



EASTERN SUBURBS  
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

# Competitive Football Operations Guide

# 2019

This document is to be used as a guide only and all final rules and regulations can be found in the ESFA Competition Rules.

For clarity and consistency, any discrepancy found in this document will be superseded by the ESFA Winter Competition Rules.

## 10 ESFA Match Facts

1. Player ID must be shown to the opposition RTO before the match commences; no ID = no play.
2. Each team must supply an ESFA approved match sheet from [Sports TG](#). Penalties may apply for incorrect match sheets. Match sheet must contain FFA number, name of player and shirt number.
3. Teams must arrive at the centre circle upon notification of by the referee before the match. If one or both teams are running late, the Referee shall reduce the time of the game as necessary to conclude on time. The RTO of each team must then check the Player IDs of the opposing team.
4. Wet weather - the Twitter, Facebook feeds and home page of the ESFA website will be updated by 8AM on weekend match days. If a club chooses to close a ground that the ground owner has left open, they must contact ESFA as soon as possible.
5. Only the designated RTO may approach a Referee during or after a match. It is also the RTO and clubs' responsibility to control spectators.
6. The Referee may red card abusive coaches and managers or players may be expelled from the ground, and if abuse continues, they may abandon the match.
7. It is the home team's responsibility to dress the field, which must include nets, corner flags, sideline ropes/line or cone markings, and technical area 5m either side of halfway, marked by cones or similar.
8. Teams will incur a penalty for forfeiting a match as per the Schedule of Penalties.
9. Incident Reports must be submitted within 2 business days after the match, via your Club Secretary. The form can be found here: [ESFA Official Incident Report](#)
10. All ESFA Documents can be found online in the ESFA library

## Age Group Information

Age Group	Ball Size	Field Size	Players	Halves (Match)	Max Subs	
<b>U6-7</b>	3	Mini (30 x 20m)	4 v 4	15-20min (30-40min)	3 interchange	
<b>G8-9, U8-9</b>		¼ (40-50 x 30-40m)	7 v 7	20min (40min)	4 interchange	
<b>G10-11, U10-11</b>	4	½ (60-70 x 40-50m)	9 v 9	25min (50min)	5 interchange	
<b>G12, U12</b>				30min (60min)		
<b>G13, U13</b>	5	Full field	11 v 11	35min (70min)		
<b>U14</b>				45min (90min)		7 interchange
<b>G15, U15-16</b>						5 substitutes
<b>G17, U18</b>						
<b>AAW, AAM</b>				7 interchange		
<b>AAM Championship</b>				5 substitutes		
<b>O35M, O45M</b>				7 interchange		

## ESFA Fixture List

### How can I amend or defer a Match?

Clubs can apply to amend a Match on the Official Fixture List by submitting a match amendment request through the [official form](#).

The form must specify the original date, time and venue of the Match and the proposed amended date, time and venue, as well as showing that both Clubs agree to the amendment.

Forms shall be submitted by 9am on the Tuesday prior to the scheduled Match where the Match falls on a weekend, or three clear working days prior to the scheduled Match where the Match falls on a weekday.

The Executive will have discretion to accept requests submitted after this time, but participating clubs may be liable to a fine of \$100 each, and clubs should be aware that late Match Amendments will almost certainly affect referee coverage for the Match before and/or after the amended Match.

### Forfeits

Clubs must advise ESFA of any forfeits at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled kick off time using the forfeit official [official form](#).

## Requirements Pre-Match

### Match sheets

Teams competing in competitions from U12/G12 Championship up must correctly complete the ESFA approved match sheet. Please note that the use of incorrect match sheets may result in a fine being imposed against clubs. The Home team must provide the Sports TG match sheet for the match, which will have both teams' details printed on it.

Access to [SportsTG](#) will be granted to Club administrators. Club administrators can then give access to RTOs. All RTOs are expected to receive access to Sports TG.

The match sheet to be completed by the RTOs prior to handing to Referee. Please approach the referee at the completion of the game to verify the score and sign the match sheet.

The Sports TG team sheet contains the following information:

- Name of Club and Team as well as the opposing Club and Team.
- The Competition (e.g. AA1, U12 Div. 2)
- For teams U12 and above, Name, FFA number and shirt number of all players participating in the match (please note under no circumstances shall two players be playing in the same team at the same time, be wearing the same shirt number)
- If players are registered with another team other than the one to which the match sheet applies (i.e. borrowed players), then the name, FFA number, shirt number and team for which the player is registered shall be noted on the match sheet and a valid Player ID Sheet must be shown. When borrowing players, please refer to Competition Rules 7.6 and 7.7.
  - Junior competitions (12-18)
    - In Junior competitions (12-18), players registered in lower teams may play up an unlimited amount of times up until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
    - As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 a player in boys' competitions may only play up three (3) times in higher competitions, and on fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) time the player shall be re-graded.

For girls' competitions a player may only play up four (4) times, and on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) time, will be re-graded.

o Senior competitions (19+)

A player in men's competitions may only play up three (3) times in senior competition and on fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) time, the player shall be re-graded.

For women's competitions, a player may only play up four (4) times and on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) time, will be re-graded.

- If a player is standing down from a match due to suspension, this should be noted on the match sheet
- Should a player change shirt throughout the match, the RTO must notify the Referee immediately to be noted by the Referee on the match sheet
- Names of RTOs are to be printed on match sheet, along with the RTOs' FFA numbers. All RTOs are expected to register with their Club in PlayFootball.

Where any Club causes a match to be delayed due to incorrect completion of match sheet, late production of match sheet, player identification or administrative matters, the delay shall be reported by the Referee to ESFA. Upon investigation of the report penalties and/or sanctions may be imposed.

## Dressing The Ground

The HOME team (that being the team listed first on the draw) must dress the field with:

- two (2) nets, pegged and secured. **No nets shall have holes;**
- four (4) corner posts (minimum height 1.5m – 5ft), and;
- one (1) crowd control rope from penalty area to penalty area minimum on each side of the field where spectators are expected to congregate. Please refer to competition rule 9.1 (A)
- technical area; please refer to competition rule 9.1 (A) iv)

**Where portable goalposts are used, they must be anchored in accordance with Australian Standards.**

Where any Club fails to properly dress the field, causes any delay to the commencement of or causes abandonment of any match due to the late dressing of the field, the Club may be subject to a penalty under the Schedule of Penalties.

## Alternate Strip

Always be aware of the strip/colours of the opposing team. The Referee may order the visiting club to change its colours and refuse to continue the match until a satisfactory change is made.

Each team must play in their home strip as approved by ESFA, unless they are the away team. It is the away team's responsibility to supply a different strip, should colours be deemed to clash. If the away team is unable or unwilling to change, they will forfeit the match.

## Match Ball

Each team is expected to provide at least one correct sized match ball.

## Player Identification

It is the RTO's responsibility to ensure Player ID checks are conducted ten minutes prior to kick off and in the centre circle, overseen by the Referee, and the Referee will retain the Player IDs during the match.

Player ID must be shown to the opposing team's RTO to ensure ESFA produced the eligibility of all players. Borrowed players must either produce a Player ID Sheet for proof of eligibility.

### ID Checks

To perform the ID check:

- Players should line up in the centre circle and RTOs should make available their teams' Player ID Sheet to the opposing RTO to check the players against the Player ID Sheet
- When checking player IDs, always check the photo matches the player, as well as the team that the player is registered with.

Any player who arrives after the ID check has been completed and is included on the match sheet with correct details prior to the match must identify themselves to the opposing RTO before they enter the Field of Play.

Only Player ID Sheets are acceptable. Neither drivers' licences nor any other form of photo identification are proof of identification for ESFA competition matches. If a Player ID Sheet does not have a photo, it is not valid ID.

### No ID = No Play

Any player without acceptable ID is deemed an ineligible player and must not play.

There are strict penalties regarding the playing of ineligible players (please see ESFA Competition Rules), and in the event a match is played and players are found to have been ineligible the offending side will forfeit the match and face other penalties.

**No incident report provided by clubs regarding player identification will be considered if ID checks are not performed**

## Requirements During the Match

### Forfeits/Walk offs

Any team who without just cause fails to fulfil an engagement to play a fixture on or at the appointed date, time of venue shall for each offence forfeit the match.

Club Secretaries must notify ESFA of forfeits at least 48 hours prior to the specified match on the correct [forfeit form](#).

Teams forfeiting are subject to sanctions under the Schedule of Penalties.

### Control of Spectators

It shall be the duty of the Club officials and the RTO to maintain control of their spectators.

Control of spectators should be to prevent any disturbance amongst its spectators and to generally assist the match officials (i.e. Referees and Assistant Referees) or ESFA Staff in the preservation of order and good discipline at any match, prior to, during and after that said match. (Please refer to Competition Rules for penalties provided for non-control of spectators). Failure to do so may result in penalties. Please refer to Competition Rules 12.6.

- Only RTOs (managers and/or coaches) are allowed within the roped off technical area during the match.
- Substitutes should be behind the roped area wearing different coloured bibs to their shirts to be easily recognised by the Referee and the opposing RTO
- No spectator shall be allowed within the roped area or on the field of play
- No spectators are to be behind either goal while a match is in progress

### Substituting Players

It is the RTO's responsibility to:

- substitute players from the half way line only after being given permission by Referee to do so
- ensure that no substitute player takes to the field prior to the substituted player completely leaving the field of play
- ensure all substitutes when not on the field of play are wearing bibs over their player shirts

### RTO and Club Officials Behaviour

RTOs and Club Officials must:

- Be readily identifiable by wearing their Fluoro Officials vests **or** in the case of an RTO who is a player, identify themselves to the Referee.
- Show due respect to all match officials.
- Show due respect to the opposition RTO, Club Officials, and ESFA officials - no sideline dissent shall be tolerated
- Make themselves aware of all Competition Rules.

## Requirements After the Match

### Match sheets and Send Offs

At the completion of each match, the Referee shall ask the RTO to check the match sheet and sign it to verify the score. The Referee will then forward the match sheet to ESFA.

If there is no official Referee, the home team is responsible for returning the match sheet to ESFA by 5:00pm the following Monday (or next business day for night games) by fax to 02 9344 6128 or email [matchsheets@esfa.com.au](mailto:matchsheets@esfa.com.au).

### Incident Reports

An [Incident Report](#) with regard to any pre-Match, Match or post-Match incident that you would wish to be brought to the attention of ESFA (e.g. unruly behaviour), spectator incidents, player abuse, referee abuse etc. must be lodged with ESFA via your Club Secretary within two (2) business days of the played fixture to [Competitions Coordinator](#)

### Results Entry

Results for all matches must be entered into [Sports TG](#) by 5:00pm on the Monday following weekend matches or at 9:00am the next business day following any mid-week game.

Both participating clubs share the responsibility of entering results. Penalties may apply for noncompliance. Access to SportsTG will be granted to Club administrators.

Club administrators can then give access to RTOs.

If there is a discrepancy with results, Club Secretaries may submit a [Results Discrepancy Form](#) for the score to be verified and (if necessary) corrected.

## Wet Weather

### Cancellation Procedure

The overriding principle for events is to attempt to play as many matches as possible as scheduled considering:

- Player and spectator safety
- Quality after playing surface
- Impact on the playing surface

ESFA does not make the decision to close a ground in the event of wet weather. Ground closures follow a set decision making hierarchy:

- **Ground Owner:** All closure notices from owners are final and absolute.
- **Ground Hirer:** A hirer may close a ground at any time if it is not fit for play. Hirers may take advice, but it is the hirer's responsibility to monitor the situation on their grounds and must close any grounds that are unfit for play. Hirers cannot re-open grounds closed by owners.
- **Referee:** The appointed match official must ensure that each match is played on a safe ground. Referees cannot close a ground but may declare that a field is not safe to play on. A Referee cannot re-open grounds closed by owners or hirers.

Once a ground is closed, **it cannot be re-opened that day.**

### Wet Weather Update Channels

You can use any of the following channels to get information regarding wet weather closures:

- **ESFA Facebook Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/Eastern-Suburbs-Football-Association134250013305053/>
- **ESFA Wet Weather Twitter Feed:** [@esfawetweather](https://twitter.com/esfawetweather)
- **Home Page of ESFA Website**
- ESFA Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/esfafootball/>

These messages will tell you which (if any) grounds are closed, e.g.:

“12/7: Chifley, Heffron 55, L'Estrange Park closed.”

If the message does not mention a ground being closed, **it is still open.**

For training ground closures, check with your club.

ESFA aim to have closed grounds announced by 8:00am weekend days. However, Clubs may still close the ground throughout the day if the field becomes unfit for play. If your club closes your ground after the ground owner has announced that it is open, please let us know through Facebook as soon as possible so we can update and let match officials and other clubs know.

### How do we reschedule a Match that was washed-out?

Clubs can propose a new date for a washed-out Match by submitting a wet weather match amendment request through the [official form](#).

The form must specify the original date, time and venue of the Match and the proposed amended date, time and venue, as well as showing that both Clubs agree to the amendment.



Where a Match is postponed, the Home Team's Club must within 7 days of the date of postponement propose an alternative date, time and venue agreed to by the opposition. If ESFA deems this to be appropriate, the Match shall be scheduled.

If the Home Team fails to notify the Competition Coordinator and Away Team's Club of a proposed date within the allowed 7 days, the Away Team has a further 7 days to propose a reschedule of the Match.

If agreement cannot be reached within 14 days of the date of deferral or postponement, the Executive will take responsibility for rescheduling.

## Referees

### Appointed Referees:

Matches shall be officiated by the Referee appointed by the ESFA Referees' Branch.

Should an appointed Referee not attend or should the game be uncovered, if there is one or more Assistant Referees appointed then most senior Assistant Referee present shall referee the match **unless** the Referee is not qualified to Referee at that level. A Club referee must be provided by the **home team**.

**Referees picking up uncovered games must not referee a match higher than they have been approved to be appointed to, and if they do they will not be paid by ESFA.**

**Junior Referees (those under the age of 18) must not referee senior matches unless permission has been granted by the ESFA Referees Coordinator. Please do not approach them to do so.**

Information with regard to uncovered games available by 2:00pm Fridays, and Clubs notified.

### Club Referees:

If there is no appointed Referee or an Assistant Referee qualified to officiate the match ten minutes before kick-off, then the home team will be responsible for organising a Club Referee.

Club Referees have the same powers as an appointed Referee, and must officiate according to the Laws of the Game (including issuing yellow and red cards as required under the Laws).

In the case that a Club Referee issues a yellow card or a red card, they must submit a report on the [official form](#).

A match officiated by a Club Referee may only be refereed by the one official - DO NOT allow the changing of Club Referees in the second half.

All cautions and send offs by a Club referee are to be reported on the official form by 9:00am on the working day following the match.

### Referee Safety:

Always remember that before, during and after the match no person other than the designated RTO may approach a Referee.

The RTO is responsible for the reasonable welfare of the officiating Referee and Assistant Referees from the time they arrive at the ground to the time they depart.

### Referee Evaluations:

All RTOs and players across all divisions, may complete a feedback report for each Referee at their team's matches. [Feedback forms](#) are online and will be immediately emailed to the Referees Coordinator.

All reports are strictly confidential between the person making the report and ESFA, and data will be analysed by Referees Coordinator and Referees Branch Coach.

## Registration

### Player ID Sheets

To appear on a Player ID Sheet, players and clubs each have two steps.

- The player must:
  - Be registered for your club in PlayFootball
  - Have an acceptable ID photo
  
- The club must:
  - Approve their registration, so their status is 'Active'
  - Allocate them to a team

### Team Naming

In the interests of consistency in PlayFootball, and to ensure that all teams' names look similar when printed on player IDs, we ask that clubs apply a consistent naming pattern for their teams, particularly in the competitive ages.

MiniRoos (U6-U11, G8/9 – G10/11):

*Team name format:*

[Age Group] [Space] [Suffix (if required)]

*Age Group names:*

U6	
U7	
U8	G8
U9	G9
U10	G10
U11	G11

*Examples:*

All players allocated to U8 can be in the same 'team' in PlayFootball	'U8'
A club that has three teams marked A, B and C playing in G10	'G10 Blue', 'G10 Green' and 'G10 Yellow'

Players in these non-competitive ages can move around between teams freely for the purposes of both seeking replacements and ability matching

Youth Teams (U12-U18, G12-G17):

[Age Group] [Space] [Suffix (if required)]

*Age Group names:*

U12	G12
U13	G13
U14	G15
U15	
U16	G17
U18	

*Examples:*

A team playing in U12 where the club has no other team in that age group	'U12'
A club that has three teams marked A, B and C playing in G14	'G14 A', 'G14 B' and 'G14 C'

Players need to be allocated to one team only and are subject to re-grading rules.

Senior Teams (AAM to O45, AAW):

[Division name] [Space] [Suffix (if required)]

*Division names:*

AAM Championship	AAW Championship
AAM1	AAW2
AAM2	AAW3
AAM3	AAW4
AAM4	AAW5
AAM5	
AAM6	
AAM7	
AAM8	
AAM1 (Sat)	
AAM3 (Sat)	
AAM5 (Sat)	
AAM7 (Sat)	
O35M	
O45M	

*Examples:*

A team playing in AAM Championship will have the whole squad in one 'team' in PlayFootball	'AAM Championship'
A team playing in AAM Division 3	'AAM3'
A club that has two teams marked A and B in AAM Division 6	'AAM6 A' and 'AAM6 B'
A club that has two teams marked A and B in AAM Sat Division 3	'AAM3 (Sat) A' and 'AAM3 (Sat) B'
A team playing in AAW Championship	'AAW Championship'
A team playing in AAW Division 3	'AAW3'
A club that has three teams marked A, B and C playing in O35M	'O35M A', 'O35M B' and 'O35M C'

Players need to be allocated to one team only and are subject to re-grading rules.

## Working With Kids

Football NSW has introduced a new Working with Children Check Policy. For the 2018 season and beyond, it is a requirement of Football NSW that all Technical Directors, Coaches, Managers, Referees and other persons in child related roles working or volunteering with children under 18 years obtain a WWCC and provide their Club, Association, Centre, Branch or Referee Branch with a valid WWC number. All Committee members volunteering in Clubs which have children under the age of 18 are also required to obtain a WWCC number.

Please see the links below:

<https://42f6uk1prw8cdcjbf1vj9lce-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Working-with-Children-Check-Policy.pdf>

<https://footballnsw.com.au/protection-and-safety/working-with-children/>

Parents coaching or managing their own child's team are **no longer exempt**. Committee members are not exempt, even if their own child attends the club. Member Protection Officers in each club also require a WWCC.

All applicants for paid and non-paid WWC numbers, will be required to attend a NSW Service Centre to provide proof of identification and receive their number.

Having a WWC clearance to work or volunteer in a child related role is a key component to providing a safe sport environment for all children. Unfortunately, where a person is unable to satisfy the requirements of the NSW Working with Children Check or the FNSW WWC Policy, they cannot work or volunteer in a child related role within FNSW with children under 18 years.

Please note, The NSW Office of the Children's Guardian is authorised to conduct audits on organisations for compliance with the WWC Check. Failure to comply by obtaining WWC Numbers from workers and volunteers in child related roles, verifying all WWC Numbers obtained and keeping a record of verifications, can result in significant Government fines (up to \$11,000) and a non-compliance notification to NSW Police. It is a requirement of FNSW that all clubs, associations and referee branches are compliant with the WWCC and the FNSW Working with Children Check Policy. FNSW reserves the right to conduct WWC compliance audits on any club, association, branch, centre or referee branch affiliated to FNSW and covered by FNSW insurances.

While we understand the extra workload this will entail, ESFA and Football NSW require all Clubs abide by this important policy.

To be compliant clubs must:

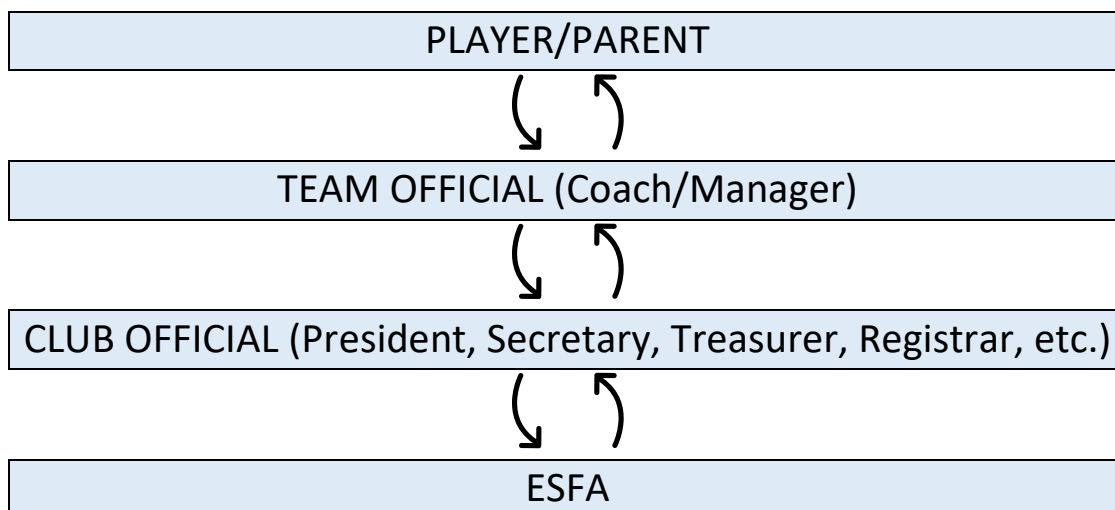
- **REGISTER** – register their organisation on-line
- **OBTAIN** – obtain WWC Numbers from people who work or volunteer with children
- **VERIFY** – verify WWC Numbers on-line
- **RECORD** – keep a record of all WWC verifications

## Contact with ESFA

### Who do I contact?

ESFA clubs communicate with ESFA through their club officials (President, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, etc.).

We restrict communications in this way because we want to ensure that if there is an issue, the club is aware of it and has an opportunity to solve it at the first instance. In many/most cases, an issue can be addressed or addressed at club level, and if it can't, the club should be made aware.



### Who's who at ESFA

If you're communicating with ESFA, who you contact will depend on what you need:

<b>General Manager</b> Aaron Dibdin: <a href="mailto:gm@esfa.com.au">gm@esfa.com.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and financial matters</li> <li>• Member protection and child protection matters</li> <li>• Association and club governance</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Football Coordinator</b> Caroline Oakes-Ash: <a href="mailto:caroline@esfa.com.au">caroline@esfa.com.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition matters for grades 19+</li> <li>• Disciplinary committee</li> <li>• ESFA Communications matters</li> </ul>
<b>Juniors Coordinator</b> Chelsea Brennan: <a href="mailto:chelsea@esfa.com.au">chelsea@esfa.com.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition matters for MiniRoos/Juniors grades 6-18</li> <li>• Summer football</li> </ul>
<b>Referees Coordinator</b> Richard Beazley: <a href="mailto:richard@esfa.com.au">richard@esfa.com.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming a referee</li> <li>• Referee training and development</li> <li>• Referee payment and billing</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Director</b> Jaime Gomez: <a href="mailto:td@esfa.com.au">td@esfa.com.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching courses</li> <li>• Coach training and development, including assistance on the ground</li> <li>• ESFA development programs (SAP/GSAP, clinics, development squads)</li> </ul>