1, where, in the opinion of a club which played in a Match, conduct of a Player during that Match warrants consideration by the Match Review Committee, the club may forward a written request for review to the Match Review Committee specifying all relevant particulars of the subject conduct to enable the Match Review Committee to identify that conduct.
- 6.3 Any such written request for review must be received by the Match Review Committee before 10.00am on the first business day after the Match and must be signed by the President or Secretary of the club making the request.



- 6.4 At 11.00am on the first business day after every match, the Match Review Committee shall meet to review the video footage of the match as well as any other evidence and any Match Official's Incident Reports and/or requests for review made in accordance with Rule 6.2.
- 6.5 It is the role of the Match Review Committee to review all reasonably available evidence irrespective of whether or not any Match Official's Incident Report(s) and/or requests for review made in accordance with Rule 6.2 is submitted to the Match Review Committee.
- 6.6 After considering all of the evidence referred to Rule 6.5, the Match Review Committee may authorise, by at least a majority vote of the Match Review Committee members, the Match Review Committee to issue a Charge against a Player for an offence.
- 6.7 In the event that the Match Review Committee is so authorised, he/she shall cause a Notice of Charge to be issued to the Player and copied to the Judiciary Administrator by 12.00pm on the second business day after the Match.
- 6.8 The Notice of Charge shall include a notice from the Match Review Committee as authorised by the Match Review Committee as to the penalty which he will recommend that the Judiciary impose should the Player be found guilty of the Charge particularised in the Notice of Charge.
- 6.9 A Player issued with a Notice of Charge must by 9.00am on the third business day after the match provide to the Judiciary Administrator a Notice of Plea.
- 6.10 The Notice of Plea shall specify whether the Player:
  - 6.10.1 Pleads guilty to the Charge specified in the Notice of Charge and accepts the imposition of the recommended penalty specified in the Notice of Charge by the Match Review Committee; or
  - 6.10.2 Pleads No Contest to the Charge; or
  - 6.10.3 Pleads guilty to the Charge, however, challenges the imposition of the penalty proposed by the Match Review Committee in the Notice of Charge; or
  - 6.10.4 Pleads not guilty to the Charge specified in the Notice of Charge.
- 6.11 In the event that the Player:
  - 6.11.1 Enters a plea in accordance with Rule 6.10.1: The Judiciary Administrator shall ask the Judiciary Chairperson to make orders consistent with those specified by the Match Review Committee in accordance with Rule 6.6.
  - 6.11.2 Enters a plea in accordance with Rule 6.10.2: The Judiciary Administrator shall issue a Notice of Outcome.
  - 6.11.3 Enters a plea in accordance with Rule 6.10.3: The Judiciary Administrator shall issue a Notice of Hearing in accordance with Rule 7, such hearing to be conducted in accordance with Rule 16.7.



- 6.11.4 Enters a plea in accordance with Rule 6.10.4: The Judiciary Administrator shall issue a Notice of Hearing in accordance with Rule 7, such hearing to be conducted in accordance with Rule 6.
- 6.12 In the event that a Player issued with a Notice of Charge fails to enter a Notice of Plea in strict compliance with Rule 6.9 then immediately after the expiry of the deadline stipulated in 6.9 that Player will be deemed to have entered a Notice of Plea in accordance with Rule 6.10.1 but is not eligible for the early plea discount.
- 6.13 In all matters, the Match Review Committee have an option to issue both a primary and alternate charge with regards to any Match Officials Incident report received.

## 7. Hearings

- 7.1 Where the Judiciary Administrator receives a Notice of Plea pursuant to Rules 6.11.3 or 6.11.4, the Judiciary Administrator shall promptly:
  - 7.1.1 Notify the Judiciary Chairperson;
  - 7.1.2 Empanel the Judiciary Panel by selecting two (2) Judiciary Panel Members from the Judiciary Panel Pool;
  - 7.1.3 Issue a Notice of Hearing to the Player and the Judiciary Administrator;
  - 7.1.4 Notify the Judiciary Counsel (where available) by providing him/her with a copy of the Notice of Hearing;
  - 7.1.5 Take whatever other steps which are necessary to convene the Judiciary.
- 7.2 Where a Notice of Charge is set down for hearing, the Match Review Committee shall ensure that the Judiciary Counsel (where available) is forthwith provided with:
  - 7.2.1 Copies of all Match Official's Incident Reports and Notices relating to the hearing;
  - 7.2.2 Copies of all evidence required to support the case, including copies of all video footage of the incident which was available for review by the Match Review Committee and all statements given by witnesses;
  - 7.2.3 The Player's career disciplinary history and/or on-field convictions (to the extent available);
  - 7.2.4 Any expert reports obtained by or on behalf of the Match Review Committee in support of the Judiciary Counsel's (where available) case; and
  - 7.2.5 Any evidence that is to be supplied by the player to support their case is provided to the Hearing Administrator no later than 10am the day of the hearing.
- 7.3 The Match Review Committee shall ensure that the Player is supplied with copies of all evidence which the Judiciary Counsel (where available) may rely on at the hearing before the Judiciary.





## 8. Preliminary Matters

The challenge to Jurisdiction and/or Composition of the Judiciary.

- 8.1 Where the Player intends at a Judiciary hearing to challenge:
  - 8.1.1 The jurisdiction of the Judiciary to deal with the Player and/or the Charge;
  - 8.1.2 The composition of the Judiciary empanelled to deal with the Player and/or the Charge; or
  - 8.1.3 Any other matter which might reasonably take the Judiciary by surprise; then the Player or his/her representative shall complete a Notice of Challenge and forward it to the Judiciary Administrator no later than 2.00pm on the day of the hearing. On receipt of a Notice of Challenge, the Judiciary Administrator shall forthwith forward a copy of it to the Judiciary Counsel (where available).
- 8.2 A hearing before the Judiciary shall commence from 6.00pm on the Thursday after the Match to which the hearing relates. However, on the application of either of the parties, the Judiciary Chairperson may, in their discretion, make further or other orders in respect of the date and time for a Judiciary hearing. Without limitation and for the avoidance of doubt:
  - 8.2.1 Such orders may be made by the Judiciary Chairperson in circumstances where a Player or their Team would or might be disadvantaged if a Judiciary hearing was scheduled at the date and time presumed in this Rule 8.2.
  - 8.2.2 Any Judiciary hearing in respect of a Player's conduct in a Match must be held and concluded before the next Match that the Player is eligible to play in but for any penalty which may be imposed by the Judiciary. The Player is ineligible to play any form of Rugby League until the case is heard.
- 8.3 Judiciary hearings shall occur at a venue to be advised by the Judiciary Administrator.

## 9. Representation

- 9.1 Subject to the leave of the Judiciary Chairperson having first been obtained, a Player appearing before the Judiciary may be represented by a barrister, solicitor, agent or other representative on such terms, if any, as the Judiciary Chairperson, in their absolute discretion thinks fit.

## 10. Attendance at Hearings

- 10.1 A Player served with a Notice of Charge and a Notice of Hearing shall attend the Judiciary hearing at the time and place specified in the Notice of Hearing.
- 10.2 If a Player is unable to attend the Judiciary hearing in person, he/she must inform the Judiciary Administrator of this fact no later than 9.00am on the day of the hearing date specified in the Notice of Hearing. If the Player so advises the Judiciary Administrator of his/her inability to attend the hearing in person, the evidence may be taken by alternate means such as video conference including Microsoft Teams or other online meeting platform.



- 10.3 If a Player issued with a Notice of Charge and a Notice of Hearing fails to attend the Judiciary hearing at the time specified in the Notice of Hearing, the Judiciary may proceed to hear and determine the Charge and penalty in the absence of the Player.
- 10.4 Where the player has in the written request consented to the Judiciary Administrator for the hearing to proceed in their absence, the following additional rules shall apply where applicable:
- I. The presiding Chairperson shall pronounce a plea on behalf of the player as the request in writing directs.
  - II. The request in writing shall be read to the Judiciary Panel.
  - III. The Judiciary Panel will retire to consider guilt or otherwise and the penalty imposed.
- 10.5 Subject to Rule 15.4, any witness which a party intends to call in evidence before the Judiciary shall wait outside the hearing room until such time as that person is called to give evidence.
- 10.6 Judiciary hearings shall be closed to members of the public.

## **11. Decision Final**

- 11.1 All decisions of the Judiciary shall be final, binding and conclusive subject to any leave to appeal granted by the Appeals Committee Chairperson in accordance with Rule 17.

## **12. Onus of Proof**

- 12.1 In every case, the Judiciary Counsel (where available) bears the onus of proof on the balance of probabilities.

## **13. Role of the Judiciary Chairperson**

- 13.1 In every case, it shall be the Judiciary Chairperson's task to decide every question of law, evidence and/or procedure.
- 13.2 The Judiciary Chairperson shall in their absolute discretion give such instructions or directions as he/she thinks fit to the Judiciary Panel as to matters of law, evidence and/or procedure.
- 13.3 The Judiciary Chairperson may give whatever direction(s) and make all such orders as he/she in their absolute discretion deem fit for the conduct, expedition and resolution of matters heard by the Judiciary.

## **14. Role of Judiciary Panel Members and Judiciary Chairperson Constituting the Judiciary**

- 14.1 In every case, it is the task of the Judiciary, comprising the Judiciary Panel and the Judiciary Chairperson, to decide every question of fact.

## **15. Evidence**

- 15.1 Proceedings before the Judiciary are not bound by the rules of evidence usually applicable to proceedings before the court of law.



- 15.2 The Judiciary Chairperson shall be entitled to disallow the appearance of any witness or the tender of any evidence on the grounds of irrelevance.
- 15.3 Evidence of a Player's disciplinary history (if any) of convictions for misconduct shall not be admissible as evidence on the issue of guilt.
- 15.4 Subject to any ruling by the Judiciary Chairperson, a party may present the evidence of a witness by that witness giving evidence:
  - 15.4.1 In person at the hearing; or
  - 15.4.2 Via videoconference (Facetime, Skype, Teams, Zoom etc.).
- 15.5 Any documents or things admitted into evidence shall be consecutively marked as exhibits, which exhibits on conclusion of the hearing shall be placed in the custody of the Judiciary Administrator.

## 16. Procedure at Hearing

### The Judiciary Counsel's Case

- 16.1 Subject to any orders made by the Judiciary Chairperson as to the conduct of any hearing, and after the Judiciary Chairperson outlines briefly to the parties the procedure of the hearing, the Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall present his/her case to the Judiciary in the following sequence:
  - 16.1.1 Playing any video footage considered by the Match Review Committee; then
  - 16.1.2 Tendering any Match Official's Incident Reports considered by the Match Review Committee and any expert reports; then
  - 16.1.3 Calling each witness whereupon that witness:
    - i Shall be examined in chief by the Judiciary Counsel (where available);
    - ii May be cross-examined by the Player or their representative;
    - iii May be questioned by the Judiciary Chairperson and, with leave granted by the Judiciary Chairperson, by any Judiciary Panel Member;
    - iv May, with leave granted by the Judiciary Chairperson, be re-examined by the Judiciary Counsel (where available).
  - 16.1.4 Thereafter the Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall close their case.

### The Player's Case

- 16.2 After the close of the Judiciary Counsel's (where available) case, the Judiciary Chairperson shall call upon the Player or their representative to advise whether they wish to give or call evidence in defence. If he/she does wish to present evidence, that evidence shall be given in the following sequence by:
  - 16.2.1 Tendering any expert reports and other documentary evidence; then



- 16.2.2 Calling each witness whereupon that witness:
- i Shall be examined in chief by the Player or their representative;
  - ii May be cross-examined by the Judiciary Counsel (where available);
  - iii May be questioned by the Judiciary Chairperson and, with leave granted by the Judiciary Chairperson, by any Judiciary Panel Member; and
  - iv May, with leave granted by the Judiciary Chairperson, be re-examined by the Player or their representative.
- 16.2.3 Thereafter, the Player or their representative shall close the Player's case.

### **Closing Addresses**

- 16.3 At the conclusion of the Player's case:
- 16.3.1 The Judiciary Counsel (where available) may make a closing address to the Judiciary Panel; followed by
  - 16.3.2 A closing address made by the Player or their representative.
  - 16.3.3 Further to Rule 16.3.1, in the event of a Judiciary hearing in respect of a Notice of Plea entered pursuant to Rule 6.10.3 (that is, a plea of guilty which challenges the recommended penalty) the closing address and submissions made by the Judiciary Counsel (where available) shall include submissions as to the objective seriousness of the conduct of the Player referred to in the Notice of Charge and any other matter relevant to the issue of penalty.

### **Directions to the Judiciary Panel**

- 16.4 At the conclusion of the closing addresses, the Judiciary Chairperson shall address the Judiciary Panel and give whatever directions he deems necessary as to:
- 16.4.1 The onus and standard of proof;
  - 16.4.2 The elements of the charge;
  - 16.4.3 The substantive law;
  - 16.4.4 The evidence presented to the Judiciary; and
  - 16.4.5 Such other matters which, in his/her opinion, should properly be brought to the attention of the Judiciary Panel.

### **Deliberations and Verdict**

- 16.5 After the Judiciary Chairperson has given directions to the Judiciary Panel, the Judiciary shall deliberate and decide on their verdict. At this point in time, the player and representation will be asked to leave and will no longer be required. In respect of the deliberations and the decision of the Judiciary Panel as to guilt:



- 16.5.1 The verdict of the Judiciary must be at least a verdict of the majority of the Judiciary Chairperson and the Judiciary Panel Members.
- 16.5.2 At the conclusion of the deliberation, once the judiciary has reached a verdict, the Judiciary Chairperson shall act as spokesperson directed to the Judiciary Administrator and state what verdict was reached, providing specifics to the Judiciary Administrator. The players district or region and/or club and/or representation will be advised through a "Notice of Outcome" via email (Appendix 8) by 12pm the following business day as to the verdict if any, and the suspension details. This is the responsibility of the Judiciary Administrator.
- 16.5.3 Unless ordered otherwise by the Judiciary Chairperson, the Judiciary shall not give reasons for their decision.
- 16.5.4 If the Judiciary finds the Player not guilty of the Charge, the proceedings are thereby concluded. This will be notified via email.

### Penalty

- 16.6 If the Judiciary finds the Player guilty of the Charge or if the Player enters a Notice of Plea pursuant to Rule 6.11.3, it is the function of the Judiciary to determine the penalty to be imposed. A penalty may be imposed in the form of:

- 16.6.1 A suspension from:
  - i A specified number of Matches or weeks; and/or
  - ii Such other penalty as to the Judiciary Panel appears just in the circumstances.

For the avoidance of doubt, in respect of any penalty in the form of a suspension, that suspension must be expressed by the Judiciary in terms of a specified number of Matches and/or weeks.

Note: Byes do **NOT** count towards matches served for suspensions. Matches forfeited by the opposition will count towards suspensions. If the team the player is registered to forfeits a match, the match does not count towards suspension.

- 16.7 The procedure to be followed by the Judiciary to determine the penalty to be imposed on the Player shall generally be in accordance with the procedure set out at Rules 16.1 to 16.4 (both inclusive) with such modifications and/or adaptations as the Judiciary Chairperson thinks fit in the circumstances.
- 16.8 Further to Rule 16.7 and for the avoidance of any doubt, the Judiciary shall decide on penalty at the hearing and not at any later date. The Judiciary Chairperson shall afford the Player an opportunity to address the Judiciary Panel on the question of penalty at a later date.
- 16.9 Any penalty ordered by the Judiciary which comprises in whole or in part a suspension from playing Matches shall be specified in terms of how many Matches and/or matches that Player is suspended from playing in and/or weeks. The Player is therefore suspended from all Rugby League activities until such time as the suspension is served unless specified differently.



- 16.10 A match shall mean a competition match of the same competition in which the player committed the offence. A player cannot count towards their suspension matches in more than one competition in each round, even if they would have participated in more than one competition during the weekend or timeframe set in the draw for the round to be played.
- 16.11 Where a period of suspension is expressed as a period of time, the period shall commence from the time the penalty is imposed and conclude at midnight on the last day of the period, unless specified differently.
- 16.12 Subject to any direction by the Judiciary, where the Judiciary imposes a suspended sentence, the period of the sentence that is suspended is subject to good behaviour by the player. If the player is found guilty by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Tribunal of any subsequent offence committed during the period of the suspended sentence, the suspended sentence will be added to any sentence imposed by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Tribunal for the subsequent offence.

## 17. Leave to Appeal

- 17.1 A Player, aggrieved by a decision of the Judiciary may appeal therefrom to the Appeals Committee, by forwarding a Notice of Intention to Lodge a Leave to Appeal Application to the Judiciary Administrator by 5.00pm on the next business day following receipt of the Notice of Outcome, on one or more of the following grounds:
- 17.1.1 With respect to the issue of guilt:
- i That there was an error of law; or
  - ii That the decision was unreasonable or insupportable having regard to the evidence presented to the Judiciary in the hearing; or
- 17.1.2 With respect to the issue of penalty: that the penalty imposed by the Judiciary was manifestly excessive.
- A League aggrieved by a decision of the Judiciary may also appeal therefrom to the Appeals Committee as per 17.1.1 and 17.1.2.
- 17.2 A Player who wishes to appeal from a decision of the Judiciary must first obtain leave to do so from the Appeals Committee Chairperson.
- 17.3 The Appeals Committee Chairperson shall not grant leave for the Player to appeal unless he/she forms the view in their absolute discretion that the Player has good prospects of success on the hearing of that appeal.
- 17.4 The Judiciary Counsel (where available) has a right to be heard by the Appeals Committee Chairperson on any application for leave to appeal made by a Player pursuant to Rule 17 before the Appeals Committee Chairperson grants a Player leave to appeal.
- 17.5 Unless otherwise ordered by the Appeals Committee Chairperson, neither an application for leave to appeal nor an appeal by a Player to the Appeals Committee shall operate as a stay of the decision of the Judiciary which is the subject of the appeal or the application for leave to appeal.



- 17.6 Proceedings shall not be invalidated or subject to appeal, merely by reason of any defect whether of substance or of form in any notice or by reason of non-compliance by the Competition/League with any provision of this Code, unless the Chairperson so directs.
- 17.7 The Appeal Fee is \$500.00 and should be attached to the completed NSWRL Community Football Appeal Application Form when it is lodged with the Appeals and Dispute Committee. The fee can be paid in cheque, by cash or Direct Debit and is only refundable if the appeal is upheld.
- 17.8 Proceedings shall not be invalidated or subject to appeal, merely due to any defect whether of substance or form in any notice or because of non-compliance by the Competition / League with any provision of this Code, unless the Chairperson so directs.

## DEFINITIONS

The following terms shall be ascribed the corresponding meanings:

**Appeals Committee** means any body constituted pursuant to the Appeals Committee Code of Procedure or otherwise vested with requisite jurisdiction to receive, consider and determine appeals from decisions of the Judiciary.

**Charge** means the offence particularised in the Notice of Charge.

**Judiciary** means the NSWRL Community Judiciary constituted in accordance with Rule 4, comprising the Judiciary Chairperson and the Judiciary Panel.

**Judiciary Chairperson** means the person appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 4.

**Judiciary Code of Procedure** means this document including all schedules and annexures.

**Judiciary Counsel** means the person appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 2.

**Judiciary Panel** means the panel of two (2) Judiciary Panel Members empanelled for a Judiciary hearing pursuant to Rule 7.1.2.

**Judiciary Panel Pool** means the persons appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 4.

**Judiciary Panel Member** means a person in the Judiciary Panel Pool appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 4 empanelled on a Judiciary Panel in accordance with Rule 7.1.2.

**Leagues** refers to the district, region, combined competition and/or regular competition and includes where necessary a reference to all matches, tournaments and premierships conducted by or under the auspices of the League and/or competition.

**Match** means a game of Rugby League played in any competition, tournament or premiership conducted by or under the auspices of the League and/or competition.

**Match Official's Incident Report** means a report completed by a Match Official in accordance with Rule 6.

**Match Review Committee** means the body established pursuant to Rule 3.

**Match Review Committee Chairperson** means the Match Reviewer appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 3.



**Match Reviewer** means the persons appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 3.

**Notice of Challenge** means a notice in the form set out in Appendix 3 specifying all relevant particulars of a challenge **by a Player to the jurisdiction and/or composition of the Judiciary submitted in accordance with Rule 8.**

**Notice of Charge** means a notice in the form set out in Appendix 4 specifying all relevant particulars of a Charge which is determined pursuant to Rule 6 by the Match Review Committee and issued by the Judiciary Administrator to a charged Player.

**Notice of Hearing** means a notice in the form set out in Appendix 5 specifying all relevant particulars of a Judiciary hearing which is issued pursuant to Rule 7 by the Judiciary Administrator to a charged Player, the Judiciary Counsel and any other person required by this Judiciary Code of Procedure to receive such notice.

**Notice of Plea** means a notice in the form set out in Appendix 6 specifying in accordance with Rule 6 how a Player shall plead in response to a Charge particularised in a Notice of Charge.

**Guidelines Appendix 7** means the timelines and guidelines imposed on the required appendixes for both Judiciary Administrator and charged players.

**Notice of Outcome Appendix 8** a letter provided to the district or region detailing the outcome of the hearing and or plea.

**Offence** means an act or omission in a Match which is sufficient to give rise to the Match Review Committee issuing a **Notice of Charge against the Player. A schedule of offences is set out at Appendix 2.**

**Judiciary Administrator** means the person appointed to that role pursuant to Rule 4.5.

**Probability** In every case, the Judiciary Counsel bears the onus of proof on the balance of probabilities. The Judiciary is not bound by the Rules of Evidence usually applicable to proceedings in courts of law. Although direct evidence of a fact in issue is to be preferred, the Judiciary may inform itself of the facts in any other way in which the Chairman considers both reliable and appropriate.





## COMMUNITY RUGBY LEAGUE EXPLANATION OF HEADINGS (Appendix 1)

**Player** – the registered name of the player cited or dismissed (i.e. the name that would appear on the club's team sheet)

**Club** – the name of the club the player was playing for when dismissed or cited.

**Grade** – the grade competition the player dismissed or cited.

**Charge** – the charges reflect the subsections of Section 15 of the International Laws of the Game.

**Grading** – the four levels of grading (see below for an explanation of points) reflect the severity of actions within each charge. A Low-level grading is the lightest and in general, would apply to actions that were 'careless' in nature with little or very minor impact on the player or official. A high-level grading would, in general, apply to actions that were deliberate or intentional and either caused or had the potential to cause substantial injury to another person. The two main exceptions to this are 'kicking' and 'dropping knees'. Both these categories are, by definition, deliberate acts and therefore are seen to attract higher penalties. Serious is any matter deemed necessary for the judiciary panel.

**Base Penalty** – the scheduled penalty for the charge issued, taken from the Penalty Schedule.

**Prior Proven Offences** – If a player has been convicted of an offence in the two (2) year period immediately preceding the incident, the player is liable to an increase equivalent to one match in addition to the base penalty.

**Clean Record** – A player is entitled to a Clean Record discount if they have not been convicted of a Judiciary or Code of Conduct Offence in the previous two years from the date the current offence occurred. Under such circumstances, the player is entitled to a reduction equivalent to one match from the base penalty.

**Suspended Penalty** - In cases where a suspended penalty is issued, the minimum probationary period to enact the penalty is 12 months. For example, if a player receives a four (4) match penalty with two (2) matches suspended for an offence on Sept 1 2024, the suspended penalty is applicable and added to the penalty for any proven Rugby League misconduct matter until midnight on Sept 2 2025.

**Possible Penalty** – the penalty a player will face taking into account their playing record (discounts and penalty loadings).

**Early Plea** – A Player who after receiving the charge details pleads guilty or no contest to an offence and accepts the grading determined by the League will waive his rights to a judiciary hearing and subsequent appeals.

**Guilty Plea** – the total penalty awarded, should a player be found guilty of the Charge and Grading by the Judiciary Panel. This total will take into consideration all discounts and loadings that apply to the player at the time of the incident.

**No Contest Plea** - When a person elects not to contest the offence charged, the making of that election does not constitute an admission on their part that the player is guilty, or otherwise responsible for, the conduct charged but, rather it is an indication that the player has chosen for one reason or another not to contest the charge. The final penalty will be determined taking into consideration all discounts and loadings that apply to the player at the time of the incident.

**Not Guilty Plea** – If a player may prefer to have the charge heard by the Judiciary Panel by either entering a Not Guilty Plea, and that player is found to be guilty of the charge and grading by the Judiciary Panel, the player is liable to an increase equivalent to a minimum of one match in addition to the base penalty.

**Guilty Plea requesting downgrade** - A player may prefer to have a charge heard by the Judiciary Panel by either entering a Not Guilty plea or Guilty Plea to the Charge but at a lessor grading. If, at the subsequent hearing, a player is found guilty to the original charge and grading, they will not be entitled to any reduction other than 'Clean Record' additionally the player is liable to an increase equivalent to one match. If, however, the player pleads guilty but disputes the grading of the charge and the Judicial Panel reduces the grading, the player will also receive the benefit of an early guilty plea discount.



## JUDICIARY OFFENCES SCHEDULE (Appendix 2)

Type of Offence	Law of Game	Grade	1 <sup>st</sup> Offence (early plea in bracket)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offence (early plea in bracket)	3 <sup>rd</sup> & Subsequent Offence (early plea in bracket)
Trips, kicks, strikes another player	15.1.a	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
Careless High Tackle	15.1.b	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 matches (5)	8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)
Intentional High Tackle	15.1.b	1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			12 matches (11)	14 matches (13)	16 matches (15)
Drops Knees first onto an opponent on the ground	15.1.c	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
Dangerous throw when effecting tackle and / or spear tackle	15.1.d	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)	14 matches (13)
Deliberately and continuously breaks the rules of the game	15.1.e	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 matches (5)	8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)
Offensive Language in General	15.1.f	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
Offensive Language directed towards a match official	15.1.f	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			12 matches (11)	14 matches (13)	16 matches (15)
		1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)



Disputes the decision of the referee or touch judge	15.1.g	4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 matches (5)	8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)
Re-enters the field of play	15.1.h	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game  <i>Including but not limited to:</i> - Indecent gestures to the crowd - Breach of Safe Play Code - Attempted trip, kick or strike	15.1.i	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
Assault or threatening behaviour towards a Match Official	15.1.i	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel.			
Dangerous Contact	15.1.i	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
Spitting	15.1.i	1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
Racial or Homophobic Insults	15.1.i	1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
Biting	15.1.i	1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
		1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)



<b>Eye / Face Gouging</b>	15.1.i	4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
<b>Coming from a distance to become involved in a fight</b>	15.1.i	1	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		2	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)
		3	6 matches (5)	7 matches (6)	8 matches (7)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 - 10 Matches	8 - 12 matches	10 – 14 matches
<b>Deliberately obstructs an opponent who is not in possession</b>	15.1.j	1	1 match (Warning)	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)
		2	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		3	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			6 matches (5)	8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)
<b>Uses a shoulder charge on an opponent</b>	15.1.k	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
<b>Applies any unnecessary pressure or twists including grapples, crushers or performs a 'chicken wing' style hold on a player in possession</b>	15.1.l	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)
<b>Forcefully spears at the legs of a player in possession, exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury</b>	15.1.m	1	2 matches (1)	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)
		2	3 matches (2)	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)
		3	4 matches (3)	5 matches (4)	6 matches (5)
		4 (Minimum Penalty Guide)	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel	Referred directly to Judiciary Panel
			8 matches (7)	10 matches (9)	12 matches (11)



	Time Deadlines	Actions
1	<b>At the completion of the Match</b>	Team sheets to be signed with send-off noted Referee completes the 'Match Officials Dismissal Sheet' Team official/player is given "yellow" copy and Referee keeps "pink" copy The original "white" copy must be scanned and sent to the relevant League Administrator.  It is important both Referees Association and League / Regional administrator are aware of the charge Note: this is not the official Notice of Charge
2	<b>6.00pm Sunday</b>	Match official to fill in and submit further "Online Match Officials Report" via the prescribed form.
3	<b>9.00am Monday</b>	Both the 'Match Officials Dismissal Sheet' and "Online Match Officials Report" are required be submitted to your relevant League/Competition administrator.
4	<b>11.00am Monday</b>	Match Review Committee reviews reports to determine actual charge and grading based on the evidence provided.
5	<b>12:00pm Tuesday</b>	Confirmed charges and grading returned to NSWRL by Match Review NSWRL Community Judiciary administrator issues the official 'Notice of Charge' to the player's Club Secretary  League Administrator will be copied in on email to clubs
6	<b>9:00am Wednesday</b>	'Notice of Plea' returned by club to the Judiciary Administrator:  Email: (as provided on Notice of Plea)
7	<b>10:00am Wednesday</b>	The Referees Association and tribunal members are notified as to whether Match Officials are required to attend a hearing (no notification indicates that officials are not required).
	<b>12:00pm Wednesday</b>	If the 'Notice of Plea' hasn't been returned to the relevant NSWRL representation the plea of "guilty" will be entered.
8	<b>From 6:00pm Thursday</b>	Tribunal convenes to adjudicate on cases brought before it (either "not guilty" OR "dispute grading" pleas)  Grade 1,2,3 Offences are heard online (via Microsoft Teams or Zoom). NSWRL administrator to provide link prior to hearing.  Grade 4 Offences are heard at a central venue – NSWRL Centre of Excellence (for NSWRL Metropolitan, Western Sydney & Macarthur only)  12 Dawn Fraser Avenue, Sydney Olympic Park
9	<b>Before 5:00pm Friday</b>	The Judiciary administrator issues the club with a "Notice of Outcome" All verdicts (including not guilty) are recorded onto national data base (MySideline)  League Administrator will be copied in on email to clubs for their records



## 7.2 Publication on MySideline

Once an authorised plea has been received or a hearing has been held, any outcome(s) will be recorded on the members MySideline tribunal record.

The following details should be recorded:

- » Team / Competition of Participant
- » Grade
- » Charge / Offence (list all charges)
- » Charge Date
- » Charge Grading
- » Reporter
- » Outcome
- » Penalty (Units)
- » Penalty (Type)
- » Carry Over Points
- » Penalty Start Date
- » Penalty Expiry Date
- » Suspended Penalty (Units) – if applicable
- » Suspended Penalty (Type) – if applicable
- » Suspended Penalty Expiry Date – if applicable

This information should be recorded to ensure that the judicial history of a player transferring to a different District or Region is known in the event of a repeat charge/offence, and also to ensure that suspensions are upheld in Districts or Regions other than where the suspension was issued.

SECTION 8

# **APPEALS CODE OF PROCEDURE**

(CODE OF CONDUCT AND JUDICIARY)



## 8.1 Appeals Committee Code of Procedure



### APPEALS COMMITTEE CODE OF PROCEDURE (Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee and Code of Conduct)

#### 1.1 Definitions

The following terms shall be ascribed the corresponding meanings:

**Appeal** means an appeal by a person against a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.

**Appeal Folder** is defined in Rule 1.13(c)(4).

**Appeals Committee** means the body constituted in accordance with Rule 1.6.

**Appellant** means the person, who Appeals a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee, referred to in Rule 1.7(a).

**Appellant's Material** means:

- (a) All documentary or other evidence (including a written outline of the oral evidence to be adduced from any witness) on which the Appellant intends to rely at the hearing of an Appeal; and
- (b) A written outline of the contentions and arguments that the Appellant proposes to advance at the hearing of an Appeal.

**Code of Procedure** means this document including all schedules, annexures and appendices.

**Committee Member** means a person appointed to the role pursuant to **Rule 1.6(c)**.

**Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee** is ascribed the same meaning as set out in the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure.

**Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure** means the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure adopted by the League.

**Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Counsel** is ascribed the same meaning as set out in the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure.





**League** means the New South Wales Community Rugby League Association Committee and includes where necessary a reference to all matches, competitions, tournaments and premierships conducted by or under the auspices of the League.

**Notice of Appeal** means a notice in the form set out in **Appendix 1** specifying all relevant particulars of an Appeal by a Person against a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.

**Notice of Appeal Hearing** means a notice in the form set out in **Appendix 4** specifying all relevant particulars of an Appeal hearing before the Appeals Committee which is issued pursuant to **Rule 1.13(c)(3)**.

**Notice of Challenge** means a notice in the form set out in **Appendix 3** specifying all relevant particulars of a challenge by an Appellant to the jurisdiction and / or composition of the Appeals Committee submitted in accordance with **Rule 1.12**.

**Notice of Withdrawal of Appeal** means a notice in the form set out in **Appendix 2** which seeks to withdraw an Appeal in accordance with **Rule 1.10(b)**.

**Party** means the Appellant or a Respondent.

**Chairperson** means the person appointed to the role pursuant to **Rule 1.6(b)**.

**Respondent** means a person, who is a respondent to an Appeal, referred to in **Rules 1.7(b)**.

**Respondent's Material** means:

- (a) All documentary or other evidence (including a written outline of the oral evidence to be adduced from a witness) on which a Respondent intends to rely at the hearing of an Appeal; and
- (b) A written outline of the contentions and arguments that a Respondent proposes to advance at the hearing of an Appeal.

**Appeals Administrator** means the person appointed to that role pursuant to **Rule 1.5**.

## 1.2 Leave to Appeal

- (a) A person, or party, who is aggrieved by a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee may appeal therefrom to the Appeals and Disputes Committee, by 5.00pm on the next business day following receipt of the Notice of Outcome, on one or more of the following grounds:
  - (1) With respect to the issue of guilt:
    - a. That there was an error of law; or
    - b. That the decision was unreasonable or insupportable having regard to the evidence presented to the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee in the hearing; or



- c. If the person is able to adduce fresh evidence which was not available to the person at the time of the hearing in respect of which the person is seeking leave to appeal the determination of. The evidence must also be sufficiently strong that, in the opinion of the Appeals and Disputes Committee, it may well have affected the outcome of the earlier determination had it been available.
- (2) With respect to the issue of penalty: that the penalty imposed by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee was manifestly excessive.
- (b) A person who wishes to appeal from a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee must first obtain leave to do so from the Chairperson.

For the avoidance of any doubt, a person seeking to appeal a decision of the Judiciary or a decision of the Code of Conduct Committee bears the burden and responsibility of including, in the documents lodged by the person pursuant to Rule 1.2(a), all information, submissions and evidence relied on by the person for the purpose of the person seeking that the Chairperson grant leave for the person to appeal in accordance with Rule 1.2(c), duly recognising that leave to appeal must only be granted in accordance with the requirements of Rule 1.2 and not otherwise or more generally.

- (c) The Chairperson shall not grant leave for the person to appeal unless he/she forms the view, in his/her absolute discretion, that the person has good prospects of success on the hearing of that appeal.
- (d) The Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Counsel (where available) has a right to be heard by the Chairperson on any application for leave to appeal made by a person pursuant to Rule 17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and this Rule 1.2 before the Chairperson grants a person leave to appeal.
- (e) Unless otherwise ordered by the Chairperson, neither an application for leave to appeal nor an appeal by a person to the Appeals and Disputes Committee shall operate as a stay of the decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee which is the subject of the appeal or the application for leave to appeal.
- (f) The Appeal Fee is \$500.00 and should be attached to the completed NSWRL COMMUNITY FOOTBALL Appeal Application Form when it is lodged with the League. The fee can be paid in cheque, by cash or Direct Debit and is only refundable if the appeal is upheld.

### 1.3 Jurisdiction

- (a) Subject to strict compliance with the procedure set out in Rule 17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and Rule 1.2, the Appeals Committee has jurisdiction to hear Appeals against decisions of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.
- (b) The sole function of the Appeals Committee is to hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.



## 1.4 Relationship with other Appeal Provisions

Notwithstanding anything herein this Code of Procedure or elsewhere contained, the Rules contained in this Code of Procedure are not intended to affect in any way a specific provision regarding an appeal that is contained in the By-Laws in respect of matters including anti-doping and misconduct.

## 1.5 The Appeals Administrator

The Appeals Administrator of the Appeals Committee can be the League Administrator or a delegate, whose role it shall be to perform all procedural and administrative tasks so as to ensure the fair, impartial and efficient conduct of the business of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.

## 1.6 Composition of the Appeals Committee

- (a) The Appeals Committee shall be constituted by a Chairperson and two (2) other Committee Members appointed in accordance with this Code of Procedure.
- (b) The Appeals Administrator shall appoint the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall be a person who is a practising solicitor or barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.
- (c) The Appeals Administrator shall appoint two (2) Committee Members. A Committee Member shall be a former Rugby League person who is not an official of a club.
- (d) A person is ineligible to be a member of the Appeals Committee if that person is also a member of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee.

## 1.7 Parties to an Appeal

For the purposes of this Code of Procedure:

- (a) The Appellant to an Appeal shall be the person who is appealing against the decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee pursuant to Rule 17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure.
- (b) The Respondent to an Appeal shall be the League, who shall, in-turn, be entitled to be represented in the Appeal by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Counsel (where available) or another person who meets the requirements set out in Rule 1.14(a).

## 1.8 Time Limit

- (a) A person wishing to appeal against a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee must seek leave to appeal in accordance with Rule 17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and Rule 1.2 by the deadline in Rule 17.1 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure.



- (b) An Appeal shall not be regarded as having been commenced within the time limit set out in Rule 17.1 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and Rule 1.2 unless a properly completed Notice of Appeal is served on the Appeals Administrator before the expiry of that deadline.

### **1.9 Leave to Appeal**

- (a) The Appellant must seek and obtain the leave of the Chairperson in accordance with Rule 1.17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and Rule 1.2 before the Appeals Committee hears an Appeal and before any of the pre-hearing procedures set out pursuant to this Code of Procedure.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, the Appeals Committee has no jurisdiction to hear an Appeal or make any ruling in respect of an Appeal unless leave to appeal has first been granted by the Chairperson in accordance with Rule 17 of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Code of Procedure and Rule 1.2.

### **1.10 Amendment and Withdrawal of Notice of Appeal**

- (a) A Notice of Appeal may not be amended by the Appellant after it is submitted.
- (b) At any time prior to the hearing of an Appeal, the Appellant may withdraw the Notice of Appeal by lodging with the Appeals Administrator a Notice of Withdrawal of Appeal, whereby the Appeal shall be finally concluded.

### **1.11 Pre-Hearing Procedures and Parties' Material**

- (a) In the event that the Chairperson grants a person leave to appeal a decision of the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee, the Chairperson shall forthwith notify the Appeals Administrator that leave has been granted by the Chairperson.
- (b) After receiving notification in accordance with Rule 1.11(a) the Appeals Administrator shall forthwith:
  - (1) Provide a copy of the Notice of Appeal to the Respondent; and
  - (2) Call upon the Appellant to provide, within twenty-four (24) hours, the Appellant's Material.
- (c) Unless the Chairperson grants leave to the Appellant (such leave to be granted on such terms as the Chairperson in his/her absolute discretion thinks fit in the circumstances), the Appellant shall not be permitted to rely, at the hearing of an Appeal, on any:
  - (1) Documentary or other evidence (apart from oral evidence of a witness whose evidence is outlined in writing in the Appellant's Material); or
  - (2) Contention or argument;



that is not contained in the Appellant's Material.

- (d) After receiving the Applicant's Material in accordance with Rule 1.11(b)(2), the Appeals Administrator shall:
  - (1) Provide a copy of the Notice of Appeal and the Appellant's Material to the Respondent; and
  - (2) Call upon the Respondent to provide, within twenty-four (24) hours, the Respondent's Material.
- (e) Unless the Chairperson grants leave to the Respondent (such leave to be granted on such terms as the Chairperson in his/her absolute discretion thinks fit in the circumstances), the Respondent shall not be permitted to rely, at the hearing of an Appeal, on any:
  - (1) Documentary or other evidence (apart from oral evidence of a witness whose evidence is outlined in writing in the Respondent's Material); or
  - (2) Contention or argument;

that is not contained in the Respondent's Material.

### 1.12 Challenge to Jurisdiction

- (a) Where the person intends at a Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee hearing to challenge:
  - (1) The jurisdiction of the Appeals Committee to hear or to deal with the Appeal; and/or
  - (2) The composition of the Appeals Committee; and/or
  - (3) Any other matter which might reasonably take the Appeals Committee by surprise.

The person or his/her representative shall complete a Notice of Challenge and forward it to the Appeals Administrator no later than 5.00pm on the day before the hearing of the Appeal. On receipt of a Notice of Challenge, the Appeals Administrator shall forthwith forward a copy of it to the Respondent.

### 1.13 Setting Down for Hearing

- (a) Unless otherwise ordered by the Chairperson, a hearing of an Appeal shall commence at 6.00pm on the day after the expiry of the deadline in Rule 1.11(d)(2) for the Respondent to submit the Respondent's Material.
- (b) Hearings shall:
  - (1) Occur in Sydney as advised by the Appeals Administrator; and



- (2) Be closed to members of the public.
- (c) On receipt of the Respondent's Material, the Appeals Administrator shall:
  - (1) Notify the Chairperson;
  - (2) Notify the Committee Members;
  - (3) Forward to the Appellant and the Respondent a Notice of Appeal Hearing;
  - (4) Collate, index and paginate the Appeal Folder consisting of the:
    - a. Notice of Appeal;
    - b. Appellant's Material; and
    - c. Respondent(s)'s Material;
  - (5) Provide a copy of the Appeal Folder to the Chairperson, the Committee Members, the Appellant and the Respondent(s); and
  - (6) Take whatever other steps which are necessary to convene the hearing of the Appeal by the Appeals Committee.

#### **1.14 Representation of Parties**

- (a) Subject to the leave of the Chairperson having first been obtained, a party appearing before the Appeals Committee may be represented by a barrister, solicitor, agent or other representative on such terms, if any, as the Chairperson in his/her absolute discretion thinks fit.
- (b) Without limiting Rule 1.14(a) and in accordance with Rule 1.7(b), the League may at the discretion of the Chairperson be represented at the Appeal Hearing by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee Counsel (where available).
- (c) If a party issued with a Notice of Appeal Hearing fails to attend the hearing at the time specified in the Notice of Appeal Hearing, the Appeals Committee may proceed to hear and determine the Appeal in the absence of that party.
- (d) In any case where the Appellant and the Respondent(s) agree in writing, the Appeals Committee may determine the Appeal on the contents of the Appeal Folder and without an oral hearing.

#### **1.15 Hearing is a Review and Adjournments**

- (a) The Appeals Committee shall hear and determine appeals by way of a review.



- (b) A hearing before the Appeals Committee shall not proceed de novo.
- (c) Subject to any order of the Chairperson, an Appeal hearing cannot be adjourned to a later date or time.

### 1.16 Role of Chairperson

- (a) In every case, it shall be the Chairperson's task to decide every question of law, evidence and/or procedure.
- (b) The Chairperson shall, in their absolute discretion, give such instructions or directions as he/she thinks fit to the Appeals Committee as to matters of law, evidence and/or procedure.
- (c) The Chairperson may give whatever directions and make all such orders as he/she in his/her absolute discretion deems fit for the conduct, expedition and resolution of matters heard by the Appeals Committee.

### 1.17 Rules of Evidence and Witnesses

- (a) Hearings before the Appeals Committee are not bound by the rules of evidence usually applicable to proceedings before the court of law, but the rules of natural justice are applied.
- (b) The Chairperson shall be entitled to disallow the appearance of any witness or the tender of any evidence on the grounds of irrelevance.
- (c) Subject to Rules 1.11(c) and 1.11(e) and subject to any order of the Chairperson, a party may present the evidence of a witness by that witness giving evidence:
  - (1) In person at the hearing; or
  - (2) Via video conference (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams).
- (d) Any documents or things admitted into evidence shall be consecutively marked as exhibits, which exhibits at the conclusion of the hearing shall be placed in the custody of the Appeals Administrator for safe keeping.

### 1.18 Hearing Procedure

Subject to any ruling or order to the contrary made by the Chairperson, the procedure of a hearing before the Appeals Committee shall proceed in accordance with the following sequence:

#### a) Notice of Challenge

- 1) If the Appellant has served a Notice of Challenge in accordance with Rule 1.12, the Chairperson shall invite submissions from the Appellant and then the Respondent(s) in respect of the substance of the Notice of Challenge. If either party requires to adduce evidence in support of an argument in respect of a Notice of Challenge, it shall be adduced at the same time.



- 2) The Chairperson alone shall make such orders as is necessary to determine the Notice of Challenge.

**b) The Appellant's Case**

The Appellant's case shall be presented in the following sequence:

- (1) Playing any video footage adduced in evidence before the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee;
- (2) Adducing any oral evidence from any witness relied on, whereupon the witness:
  - a. Shall be examined in chief by the Appellant or his/her representative;
  - b. May be cross-examined by the Respondent or its representative;
  - c. May be questioned by the Chairperson and, with leave granted by the Chairperson, by any Committee Member; and
  - d. May, with leave granted by the Chairperson, be re-examined by the Appellant's representative.
- (3) Thereafter the Appellant shall close his case.

**c) The Respondent's Case**

The Respondent's case shall be presented in the following sequence:

- (1) Adducing any oral evidence from any witness relied on, whereupon the witness:
  - a. Shall be examined in chief by the Respondent's representative;
  - b. May be cross-examined by the Appellant's representative;
  - c. May be questioned by the Chairperson and, with leave granted by the Chairperson, by any Committee Member; and
  - d. May, with leave granted by the Chairperson, be re-examined by the Respondent's representative.
- (2) Thereafter the Respondent(s) shall close its case.

**d) Addresses**

At the conclusion of the Respondent's case, the Appellant may make a closing address to the Appeals Committee, followed by an address by each Respondent.





#### **e) Directions and Deliberations**

At the conclusion of the closing addresses, the Appeals Committee may, but need not, adjourn to consider its decision.

#### **f) Decisions**

- (1) A decision of the Appeals Committee must at least be a decision of the majority of the three (3) members being the Chairperson and the two (2) Committee Members.
- (2) Reasons for a decision of the Appeals Committee may, but need not, be given.
- (3) A decision of the Appeals Committee may be given orally by the Chairperson or in writing by the Appeals Committee.

#### **g) Powers of the Appeals Committee**

On the hearing of an Appeal, the Appeals Committee may:

- (1) If the Appeal is in respect of a decision made by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee as to guilt:
  - a. Uphold that decision;
  - b. Vary that decision; or
  - c. Quash that decision.
- (2) If the Appeal is in respect of a decision made by the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Committee as to penalty:
  - a. Increase the penalty;
  - b. Decrease the penalty;
  - c. Vary the penalty; or
  - d. Affirm the penalty.

#### **h) Decision Binding**

All decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final and conclusive, are binding on and shall be given effect to by the parties to the Appeal.

*SECTION 9*

# **DISTRICT OR REGIONAL BY-LAWS**



## 9.1 Local League Rules / By-Laws

Any Local League that holds their own Competition Rules or By-Laws should adopt those By-Laws and have them approved by their members at a General Meeting.

Once they have been adopted, they must be submitted to NSWRL for approval.

*SECTION 10*

# **APPENDIX AND NRL POLICIES**



## 10.1 Links to NSWRL Policies & Guidelines

Please find following link to the NSWRL Policies that relate to Community Rugby League:

<https://www.nswrl.com.au/about/documents/community/>

Through this link you will find the following Policies and Documents:

- » NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies & Procedures Manual
- » NSWRL Player Points Index System (PPIS)
- » Code of Conduct Incident Report Form
- » NSWRL Event Sanctioning Form [NSWRL Event Sanctioning Application \(cognitoforms.com\)](#)
- » NSW Community Rugby League Request for Leave to Appeal Application Form
- » NSW Community Rugby League Transfer Policy Appeal Form (Online)
- » NSW Community Rugby League Transfer Denial Case Review Form
- » WWCC Undertaking and Consent Form
- » NSW Community Rugby League – District/Group Authority to film
- » NSW Community Rugby League Photography Consent Form
- » NSW Community Rugby League Playing in Higher Age Division Consent Form
- » NSWRL Critical Incident Management Plan
- » NSWRL Regional Member Standard Playing Agreement
- » NSWRL Admission of Teams to Competitions in Regional Areas 2020
- » NSWRL Metro Conference Competition By-Laws 2026



## 10.2 Links to NRL Policies & Guidelines

Please find following link to the NRL Policies and Guidelines that relate to Community Rugby League:

<https://www.playrugbyleague.com/policies/>

Through this link you will find the following Policies and Documents:

- » NRL On-Field Policy
- » National Coach Accreditation Policy
- » Return to Play Policy
- » Infectious Disease Policy
- » Sun Protection Policy
- » Mixed Gender Policy
- » NRL Member Protection Policy
- » NRL Privacy Policy
- » NRL Travel and Tour Policy (Domestic and International Tour Application requirements included)
- » National Clearance and Permits Policy
- » National Registration Policy
- » Leagues Anti-Doping Policy
- » Unmanned Aerial Drone Policy
- » Sports Glasses / Goggles Policy
- » Mouthguard Policy
- » Neck Injury and Cervical Collar Policy
- » Pregnancy Policy
- » Management of Concussion in Rugby League
- » Heat Guidelines
- » Electrical Storm Safety Guidelines
- » NRL Preferred Facility Guidelines
- » NRL Synthetic Field Standards
- » Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- » Safeguarding Children and Young People: Child Safe Code of Behaviour
- » Safeguarding Children and Young People: Complaints and Reporting Procedure
- » Safeguarding Children and Young People: Induction and Training Requirements
- » Safeguarding Children and Young People: Recruitment and Screening Requirements
- » SafePlay Code
- » NRL Code of Conduct