



# Match Officials Handbook 2026

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Match officials have a level of authority during a game and on certain incidents that occur immediately before and after a game. It is important to note however that match officials should not be expected to make judgement on all matters related to football. Team officials, players, spectators and club personnel may sometimes ask match officials a question that is outside the responsibility of a match official.

Match officials are advised to;

- NOT COMMENT about potential suspensions or sanctions that may be imposed by FFNC.
- NOT COMMENT about competition regulations, but instead refer people with ANY enquiries to FFNC.
- NOT COMMENT about results, abandoned fixtures or any issues that will need to be assessed by FFNC.
- NOT COMMENT on the eligibility of players, but instead to refer people with ANY enquiries to FFNC.
- NOT be seen as supporting any individual team/club when acting as a match official. This includes immediately before, during and after officiating.
- Be mindful of ALL comments made before, during and after matches (including between match officials when using the communications equipment). Comments that may seem innocuous may be completely misconstrued or taken in a way that was not intended.

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## **1. FAR NORTH COAST REFEREES ASSOCIATION LIFE MEMBERS**

Football Far North Coast acknowledges those who have been bestowed the honour of Life Membership with the Far North Coast Referees Association.

The individuals named below, each made an extraordinary contribution to the Far North Coast Referees Association over many years and will be forever recognised for their efforts in supporting the development of match officials in this region. Football Far North Coast also extends an appreciation to the families of these stalwarts, for allowing an opportunity for the individuals named below, to have dedicated many hours to match officials and the game broadly.

- 1977: Charlie Sourry (Deceased)
- 1979: Robert Beaumont (Deceased)
- 1979: Reginald Wiffen (Deceased)
- 1980: Alistair Watts
- 1983: Barry Such
- 1987: Dean Mohammed (Deceased)
- 1988: Alexander 'Sandy' Smart
- 1991: Kenneth Hudson
- 1997: Joseph Pisani (Deceased)
- 1999: David (Dick) Nolan
- 2001: Glen Gibbs
- 2001: William (Bill) Duffy
- 2001: Kenneth Cartwright
- 2004: Clive Owen
- 2006: Lee MacMaster
- 2009: Luke Mackney
- 2015: Stuart Bradley
- 2015: Len Keith
- 2015: Thomas Rehbach

## **2. MEMBER PROTECTION AND PRIVACY**

Football Far North Coast is committed to upholding the terms outlined in various Football Australia (FA) and Northern NSW Football (NNSWF) policies including the Member Protection Framework outlined by Football Australia.

Football Far North Coast collects limited information about registered participants, primarily consistent with the disclosure made by Football Australia relevant to data collected (and used) in PlayFootball.

Football Far North Coast treats all personal information with the utmost confidentiality and will not disclose it except where necessary for the operation of the body or where required by law or standing agreements with affiliated organisations.

Enquiries about the use of personal information can be directed to the Football Far North Coast Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) Steve Mackney 0438 215 593 email [general.manager@ffnc.net.au](mailto:general.manager@ffnc.net.au)

### **2.1. Working with Children Legislation**

Please note that it is the responsibility of all organisations and/or employers to determine which child-related roles require a WWCC and which roles fall under an exemption. The Office of the Children's Guardian does not make this determination for organisations and/or employers or provide legal advice.

Northern NSW Football has determined that each match official aged 18 years or older, is required to have a current Working with Children Certificate notwithstanding any scope given by the Office of the Children's Guardian for an exemption to requested.

Although the Australian Tax Office (ATO) does not consider match officials within community sport to be employees (and provide an explicit exemption to any earnings being taxable), the 'best practice' position of Northern NSW Football and Football Australia, is to consider the role of match officials (aged 18 or over), to comply with the requirements stipulated by the Office of the Children's Guardian in relation to the following overview of an employee;

A Working with Children Check (WWCC) is generally required by adults in NSW who:

- provide services for children and young people under 18
- where the work normally involves being face to face with children
- where contact with children is more than incidental to the work.

For more information regarding who needs a WWCC, please visit [Who needs a Check | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.occ.nsw.gov.au/who-needs-a-check)

There are exemptions for some workers and employers. For a full list of exemptions please refer to section 20 of the [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013 - NSW Legislation](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/Details/2013-0001/2013-0001)

A registered Match Official who will be aged between 13 – 17 in the same year of registration is required to claim for a Working with Children Check exemption when registering within PlayFootball. The exemption that you must claim is 'under the age of 18', that is a declaration that you are a minor.

### 3. CLUB VENUES AND COMPETITION FIELDS

#### 3.1. Venue and Field Name Abbreviations

Alstonville HS	Alstonville High School	NBO	Tom Kendall Oval, New Brighton
Bang2	Bangalow Sports Fields	NH1 to NH2	Cecil Strett Fields, Nimbin
BB1 to BB2	Byron Bay Recreation Ground	NOS	Bob Bellear Sports Field, North Ocean Shores
Black Rocks 1 to Black Rocks 2	Black Rocks Sports Field, Pottsville	Oakes Oval	Oakes Oval, Lismore
Burringbar to Burringbar 2	Burringbar Sports Field	Potts1 to Potts2	Koala Beach Sports Fields, Pottsville
Cas2/Cas4/Cas5	Colley Park, Casino	Richards	Richards Oval, Lismore
CP1 to CP2	Crawford Park, Alstonville	Riverview	Riverview Park, South Lismore
Croz	Crozier Field, Lismore	Saunders 1 to Saunders 2	Saunders Oval, Ballina
Dun1 to Dun2	Balzer Park, Dunoon	SkHd 1 to SkHd 3	Skennars Head Sports Field, Skennars Head
E1 to E2	Nielson Park, East Lismore	SP	Linda Vidler Park, Suffolk Park
Eur 1 to Eur2	Eureka Public School, Eureka	Sth Lis	Caniaba Street Field, South Lismore
Ewing	Cavanbah Centre, Ewingsdale	T1 to T2	Thistles Park, East Lismore
GW3	Geoff Watt Oval, Alstonville	TEB 1 to TEB 2	Ballina Heights Sports Field, Cumbalum
JSF	Jeff Schneider Field, Bangalow	T'gum	Brian Breckenridge Field, Tumbulgum
KyH1	Kyogle High School, Kyogle	Uki	Vic Bianchetti Sports Ground, Uki
Mortimer Oval	Mortimer Oval, Lismore	W'burn1 to W'burn2	Woodburn Recreation Oval, Woodburn
Mull1 to Mull2	Pine Avenue Sports Fields, Mullumbimby	WP1 to WP2	Weston Park, Goonellabah

#### 3.2. Club Home Ground Locations

ALSTONVILLE FC	Crawford Park, Freeborn Place, Alstonville
BALLINA SC	Geoff Watt Oval, Deegan Drive, Alstonville
BANGALOW SC	Saunders Oval, Tamar Street, Ballina
BURRINGBAR FC	Bangalow Sports Field, Bangalow Road, Bangalow
BYRON BAY FC	Jeff Schneider Field, Bangalow Road, Bangalow
CASINO RSM COBRAS FC	Burringbar Sports Field, Fourth Avenue (off Burringbar Road), Burringbar
DUNOON UNITED FC	Byron Bay Recreation Ground, Cnr Carlyle & Cowper Street, Byron Bay
EUREKA FC	Colley Park, Cnr Farley and West Street, Casino
GOONELLABAH FC	Balzer Park, Cowley Road, Dunoon
ITALO STARS FC	Eureka Public School, Eureka Road, Eureka
KYOGLE FC	Weston Park, Reserve Street, Goonellabah (off Rous Road)
LENNOX HEAD FC	Mortimer Oval, Brewster St, Lismore
LISMORE RICHMOND ROVERS FC	Kyogle High School Ground, Kyogle
LISMORE THISTLES SC	Skennars Head Sports Field, Skennars Head
LISMORE WORKERS FC	Nielson Park, Oakley Avenue, East Lismore
MULLUMBIMBY BRUNSWICK VALLEY FC	Thistles Park, Military Road, East Lismore
NIMBIN HEADERS FC	Richards Oval (Rec 12), Brewster Street, Lismore
POTTSVILLE BEACH FC	Pine Avenue Sports Fields, Mullumbimby
SHORES UNITED SC	Cecil Street, Nimbin
SOUTH LISMORE CELTIC FC	Koala Beach Sports Fields, Tom Merchant, Drive, Pottsville
SUFFOLK PARK FC	Black Rocks Sports Field, Overall Drive, Pottsville
TINTENBAR EAST BALLINA FC	Tom Kendall Oval (aka New Brighton Sports Fields), Park Street, New Brighton
TUMBULGUM RANGERS SC	Bob Bellear Sports Field, Shara Boulevard, North Ocean Shores (Competition field)
UKI PYTHONS FC	Caniaba Street Fields, South Lismore (adjacent to Nesbitt Park)
WOODBURN WOLVES FC	Linda Vidler Park, Beech Drive, Suffolk Park

## **4. HOW DO I REGISTER AS A MATCH OFFICIAL?**

Each match official must register online in PlayFootball each year.

Each match official must select the applicable product from the four (4) registration products. These are outlined as follows;

### **Register as a Returning Match Official in 2026**

(applicable if you have registered previously as a Match Official prior to 2026)

- 4.1. FFNC Returning Match Official (from 2025 or prior season) (age 13 – 18 years in 2026): [bit.ly/ffncReturningMO2026-Jnr](https://bit.ly/ffncReturningMO2026-Jnr)
- 4.2. FFNC Returning Match Official (from 2025 or prior season) (age 19+ in 2026): [bit.ly/ffncReturningMO2026-Snr](https://bit.ly/ffncReturningMO2026-Snr)

### **Register as a 1<sup>st</sup> Year Match Official in 2026**

(applicable for individuals who have not been registered since completing a C3 New Referees Course).

- 4.3. FFNC 1st Year (Starter Package) Match Official (age 13 - 18 years in 2026): [bit.ly/ffnc1styearMO2026-Jnr](https://bit.ly/ffnc1styearMO2026-Jnr)
- 4.4. FFNC 1st Year (Starter Package) Match Official (age 19+ in 2026): [bit.ly/ffnc1styearMO2026-Snr](https://bit.ly/ffnc1styearMO2026-Snr)

Alternatively, you can scan the QR code on the back of this handbook to access the applicable link to register as a Match Official.

Each individual who registers as a match official is required to pay the FA component and also the NNSWF component, at the point of registration. Football Far North Coast does not impose any fee for registration of a match official.

\*Please note that each match official user must have a unique email address (i.e. Username), that provides access for them (and only them), to login to Schedula. This must be the same email address that is used to register in PlayFootball.

While PlayFootball will accept an e-mail address to initiate a registration for siblings, this is contrary to how Schedula functions. Each Match Official must have a unique email address.

## **4.5. What other information do I need to provide to FFNC?**

Individual Match Officials must complete and submit the Football Far North Coast Match Officials 2026 Jotform which requests information including Banking Details & Statement by a Supplier Declaration to FFNC before they can be appointed to matches.

This form can be accessed from the QR code on the back of the handbook or alternatively can be found under "Forms" in the "Referee Headquarters" section of the FFNC website.

## 5. WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE A QUESTION OR NEED SUPPORT?

### By Email

To [referees@ffnc.net.au](mailto:referees@ffnc.net.au)

- Questions about appointments
- Questions about administration
- Questions about my Match Official Registration
- Questions about payments due to me

To [mcarter@northernnswfootball.com.au](mailto:mcarter@northernnswfootball.com.au)

- Questions about the Laws of the Game
- Questions about Development and Training
- Questions about Accreditation

### By Phone

Mob: 0434 856 992

### In person

Suite 5 / 32 Gum Tree Drive, Goonellabah NSW 2480

The Football Far North Coast office generally operates 9am – 4pm on business days, however normal football activities may mean that the office is closed between these hours on occasions. If you need to visit the office, please contact 0434 856 992 before visiting.

### Gear and equipment

[www.umbroteamwear.com.au/collections/northern-nsw-referees](http://www.umbroteamwear.com.au/collections/northern-nsw-referees) (also refer to Page 38 in this handbook)

### General information

Refer to website: [www.footballfarnorthcoast.com.au/referee-headquarters](http://www.footballfarnorthcoast.com.au/referee-headquarters)

- Communication to match officials throughout the season is primarily via email, so please remember to check your email regularly;
- Text messages are used where appropriate to individual match officials;
- Phone calls on behalf of FFNC to individual match officials are made where absolutely necessary, but please be aware that having more than 100 match officials (plus parents), this method of communication is unrealistic as a primary option.

Social media, and other communication methods are also important tools; however, these are NOT the primary mode of communication with individual match officials.

Please be aware that the use of social media should ALWAYS reflect appropriate language, messaging and images. YOUR obligations to act appropriately include being a registered participant with Football Far North Coast, but specifically as a match official, that brings additional expectations.

Match Officials are obliged to act in a manner that is consistent with the terms and conditions outlined in various football regulations and further relevant legal statutes. If you are accused of breaching any of the codes (including by a member of the football community or a complaint lodged by a colleague or third party), you may be called by FFNC to explain your actions. If proven, you may be subject to sanction or other action in response to such behaviour.

The information contained within the Football Australia regulations apply including;

- National Code of Conduct and Ethics Regulations
- National Member Protection Framework

Refer to back cover of handbook for QR code to access links.

## 6. CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026

Please note that these details may change. Check the website regularly for up-to-date information.

### FEBRUARY 2026

Sun 1st	Registrations anticipated to Open for Season 2026
Sat 14th	FFNC Match Officials Annual Seminar & Awards Function (Goonellabah Workers Sports Club)
Sat 14th	C3 New Referees Practical Workshop (Hepburn Park, Goonellabah) (TBC)
Fri 27th / Sun 1st Mar	ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan Competitions - Round 1

### MARCH 2026

Fri 6th / Sun 8th	ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan Competitions - Round 2
Fri 13th / Sun 15th	ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan Competitions - Round 3
Fri 20th / Sun 22nd	ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan Competitions - Semi-Finals (if applicable)
27th / 28th / 29th	Senior Leagues commence

### APRIL 2026

3rd / 4th / 5th	Easter Long Weekend - NO GAMES
24th / 25th / 26th	ANZAC Day Cup and Callan McMillan Memorial Shield Finals
Sun 26th	Selected Junior Competitions commence (TBC)

### MAY 2026

1st / 2nd / 3rd	Junior Competitions commence
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### JUNE 2026

5th / 6th / 7th	King's Birthday Long Weekend - NO GAMES
Tues 30th	Deadline for Season 2026 Match Official Registrations

### JULY 2026

### AUGUST 2026

14th / 15th / 16th	Junior Competitions & Senior Leagues Finals Series commence (TBC)
21st / 22nd / 23rd	Junior Competitions & Senior Leagues Finals Series continues (TBC)
28th / 29th / 30th	Junior Competitions Grand Finals (TBC)
28th / 29th / 30th	Senior Leagues Finals Series continues (TBC)

### SEPTEMBER 2026

4th / 5th / 6th	Senior Leagues Finals Series continues (TBC)
4th – 13th	Senior Leagues Grand Finals (TBC)
Sat 26th	Senior Awards Function (Lismore Workers Club)

## **7. APPOINTMENTS PROCESS AND YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1. Overview**

- Nominate your availability in Schedula for the upcoming week (being Friday night, Saturday and Sunday), NO LATER than 6pm each Sunday night.
- Weekend fixtures will typically be scheduled between 6pm and 10pm Friday nights, between 8:30am and 5pm each Saturday and between 9am and 4:30pm each Sunday.
- Midweek fixtures (when scheduled) are generally each Tuesday night and Wednesday night between 6pm and 10pm.
- If you do NOT update your availability by 6pm each Sunday, your records will remain unchanged, and appointments will be made accordingly. You are requested to check your availability that is loaded in Schedula (by 6pm each Sunday) even if you believe no changes to your availability are required.
- Do NOT rely on email, text or verbal advice given to FFNC to advise your availability. Your availability MUST be updated in Schedula.
- If you are unable to login to Schedula as a consequence of technical issues, send an email to [referees@ffnc.net.au](mailto:referees@ffnc.net.au).
- FFNC will aim to appoint individual match officials to fixtures that correspond with their respective availability nominated in Schedula as at 6pm each Sunday. Consideration is also given to the level of fixture and location of fixture, however it should be anticipated that some travel may be required to fulfil appointments.

### **7.2. How do I nominate my availability to officiate?**

The appointments system used by Football Far North Coast is called Schedula: [www.schedula.com.au](http://www.schedula.com.au). Each registered match official is given an individual login by FFNC. We highlight that each match official must have their own unique email address and it is recommended that each match official uses the same e-mail address for registering in PlayFootball in addition to using Schedula.

Please do not change your availability beyond 6pm each Sunday. FFNC relies upon records as at 6pm each Sunday to allocate appointments for each match official for the upcoming week. You must phone or text (0434 856 992) if you realise that you need to change your availability.

For a quick reference guide to using Schedula, please scan the QR code on the back cover of the handbook.

### **7.3. How do I know if I am appointed to a fixture?**

- Appointments are typically published in Schedula (i.e. available to be viewed) at 5:30pm each Tuesday.
- Appointments loaded in Schedula beyond 5:30pm each Tuesday (for the current week of fixtures) will appear automatically in Schedula.
- An email is automatically generated at 5:30pm each Tuesday to notify you that you have been appointed to a fixture(s), however you must login to Schedula every Tuesday night to view and confirm your appointments.
- When you login to Schedula, your appointments will be displayed at the top of the 'Dashboard' page.
- Login and check your appointments regularly during the week to make sure they haven't changed, noting that communication will ordinarily be sent to you if your appointment/s are updated.
- Every reasonable effort will be made to text you in the rare event that changes are required beyond publication of appointments each Tuesday (5:30pm).

## **7.4. How do I confirm my appointment to a fixture?**

- YOUR first task once appointments have been published is to login to Schedula and "Confirm" your appointment(s). This MUST be done by 9am Wednesday, every week.
- When you login to Schedula, your appointments will be displayed at the top of the 'Dashboard' page. You will need to select each fixture you have been appointed to then select 'Confirm' to confirm your appointment or 'Decline' to decline your appointment.

## **7.5. What if I choose to decline any appointment(s)?**

- The ONLY legitimate reasons you should have to decline "any" appointment is if FFNC has appointed you contrary to the availability that you had nominated in Schedula as at 6pm Sunday or if illness, injury or misadventure will prevent you from accepting your appointment(s).
- The need to decline an appointment in Schedula should be VERY RARE, noting that reasons such as change in family plans, your own playing/training commitments or deciding to meet up with friends are all excuses that may limit appointments given to you at a future date.
- If there are any errors in your appointments, please contact 0434 856 992 ASAP – You can send an email as well, however this should not be the only method of communication in this case.

## **7.6. What if I become injured or sick on the day of my appointment?**

If you are sick on the day of the match and are unable to fulfil your appointment/s PHONE 0434 856 992 as soon as possible.

If you sustain an injury (either as a player beforehand or as a referee) which prevents you from being able to fulfil an immediate appointment;

- See if another qualified and suitable match official (even if they are there as a player) is at the ground and enquire if they are available to take your place? Suitable match officials are those that have officiated on the same level of football as your appointed game.
- If you are unable to find a suitable replacement at the ground, inform the Ground Official of the home club that you are unable to fulfil your appointment/s and there is no replacement available. The home club will need to source a suitable individual to fill-in.
- Then phone 0434 856 992 as soon as possible to inform FFNC of your injury and action.

We encourage match officials who are players to take their gear with them, just in case you are asked to officiate before/after playing your game.

## **7.7. What do I do if I am no longer able to commit to an appointment(s) previously confirmed in Schedula?**

- If you have to withdraw from an appointment that you have already confirmed in Schedula, for reasons such as illness, injury or unforeseen circumstances, you must phone 0434 856 992 and discuss.
- If your call to 0434 856 992 is not answered, please leave a message or alternatively send a text.
- Do NOT send an email (as the only action) as this may not be immediately seen and therefore be ineffective.
- If you do not turn up to a game (without a reasonable excuse) you may be excluded from being appointed on future matches for a period. This is not the desired action for FFNC, however individual match officials are expected to be committed to the role.

## **7.8. Will I be advised if a fixture I am appointed to has been called off?**

- When a fixture is not proceeding for reasons such as adverse weather or a forfeit, each match official will be advised by text message at the earliest opportunity. Please do not contact FFNC asking if a game is still proceeding. Unless you have been advised that your appointment has been cancelled you should anticipate that the appointment remains valid.
- Please remember that there are over 100 match officials, with 150+ games every week and things can be VERY frantic in wet weather conditions.
- Do not rely upon information found on social media (or advised verbally by friends etc.).

## **7.9. What to do if the Centre Referee doesn't show up in a senior match?**

- If you are a senior referee who has officiated as a centre referee previously on the same level of football as the match in question, you can referee the match and you will be entitled to the referee match payment.
- If you are a junior referee (under 18) who is not usually appointed in the centre to senior matches OR if you have NOT acted as a centre referee in the affected level of competition previously, you MUST NOT referee the match. The home club will need to source a suitable "club referee". You are permitted to officiate on the match as an Assistant Referee, and you will be entitled to the Assistant Referee match payment. Your name however must be shown on the applicable match sheet for FFNC to pay you for such an appointment.
- If you are a junior assistant referee and the referee does not show up for your match, **DO NOT let the teams or any club official pressure you into refereeing the match**. You are only allowed to fulfil your appointment as an assistant referee (as per above).

## **7.10. Can I officiate if I recognise a gap on match day?**

- If you have officiated as a centre referee previously on the same level of football (or higher) and role, as the match (and role) in question, you can officiate and you will be entitled to the applicable match payment. Your name however must be shown on the applicable match sheet for FFNC to pay you for such an appointment.
- If you are a junior referee (under 18) who is not usually appointed in the centre to senior matches OR if you have NOT acted as a centre referee in the affected level of competition previously, you MUST NOT referee the match.
- Please do NOT act as an Assistant Referee (AR) on a junior fixture below 16's, noting that FFNC does not appoint such roles except for Finals and Grand Finals.
- The home club will need to source a suitable "club centre referee" if no other options exist. You are permitted to officiate on the match as an Assistant Referee (Fixtures 16's to senior), and you will be entitled to the Assistant Referee match payment. Your name however must be shown on the applicable match sheet for FFNC to pay you for such an appointment.
- If you are a junior assistant referee and the referee does not show up for your match, **DO NOT let the teams or any club official pressure you into refereeing the match**. You are only allowed to fulfil your appointment as an assistant referee (as per above).

## **7.11. Communication**

YOU are responsible for nominating YOUR availability (in Schedule).

You are responsible for communicating with FFNC if any circumstances arise that will impact your availability.

Communication is critical to everything we do and we urge open, clear and regular communication about ANY aspect of your role as a match official.

Match Officials aged under 18 "may" wish a parent to communicate about issues or to clarify aspects of your role or procedures. While we recognise that parents may communicate on behalf of their children, we urge young match officials to take responsibility for themselves and communicate directly with FFNC where required.

## 8. OVERVIEW OF MATCH CONDITIONS

### 8.1. Duration of FFNC Competition Matches

Grade 12:	25 minutes each way
Grades 13 & 14:	30 minutes each way
Grades 15 & 16:	35 minutes each way
Senior Leagues:	45 minutes each way
Summer Youth League (SYL):	35 minutes each way

There is NO allowance for time lost in ANY senior league or junior competition (including for injury or interchanges) – unless otherwise determined by FFNC in specific circumstances.

### 8.2. Match Ball Sizes

Grade 12 and 13:	Size 4
Grade 14 to Seniors:	Size 5

The home team must supply three (3) suitable match balls. For neutral fixtures, the team listed first is deemed to be the 'home team' for such fixture.

### 8.3. Half Time Length

(From End of 1<sup>st</sup> Half to Start of 2<sup>nd</sup> Half)

All Junior Competitions:	5 minutes
All Senior Leagues & SYL:	5 – 10 minutes

We ask match officials to communicate with junior teams and urge them to stay in the vicinity of the field or technical area during the half-time break. There is no time allocated (no added time) in response to teams delaying the start of play for the first or second half.

### 8.4. Interchange Regulations

*Applicable to ALL Senior Leagues, Junior Competitions and Summer Youth League (SYL)*

Maximum of sixteen (16) eligible players can be listed on any one team sheet.

Unlimited interchange applies, noting the following;

- Interchanges can only occur when the referee stops play for this purpose;
- The referee is authorised to 'stop play' or to instruct that play continues;
- The referee must ensure that interchanges are not used as a deliberate ploy to 'burn' up time (especially during the final stages of a match);
- Interchanges must be made at the halfway point adjacent to the side of the field that technical areas are situated;
- Any player who is interchanged to play as goalie, must wear a goalie shirt with a distinct number (as notated on the match sheet), including swapping shirts with the goalie (e.g. wears shirt #1) before such player begins participating as goalie;
- Any goalie who is interchanged to play as field player, must wear a shirt with a distinct number (as notated on the match sheet), that is consistent in colour and design with other outfield players in their same team before participating as an outfield player. This includes wearing shorts and socks that are consistent in colour and design of other outfield players in the same team. There is no scope for a goalie to participate as an outfield player if the player continues to be dressed in their goalie equipment;

## 8.5. Team Officials

*Applicable to ALL Senior Leagues, Junior Competitions and Summer Youth League (SYL)*

At least one (1) registered Team Official must be listed on the match sheet prior to kick-off, with up to a maximum of three (3) team officials listed. Note the following;

- A Team Official must be aged at least 18 years (a referee is not required to verify, but the referee should make reasonable enquiries if any individual Team Official does not look at least 18 years of age and should otherwise make a note on the match sheet for FFNC to investigate).
- SENIOR players can also be listed as a Team Official for the team in which they are participating as a player, provided such players are also registered in PlayFootball as a Team Official. It is however *not* the responsibility of any match official to know if an individual is registered (in any role).

## 8.6. Mercy Rule

Football Far North Coast introduced a 'Mercy Rule' in 2024 as part of a pilot component to competition regulations. This rule was retained in 2025 and will also exist in season 2026. This means that a maximum score differential of ten (10) goals in favour of either team in a competition fixture (Grade 12 – Seniors) will apply.

The implications (including for match officials) are as follows:

- The score that is recorded on any match sheet (and in FFNC records) will reflect a maximum score differential of ten goals.
- A record of goalscorers will cease once a 'ten' goal differential has been reached.
- A match can continue, however will be considered to be a friendly for the period beyond a ten-goal differential being reached.
- If a match concludes at the point that a ten-goal differential has been reached, the result recorded will constitute a valid match.

### GRADE 12 CORNER KICKS are modified

Corner Kicks are to be taken on the Goal Line at a point that is 9.15m (10 yds) in from each corner. This distance is generally indicated by a small mark, off the field, perpendicular to the goal line.

### GRADE 12 GOAL KICKS are NOT modified

Goal kicks apply in Grade 12 as they do for higher age competitions and senior leagues

## 9. MATCH DAY PROCEDURES

The timelines outlined below are based on best practise to ensure that each fixture can start on time and allow the allocated schedule of fixtures at each respective field to proceed.

There is no problem with a fixture starting slightly earlier than scheduled, however games starting slightly later than scheduled can impede the start time of fixtures as the day progresses.

### 9.1. Pre-Match Checks Required

- Check that nets are in reasonable condition and are adequately secured.
- Conduct a field inspection (this could be at half-time during the preceding game or at the earliest opportunity before kick-off that you are officiating) by walking over the playing surface. Potentially speak with the referee of the preceding game to highlight any potential issues. Approach the ground official of the home club to rectify any concerns prior to proceeding with a fixture.
- Inspect the field markings including the penalty spots and confirm that they are reasonably visible and situated accordingly. You may use the field marking guide at the back of this handbook to assist.
- Confirm that each match ball is in good condition and each is adequately inflated.
- Confirm that each team has nominated a ground official and that you know where each ground official can be found if required.
- Check that there are four (4) corner flags in place. Halfway flags are not required.
- If there are any safety issues (on or off the field) that you identify could be of concern, bring them to the attention of the home ground official to rectify.
- Do not start a match (or proceed with a match) if there are any serious concerns or matters that are contrary to what is outlined above.
- Check playing strips/equipment of players in each respective team are compliant with Law 4.
- Consider if the home team (or either goalkeeper) needs to wear an alternate strip to avoid a clash with the opposition team.
- Report any matters to FFNC (i.e. make notation on the respective match sheets).

### 9.2. FIFA Handshake

- 5 mins before KO: Call the captains (and teams) to the vicinity of the Technical Areas for the coin toss.
- 3 mins before KO: Lead players to centre circle for FIFA handshake
- Match officials lead teams onto the field prior to kick-off
- Each team files out either side of match officials for a moment to present themselves to the crowd
- Referee invites HOME team to file across to shake hands with match officials and opposition players

### 9.3. Junior Competitions Pre-Match Procedures – Before Kick-Off (KO)

- 30 mins before KO: Arrive at ground NO LATER than this time.
- 15 mins before KO: Be fully ready in your gear, with your whistle, cards etc. and then check the field of play, all players' equipment and get team sheets from both teams.
- 5 mins before KO: Call the captains (and teams) to the vicinity of the Technical Areas for the coin toss.
- 3 mins before KO: Lead players to centre circle for FIFA handshake

### 9.4. Junior Competitions Post-Match Procedures - After Fulltime (FT)

- 5 mins after FT: Complete your match sheets, *fully and correctly*. Make sure you also note ALL relevant referee comments on the match sheet, such as no Ground Official etc.
- 5 – 10 mins after FT: Both team managers should check, then sign their team sheet after the match and take their match pad. If no club representative comes to sign the match sheet and collect their match pad, leave the match pad at the canteen.
- 10 – 15 mins after FT: Hand in your correctly completed match sheets to the canteen or HOME team

## 9.5. Senior Leagues Pre-Match Procedures – Before Kick-Off (KO)

- 45 mins before KO: Arrive at ground.
- 30 mins before KO: Check the field of play.
- 20 mins before KO: Change into your gear. Referee to give AR's their pre-match instructions.
- 15 mins before KO: Both teams match sheets should be handed to you by NO LATER than this time.
- 10-15 mins before KO: Check all players' equipment.
- 5 mins before KO: Call the captains (and teams) to the vicinity of the Technical Areas for the coin toss.
- 3 mins before KO: Lead players to centre circle for FIFA handshake

## 9.6. Senior Leagues Post-Match Procedures - After Fulltime (FT)

- 5 mins after FT: Complete your match sheets, *fully and correctly*. Make sure you note ALL relevant referee comments on the match sheet, such as no Ground Official/s, ground not roped etc. **In Men's and Women's Premier League** you must take note of the three players you wish to award the 3, 2, 1 player of the match points from the match. **This information is to be submitted by 9am Monday**  
(within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures)
- 10 – 15 mins after FT: Both team managers should check, then sign their team sheet after the match and take their match pad (referee to keep original sheet). If no club representative comes to sign the match sheet and collect their match pad, leave the match pad at the canteen.
- 10 – 15 mins after FT: Submit your completed match sheets to the home club and enter the 3, 2, 1 Players of the Match Points (Men's & Women's Prems only).

For information regarding Send off and Incident Reports, see “Report Writing” section of this handbook.

See “Finals Series Procedures” for information on how to complete Match Sheets after Extra-time or Penalties.

## 10. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

### 10.1. Overview

Match officials are advised that FFNC will not provide any exceptions to ANY player relevant to any matter related to the Laws of the Game and more specifically, players equipment.

Match officials are also prohibited from wearing (or taping) jewellery except the wearing of one (or two) watches.

### 10.2. Jewellery

Players are NOT allowed to play in ANY competition fixture if they are wearing jewellery (or other like items). The Laws of the Game - Law 4 prohibits the wearing of items including necklaces, rings, visible piercings with studs, earrings, bracelets, watch, leather bands and rubber bands or any item deemed by the referee to be a potential hazard. Visible means 'suspected as being concealed under visible tape'.

Players CANNOT tape jewellery under ANY circumstances. If a player is unable to remove an item of jewellery, that player is NOT permitted to participate.

Match officials are required to make such checks/enquiries as part of the equipment check prior to the game and they are obliged to be vigilant and uphold the requirements of Law 4. Match officials are required to make reasonable checks/enquiries and to instruct players to remove jewellery

Any player found to be wearing jewellery during the match will be issued a yellow card and will be instructed to leave the field of play and remove the item(s). They are not permitted to return to the field of play until a future stoppage in the match and only if/when, the referee has confirmed that the player has removed the offending item.

FFNC will not provide any exceptions for ANY player to participate by taping jewellery (e.g. ears, nose, etc.).

This information is consistent with the requirements of law 4 (players' equipment) in the laws of the game and no person (including any individual match official or administrator), is authorised to deviate from what is mandated.

Match officials are also prohibited from wearing (or taping) jewellery except the wearing of one (or two) watches.

### 10.3. Players and Match Officials Wearing Spectacles

Sports spectacles are recommended, however if they are not sports spectacles, the referee should inspect the equipment to determine they do not pose any danger to the player wearing the spectacles or any other participant. Note however that evidence of the type of lenses is not required, but the referee is authorised to ask the wearer of the spectacles about the type of lenses. Note that the intensity/contact in junior fixtures is generally much less in younger ages (compared to senior football). The type of frame is generally the component that is more likely to be a risk to harm.

If a senior player is wearing spectacles on the field of play during matches, the spectacles should be sport spectacles. This is for the safety of the wearer and other participants.

### 10.4. Players with Hard Casts

Players are NOT allowed to play with a plaster cast or any type of hard cast in any FFNC sanctioned fixtures (whether wrapped in padding or not). They also cannot occupy the Technical Area (unless they are a registered Team Official and have been listed as a Team Official on the match sheet).

Please report any concerns to FFNC to enable enquiries to be made with respective clubs.

## **10.5. Roles and Responsibilities of Team Captain**

The philosophy and spirit of the Laws of the Game are that all those in authority, especially coaches and team captains, have a clear responsibility to the game to respect the match officials and their decisions. Participants have an influential role in shaping the image of the game and the team captain should ensure that the Laws of the Game and referees' decisions are respected.

The team captain for each junior competition and senior leagues team should be identified by the wearing of a coloured armband in accordance with Law 4 – The Players' Equipment.

The team captain has no special status or privileges, but has a degree of responsibility for the behaviour of the team.

The team captain (or any player or team official) has no right, according to the Laws of the Game (Refer Law 3), to approach a match official or to question/dispute a decision.

Although, match officials should treat players with respect, this does NOT mean answering all questions related to decisions made in a game or entering into disputes with players (be it the captain or any other participant). Team captains, players and team officials should respect the role of the match officials, regardless of whether or not there is agreement on a decision made during a game.

## **10.6. Other Policies**

Football Far North Coast recognises the following policies:

- NNSWF Hot Weather Policy (Community Football)
- NNSWF Lightning Policy

Refer to the QR Code on the back of the handbook.

## 11. MATCH SHEETS

### 11.1. Pre - Match

- Each Team Official/Manager shall fill in a match sheet *fully* with the correct details. The match sheet for both teams should be submitted to the appointed referee NO LATER than 15 minutes prior to the commencement of senior leagues fixtures (10 mins for junior competitions).
- A maximum of *sixteen* (16) player names may be listed on the match sheet prior to kick-off in ALL Senior Leagues, Junior competitions and Summer Youth League (SYL). This allows for up to five (5) interchange players, with teams permitted to make an unlimited number of interchanges during a stoppage in a match (with the permission of the referee).
- A participant(s) name cannot be added to the match sheet after the game has commenced, noting that in practical terms, this means beyond when the match sheet book has been submitted to a match official prior to the match.
- Players' shirt numbers must correspond with the number next to their name on the match sheet. If an error is identified after kick-off, note this on the match sheet.
- Suspended player/s details must be written in the appropriate section of the match sheet to indicate that they are standing down from the fixture. If you suspect a player is participating as an illegible player, allow the player(s) to play in the match and report the incident to FFNC as a priority.

### 11.2. Post - Match

- Complete all relevant sections, including (if applicable) writing the number of goals scored by each player, cards issued (write the offence code/s), opposition own goals, total goals, match result, full name(s) of all match officials on the match and any remarks by referee.
  - NOTE: Recording Own Goals – Own goals are NOT recorded against the player who scored the goal – they are recorded in the "Opposition Own Goals" section **on the match sheet of the team the goal is credited to**.
  - If you have sent-off a participant (player, interchange player or team official) you must record this on the match sheet next to the name of the participant and also submit a Send-off Report to FFNC by 9am Monday (or within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures)
  - If you have misconduct to report, you must submit an Incident Report to FFNC by 9am Monday (or within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures)
- The referee must write their name and sign in the relevant section on each match sheet. The referee must give each respective team representative their match sheet pad.
- Under the supervision of the referee, the nominated team representative should check the details on the match sheet and sign the nominated spot on the match sheet to verify the records written on the match sheet.
  - The referee should resolve ANY discrepancies (e.g. cards recorded, goal scorers, result) with the respective team official before signing the match sheet and before asking each nominated team official to sign the match sheet.
  - The Referee should initial any amendments/errors made by them on the match sheet.
  - The referee is authorised to cross off the name of any player who did not participate conditional upon the referee being satisfied that such player(s) did not take the field.
- The Team Official shall retain the yellow carbon copy of the Match Sheet (and match sheet pad) for the club's records.
- ALL match sheets are to be submitted to the HOME club.
  - Match Officials are not to retain the match sheets (or match sheet pads) under any circumstances
  - 3, 2, 1 Players of the Match Points – Must be submitted to FFNC via the Jotform by the centre referee for all Men's and Women's Premier League pointscore competition fixtures by 9am MONDAY (or within 48 hours of a mid-week fixtures). Scan the QR Code on the back cover of the handbook to nominate individual players.
- If you need details from the match sheets (e.g. for a send-off report or 3, 2, 1 Players of the Match points in Men's & Women's Premier League), take a photo of the match sheet/s or write down the details BEFORE submitting the match sheet.
- The Referee Remarks section of the match sheet is for referees ONLY to note comments that need to be reported to FFNC, but do not require an incident report (e.g. poor line markings, no Ground Official, etc.).

**Team/club representatives are NOT authorised to write any additional comments on the match sheet.**

- Your attention to details, procedures and timelines is appreciated and is a necessary part of your role.

## 12. OFFICIAL MATCH SHEET

### 12.1. BLANK

USED BY ALL SENIOR LEAGUES AND JUNIOR COMPETITIONS



#### OFFICIAL MATCH SHEET – POINTSCORE & FINALS SERIES

WHITE COPY – To FFNC by 1pm Wednesday. YELLOW COPY – To be retained by club.  
HOME Club to submit results online not later than 11pm Sunday for weekend fixtures and not later than 11pm same night for midweek fixtures



Here for good.

LEAGUE / GRADE: ..... MEN'S / WOMEN'S / GIRLS / JUNIOR MIXED DATE: ..... / ..... / .....  
(please circle competition type)

HOME TEAM: ..... V VISITING TEAM: ..... FIELD: ..... K/O TIME: .....

YOUR CLUB NAME: .....

NAME OF YOUR GROUND OFFICIAL (CANNOT BE A PLAYER OR TEAM OFFICIAL LISTED BELOW): .....

Shirt No.	Player's First Name	Player's Surname	Shirt No.	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Goals
1			1			
2			2			
3			3			
4			4			
5			5			
6			6			
7			7			
8			8			
9			9			
10			10			
11			11			
12			12			
13			13			
14			14			
15			15			
16			16			
<i>A team cannot list more than 16 players on a match sheet. If a player is wearing a number that is not listed above, please cross out a number that is not in use and write the number that will be worn by that player.</i>						+ Opposition Own Goals:
						= TOTAL GOALS:

Team Officials	Print Full Name	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Team Names	MATCH RESULT
Team Official 1:				HOME Team:	GOALS:
Team Official 2:				VISITING Team:	GOALS:
Team Official 3:					

Suspended Players/Team Officials (Full Name)	Match Officials	First Name	Surname
	Referee:		
	Asst Referee 1:		
	Asst Referee 2:		

I declare that the final result and full details of the match are correct (including Goal Scorers and Match Result, Yellow Cards and/or Red Cards issued).

Team Representative (print your name) ..... (signature) x .....

Remarks by Referee (optional – Field markings, quality of surface, etc.)

Referee must initial any amendments on the match sheet to validate.

Referee (signature)

Referee must sign & submit both completed match sheets (originals) to HOME club.

x .....

Yellow Card Offences – Players or Interchange Players	Red Card Offences – Players or Interchange Players
Y1 Unsporting behaviour	R1 Serious foul play
Y2 Dissent by word or action	R2 Violent conduct
Y3 Persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes 'persistent')	R3 Biting or spitting at someone
Y4 Delaying the restart of play	R4 Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
Y5 Failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick or throw-in	R5 Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick (unless as otherwise outlined in the Laws of the Game)
Y6 Entering, re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission	R6 Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
Yellow Card Offences – Team Officials	R7 Receiving a second caution in the same match
Y7 Any cautionable offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)	Red Card Offences – Team Officials
	R8 Any sending-off offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)

# OFFICIAL MATCH SHEET

## 12.2. ANNOTATED TO ASSIST COMPLETION

USED IN ALL SENIOR AND JUNIOR COMPETITIONS



### OFFICIAL MATCH SHEET – POINTSCORE & FINALS SERIES

WHITE COPY – To FFNC by 1pm Wednesday YELLOW COPY – To be retained by club  
HOME Club to submit results online not later than 11pm Sunday for weekend fixtures and not later than 11pm same night for midweek fixtures



Here for good.

LEAGUE / GRADE: ..... MEN'S / WOMEN'S / GIRLS / JUNIOR MIXED DATE: ..... / ..... / .....  
(please circle competition type)

HOME TEAM: ..... V VISITING TEAM: ..... FIELD: ..... K/O TIME: .....

**YOUR CLUB NAME:** .....

Ground Official required  
for all teams and all fixtures

NAME OF YOUR GROUND OFFICIAL (CANNOT BE A PLAYER OR TEAM OFFICIAL LISTED BELOW): .....

Shirt No.	Player's First Name	Player's Surname	Shirt No.	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Goals
1			1			
2			2			
3			3			
4			4			
5			5			
6			6			
7	Team Official to list the names of ALL eligible participating players – FIRST NAME and SURNAME in BLOCK LETTERS		7			
8			8			
9			9			
10			10			
11	Team Official to note 'BP' for Borrowed Player and the specific 'League/Grade' in which the player is registered		11			
12			12			
13			13			
14			14			
15			15			
16			16			

A team cannot list more than 16 players on a match sheet. If a player is wearing a number that is not listed above, please cross out a number that is not in use and write the number that will be worn by that player.

+ Opposition Own Goals:

= TOTAL GOALS:

Team Officials	Print Full Name	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Team Names	MATCH RESULT
Team Official 1:	Team to list a minimum of ONE (maximum of THREE) registered Team Officials			HOME Team:	GOALS:
Team Official 2:				VISITING Team:	GOALS:
Team Official 3:					

Suspended Players/Team Officials (Full Name)
Names of any players/team officials relevant to this team who are currently suspended are to be written here

Match Officials	First Name	Surname
Referee:		
Asst Referee 1:		
Asst Referee 2:		

I declare that the final result and full details of the match are correct (including Goal Scorers and Match Result, Yellow Cards and/or Red Cards issued).

Team Official to check goal scorers, cards issued and match result then print name and sign after the game

(signature) x

**Remarks by Referee** (optional – Field markings, quality of surface, etc.)

Referee must initial any amendments on the match sheet to validate.

Referee (signature)

x .....

Referee must sign & submit both completed match sheets (originals) to HOME club.

Yellow Card Offences – Players or Interchange Players	Red Card Offences – Players or Interchange Players
Y1 Unsporting behaviour	R1 Serious foul play
Y2 Dissent by word or action	R2 Violent conduct
Y3 Persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes 'persistent')	R3 Biting or spitting at someone
Y4 Delaying the restart of play	R4 Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
Y5 Failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick or throw-in	R5 Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick (unless as otherwise outlined in the Laws of the Game)
Y6 Entering, re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission	R6 Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
Yellow Card Offences – Team Officials	R7 Receiving a second caution in the same match
Y7 Any cautionable offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)	R8 Any sending-off offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)



## 12.4. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING A MATCH SHEET

USED IN ALL POINTSCORE AND FINALS SERIES COMPETITIONS

### PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING A MATCH SHEET FOR YOUR TEAM POINTSCORE AND FINALS SERIES COMPETITIONS

#### WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN **BEFORE** KICK-OFF?

- ✓ Complete '**MATCH DETAILS**' section of match sheet in FULL
- ✓ List the name of the Ground Official for YOUR team (this is required for ALL teams, for ALL fixtures)
- ✓ List the names of your players for the fixture (up to a **maximum of 16 eligible players**)
- ✓ List a minimum of **ONE (1)** and up to a maximum of **THREE (3)** registered Team Officials for your team
- ✓ List players/Team Officials for your team who are currently suspended (Refer to nominated section on match sheet)
- ✓ Submit completed match sheet pad to referee (**AT LEAST 15 MINUTES PRIOR** to scheduled kick-off time)

**PARTICIPANTS (I.E. PLAYERS OR TEAM OFFICIALS) CANNOT BE ADDED TO A MATCH SHEET, BEYOND WHEN THE MATCH SHEET BOOK HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE MATCH OFFICIALS BEFORE KICK-OFF**



**SCAN THE 'QR' CODE TO GET ACCESS TO COMPETITION AND DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

#### WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MATCH SHEET **AFTER** THE GAME?

- 1 The referee will complete the match records (i.e. goal scorers, goals, match result, yellow cards and red cards)
- 2 The referee will present the relevant Match Sheet to each respective Team Representative who should review the match sheet records to ensure the details are correct, then print their name and sign. Any mistakes with the match sheet details should be reviewed with the referee and amended (where appropriate) and initialled by relevant parties.
- 3 The Referee will retain the original match sheets from each team and will submit both to the HOME CLUB. The Referee will give the match sheet pad (which includes the yellow carbon copy) to each respective team representative.
- 4 The home club will enter all results online in GameDay by 11pm Sunday (for weekend fixtures) or prior to 11pm on the night of midweek fixtures.
- 5 The HOME club will submit match sheets for all home fixtures to FFNC not later than 1pm Wednesday (for weekend fixtures) or within 24 hours for midweek fixtures. An initial legible electronic copy is acceptable.
- 6 The HOME club will submit original match sheets to FFNC within TEN (10) business days after each HOME fixture.

REVIEWED NOVEMBER 2025

## 13. ABANDONED MATCHES

The referee has a right to abandon any game if an assessment concludes that the conditions are unsafe for play. A decision to abandon a match usually falls into two categories, being (1) Extreme adverse weather creating an unsafe environment for play or (2) Violent incident, threatening behaviour or any activity that creates an unsafe environment generally at the fixture/venue.

### 13.1. Immediately before a game is due to commence

- An assessment of the playing surface by the appointed referee, concludes that it is unfit for play. Particular caution should be taken with storm activity, noting that fixtures can be delayed for a short period and commence/re-commence when danger has passed (you should contact Steve Mackney – 0438 215 593 to get instructions).
- The field of play does not conform to the requirements/laws.
  - *Note: Always give the club the opportunity to fix the problem/s before abandoning the match.*
- Match Official/s are physically assaulted before the game commences – the match officials do not take the field for the game.

### 13.2. During the Game

- Weather deteriorating makes conditions unsafe for further play (if it is a passing storm, allow reasonable time, if possible) to recommence after the storm has safely passed.
- Problems caused by spectators invading the pitch, leading to a dangerous situation.
- A violent incident occurs on the field of play involving four or more players engaging in violent conduct.
- Match official/s are physically assaulted during the game.
- Any circumstances where grave danger or threat to any person may be suspected in the vicinity of the fixture/venue.

Remember, fixtures can be delayed for whatever reason if the Referee feels that the match may be resumed in a short space of time (e.g. delayed because of brief storm activity). The Referee is generally the judge of how long this interval should be, however referees are urged to contact the referee mobile (0434 856 992) when the decision is required to delay a fixture. The Referee should communicate with the captains of both sides (and the coaches if appropriate) so they are aware what is occurring and how much time will be taken off each half.

When a game has been abandoned, the Referee must submit a full Incident Report to Football Far North Coast, by 9am Monday OR no later than 48 hours after the match. The Incident Report Form can be found in the Referees Headquarters section of the FFNC website.

### 13.3. Abandoned Match Payments

Match payments for abandoned matches will be considered subject to the circumstances that apply and the impact upon the individual match official/s.

Match officials are invited to make written submission to FFNC for payment, where they have been required to abandon a match for whatever reason.

A decision to approve or deny payment will subsequently be made by Football Far North Coast.

A full report must be submitted to Football Far North Coast detailing the circumstances of the abandonment.

## **14. BEHAVIOUR**

Football Far North Coast imposes a zero tolerance latitude for inappropriate behaviour displayed by players or team officials, including when such persons are situated in the Technical Area.

Match Officials are instructed to enforce this policy vigorously at all times. Your authority can be demonstrated by one or more of the following actions:

- Verbal Warning
- Yellow Card
- Red Card

Spectators are also obliged to behave appropriately and each member club is obliged to uphold appropriate behaviour. A match official should submit an incident report if any serious incident is identified.

### **14.1. Alcohol**

No alcohol shall be permitted within the vicinity of the field at any junior competition fixture. Should a match official recognise the consumption of any alcohol occurring, or the possession of alcohol, the match must be stopped, and the Ground Official(s) notified. The match can only continue when the matter has been resolved. The matter must be reported to FFNC.

If any participant is suspected of being affected by alcohol, such participant(s) should be instructed to leave the field of play (and Technical Area). Report such instances to FFNC.

### **14.2. Glass containers**

Glass containers are prohibited from the vicinity of a sporting field. If a match official identifies the presence of glass containers (regardless of whether this is alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverage), the match should be stopped and the Ground Official(s) should be instructed to rectify the matter.

### **14.3. Smoking and Vaping**

Smoking or Vaping are prohibited from the vicinity of a sporting field. If a match official identifies the presence of such activity, the match should be stopped and the Ground Official(s) should be instructed to rectify the matter.

## 15. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AGAINST MATCH OFFICIALS

FFNC does NOT tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive behaviour from players, team officials or spectators towards match officials and it is crucial that ALL match officials to take action where this does occur.

Players, Team Officials and spectators are not allowed into the Referees' room unless invited by the Match Officials. Referees shall not discuss match decisions with players, team officials, or spectators during the half time break or at the conclusion of the match whether on the field or not.

### 15.1. What to do in the case of unacceptable behaviour from Team Officials?

- If you are the centre Referee: At the next stoppage in play go over to the team official/s and take appropriate action as detailed in the Ask, Tell (yellow card), Remove (red card) strategy.  
Remember this strategy is a guide and you CAN issue a red card to a team official as the first step, if appropriate.
- If you are an Assistant Referee: Speak to the individual/s in the Technical Area if you are close to them and the behaviour is not too serious. If the behaviour is serious or you do not feel comfortable, call the referee over at the next available stoppage in play (using the flag signal across your chest) and tell the referee what has occurred and your suggested action (e.g. yellow card or red card). The referee will then decide what action to take.

### 15.2. What to do in the case of unacceptable behaviour from spectators?

BOTH teams are required to have at least one Ground Official (visible in a bright vest) assigned to monitor behaviour during each respective match and specific to each individual field that is being played on.

- *If you are the Centre Referee:* Stop the game and report the incident to the Ground Official. Identify the person or persons causing the trouble and ask the Ground Official to take action (i.e. speak to them) or if appropriate, have them REMOVED from the venue.
- *If you are an Assistant Referee:* At the next available stoppage in play, call the referee over (using the flag signal across your chest) and tell the referee what has occurred. The referee will then decide what action to take (outlined in the point above).

As well as the action taken on the day, it is necessary to submit an INCIDENT REPORT following unacceptable behaviour by a Ground Official, spectators or any person not named on the match sheet.

### 15.3. Incidents of Assault

Should you ever be physically assaulted by ANYONE at a game, the following action should be taken:

- Abandon the game (if in progress) - MANDATORY ACTION (No exceptions) - you do NOT complete the game!
- Do nothing to aggravate any situation. Get away from the incident as quickly as possible.
- Include names and reasonable details of as many witnesses to the incident as possible.
- If you require police assistance or wish to report the incident to authorities, call or visit the local police station (or if necessary, call 000).
- If medical attention is needed, make sure you get a medical certificate detailing the injuries.
- **Contact 0434 856 992 as soon as possible (within 24 hours).**
- Submit a full Incident Report to Football Far North Coast within 24 HOURS of the incident.

*If there are additional match officials at the game, an Incident Report will be expected from each match official.*

## **15.4. What is the impact on me officiating if I receive a RED CARD when in the role as a player or team official?**

If a match official who is also a player, coach or manager, receives a RED CARD and or is otherwise suspended for conduct as a player, coach or manager, FFNC will make an assessment whether you remain eligible to be appointed to games during the period of the suspension that is imposed.

If an individual is suspended for a breach of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Regulations (in any role), it can be anticipated that they will be suspended from all participation in football (whether as a referee, player, or team official) until the suspension has been extinguished in full.

# GUIDE TO ASSIST CLUBS AND GROUND OFFICIALS

A person who acts in the role of a **Ground Official** **must** be;

- Aged at least 18 years;
- Registered in PlayFootball as a **volunteer**
- Recorded on the match sheet as the Ground Official
- Only acting in the role of a Ground Official (i.e. not also coaching or working in a canteen while acting in the role of Ground Official)
- Visible, vigilant, mobile, impartial and passive during the game
- Wearing an appropriate vest (e.g. labelled Ground Official, Duty Officer or Volunteer)
- Otherwise eligible (e.g. not subject to the terms of any suspension) and have appropriate traits and skills to act in the role

A person who acts in the role of a **Ground Official** is **encouraged** to;

- Provide support to Match Officials, including supporting their safety within the vicinity of the club fields and venue
- Work constructively with patrons and supporters (including from opposition clubs) to promote appropriate behaviour
- Be of assistance where it is reasonable to do so (e.g. sourcing a club referee or helping to facilitate ambulance access to a field)
- Report significant incidents to the CLUB

A person who is acting in the role of a **Ground Official** must **not** be;

- Consuming alcohol or be affected by alcohol or any illicit substance
- Smoking (or vaping)
- Acting in multiple roles while acting in the role of Ground Official (e.g. not also be coaching or working in a canteen)
- Acting in the role of a player or team official when being a nominated ground official
- Displaying vocal behaviour, including being perceived as being biased

A **club** must;

- Appoint an appropriate adult as a Ground Official for each competition team for both HOME and AWAY fixtures
- Ensure that there is an appropriate number of Ground Officials to manage behaviour at home MiniRoos fixtures.
- Encourage spectators to comply with the National Spectator Code of Behaviour
- Consider the support required for each Ground Official to ensure their well-being
- Consider the support required for each Match Official to ensure their well-being
- Report significant matters in writing to Football Far North Coast

## THANK YOU FOR MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO UPHOLDING A MORE APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN COMMUNITY FOOTBALL

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2025

## 16. REPORT WRITING

There are two types of reports which must be submitted under certain circumstances.

- Send off Report
  - An individual send-off report is required for each red card incident.
- Incident Report
  - An individual incident report must be submitted in relation to allegations made against a specific individual, team or club (where applicable).

A link to both reports is available via the QR code on the back of the handbook and also in the Referees Headquarters section of the Football Far North Coast website.

The information contained within reports should be factual, concise and only refer to the incident(s) you are reporting.

### 16.1. Send Off Reports

Send off Reports MUST be submitted when any participant (player, interchange player or team official) is shown a red card before, during or after the match (either after receiving a straight red card or after receiving two yellow cards and a subsequent red card in the same match).

When writing your send off report, you MUST include the following information:

- Your name and role (e.g. referee, assistant referee etc.).
- Match Details – Competition, Grade/Division, Home Club, Away Club, Location, Date and Minute of send off.
- Name of the participant that was sent off, their club name and the shirt number if it was a player.
- The offence that resulted in the participant being sent off for (e.g. Violent Conduct, R2) – the send off offences are noted on the bottom of the match sheets.
- Description of send off: WHAT happened to ignite in the send off? (include relevant direct events leading up to the send off). WHO was involved? WHERE on (or off) the field did it happen? Did you have a clear view? What action did you (as the referee) and/or your AR's take (or not take)? Did any of your assistant referees see it and if so, they must also lodge a report.
- If immediately after issuing a participant with a red card that participant is guilty of misconduct or commits a further infringement, you must answer "Yes" to the question; "Did anything occur immediately after the send off?" and then describe what occurred.
- If a sent off participant is guilty of misconduct after leaving the field of play (e.g. on the sideline after play has resumed or near the change rooms after the match), then you will need to submit a separate Incident Report (as well as the original send off report).

All Send off and Incident Reports MUST be submitted to FFNC NO LATER than 9am Monday (or within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures).

## 16.2. Incident Report

Incident Reports **MUST** be submitted in circumstances when;

- Anyone who is NOT listed on the match sheet as a player or coach/team official (i.e. Ground Official, club official, spectator, other person) is guilty of misconduct before, during or after the game.
- A listed participant is guilty of misconduct while you are not on the field of play before the game, at half-time or after the game.
- Termination of a match due to weather, crowd disturbance, assault or any other reason.
- To report any safety issue or extremely poor/unsafe ground markings and/or to report extremely unsatisfactory ground facilities such as the referee's change room, toilet, shower facilities etc.

When writing your Incident Report, you **MUST** include the following information:

- Your name and role (e.g. referee, assistant referee etc.).
- Match Details –Home Club, Away Club, Competition, Grade/Division and Date.
- The person/s involved (name/s if known) and the club they are associated with or note "other" in the event of a termination of the match due to other circumstance (i.e. not the fault of one club).
- Time and location of incident.
- Description of incident: WHAT happened? WHEN did it happen? WHO was involved? WHERE did it happen? Did anyone witness it and if so, who?
- Include names and reasonable details of persons directly involved in incident (where known).
- Include names and reasonable details of witnesses to incident (where known).

All Send off and Incident Reports **MUST** be submitted to FFNC **NO LATER** than 9am Monday (or within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures).

## 16.3. Summary

- All Send off and Incident Reports **MUST** be *received* by FFNC **NO LATER** than 9am Monday (or within 48 hours of mid-week fixtures) by use of the Jotform (refer QR code back of handbook).
- If your report is being submitted to report foul, insulting or abusive language made by a participant or any other person, you **MUST** write the full word/s in your report. **DON'T** use abbreviations such as F\*#K, or "the 'F' word" – **WRITE THE WHOLE WORD/S.**
- Before submitting your report/s you can phone 0434 856 992 if you have any questions regarding writing a Send off report or Incident Report.
- All red cards and yellow cards that were issued in a match must be recorded on the match sheet and a Send off report is required for ALL red cards issued in a match.

You can find a Guide to Writing Send off and Incident Reports in the Referees Headquarters section of the FFNC website, under 'Forms.' Alternatively, scan the QR code on the back of the handbook.

## 16.4. EXAMPLE SEND OFF REPORT

(ALL FIELDS ARE MANDATORY)

### FFNC Send-off/Incident Report Form

Select Report Type: \*

Send-off Report  
 Incident Report

YOUR NAME: \* YOUR ROLE: \*

Teresa Green Referee

MATCH DETAILS

HOME CLUB \* VISITING CLUB \*

Rock FC Paper FC

VENUE \*

Rock Field 1

COMPETITION \* LEAGUE OR GRADE \*

Senior Men's Pointscore League 3

DATE OF FIXTURE \*

28/03/2026 Date

Next

### SENT OFF PARTICIPANT DETAILS

SELECT THE ROLE OF THE PARTICIPANT: \*

Player  
 Team Official

FULL NAME: \*

Lou Natic

SHIRT NUMBER \*

2

CLUB \*

Rock FC

MINUTE OF SEND-OFF \*

78

If the send-off offence occurred BEFORE the match, AFTER the match OR at HALF-TIME, please specify as such in the 'MINUTE OF SEND-OFF FIELD'.

Back

Next

SEND OFF CHARGE \*

R1 - Serious foul play

CLEARLY DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT/S THAT RESULTED IN THE SEND-OFF (in the case of a send-off for issuing two cautions to a participant in the same match, briefly describe EACH incident that resulted in a caution being issued) \*

Player #8 for Paper FC had the ball at his feet near the halfway line when player #2 for Rock FC slid studs up from behind and made first contact with the Paper FC player's lower leg/ankle.

The challenge was made with a high degree of force and was extremely dangerous, with only a minimal attempt to gain control of the ball, in my opinion.

I was approximately 15 metres from the incident when it occurred, and I immediately blew my whistle to award a direct free kick to Paper FC and then I issued Rock FC #2 with a red card for serious foul play.

DID ANYTHING OCCUR IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SEND OFF? \*

YES  
 NO

CLEARLY DESCRIBE BELOW WHAT HAPPENED: \*

After issuing Rock FC #2 with a red card, he yelled at me loud enough for both Assistant Referees to hear, "I was going for the ball! You're fucking joking, that's ridiculous!" He then left the field of play without further incident.

Back

Submit

## 16.5. EXAMPLE INCIDENT REPORT

(ALL FIELDS ARE MANDATORY)

### FFNC Send-off/Incident Report Form

Select Report Type: \*

Send-off Report  
 Incident Report

YOUR NAME: \* YOUR ROLE: \*

Perry Scope Referee

MATCH DETAILS

HOME CLUB \* VISITING CLUB \*

Paper FC Rock FC

VENUE \*

Paper Field 1

COMPETITION \* LEAGUE OR GRADE \*

Senior Women's Pointscore League 4

DATE OF FIXTURE \*

29/03/2026 Calendar icon

Date

Next

#### INCIDENT DETAILS

PERSON 1 \*

Mark Urr

PERSON 1 CLUB ASSOCIATED WITH \*

Paper FC

PERSON 2

Sue Render

PERSON 2 CLUB ASSOCIATED WITH

Paper FC

PERSON 3

PERSON 3 CLUB ASSOCIATED WITH

WHEN DID THE INCIDENT OCCUR?

- BEFORE the match
- DURING the match
- AFTER the match

LOCATION OF INCIDENT \*

Match Officials Changeroom

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT \*

At the conclusion of the match, I returned to the match officials changeroom and completed both match sheets. I then waited in the changeroom for approximately ten minutes for both team officials to come and sign, and collect their match sheet pad.

When the Paper FC Team Official arrived (identified from the match sheet as being Mark Urr), he signed his team's match sheet and then said, "You had a terrible game. That was the worst refereeing I've ever seen", before he threw the original copy of the match sheet on the floor near my feet.

The Woodburn Ground Official (identified from the match sheet as Sue Render) was near our changeroom door when this occurred and she then said, "Yeah you're shit mate."

I politely asked both the Team Official and the Ground Official to leave the changeroom area, which they did without further comments.

The incident was witnessed by my two Assistant Referees, who will also be providing an Incident Report

NAME OF WITNESSES TO THE INCIDENT (if any)

Both Assistant Referees

Submit

Back

Submit

## 17. MATCH OFFICIAL PAYMENTS SCHEDULE 2026

Payments to match officials for all COMPETITION fixtures will be made fortnightly via direct credit into the nominated bank account of respective match officials.

There will be NO cash payments to match officials for any COMPETITION fixtures.

Each Individual Member Club participating in a FRIENDLY/TRIAL fixture is required to arrange CASH payment to match officials on the day of the friendly/trial. The HOME club is however ultimately responsible for ensuring that match officials receive the FULL payment due to them.

The schedule of payments is based on the highest League/Grade playing in the friendly/trial.

Pointscore / Finals / Friendlies	Full Amounts Receivable		
League / Grade	Centre	Assistant Referee 1	Assistant Referee 2
Men's Premier League	\$130	\$60	\$60
Men's Championship League	\$110	\$50	\$50
Men's League 1 - 4	\$90	\$50	\$50
Men's League 5 - 7	\$90	\$45	\$45
Women's Premier League	\$100	\$50	\$50
Women's League 2 - 5	\$90	\$45	\$45
Grade 16	\$60	\$30	\$30
Grade 15	\$60		
Grade 14	\$50		
Grade 13	\$40		
Grade 12	\$40		

ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan	Full Amounts Receivable		
Competition	Centre	Assistant Referee 1	Assistant Referee 2
Men's Premier League	\$130	\$60	\$60
Men's Open A	\$100	\$50	\$50
Men's Open B	\$90	\$45	\$45
Men's Open C	\$90	\$45	\$45
Grade 16	\$50	\$30	\$30
Callan McMillan 'A'	\$100	\$50	\$50
Callan McMillan 'B'	\$90	\$45	\$45

All Match Official payments for competition fixtures will be made via direct credit into their nominated bank account on a fortnightly basis AFTER appointments have been completed and reconciled with the match sheet records.

Individual Match Officials must complete and submit the Football Far North Coast Match Officials 2026 Jotform which requests information including Banking Details & Statement by a Supplier Declaration to FFNC before they can be appointed to matches.

This form can be accessed from the QR code on the back of the handbook or alternatively can be found under "Forms" in the "Referee Headquarters" section of the FFNC website.

## **17.1. How do I get paid for the appointments that I officiate?**

All payments made to you as a match official, for appointments that you officiate, will be made via direct credit into your nominated bank account on a fortnightly basis AFTER appointments have been completed and reconciled with the match sheet records. There will be NO cash payments to match officials for any COMPETITION fixtures.

## **17.2. Reconciling payments received with appointments completed**

If you want to get specific payment details (i.e. reconcile with your appointments) you can access Schedula and refer to "Unread Pay Advices". The records of all pay advice information is found in your "Dashboard", under "Your Pay Advices".

## **17.3. Will I get paid if I officiate when I was not formally appointed?**

FFNC will pay a registered match official who has officiated on an appointment subject to the following circumstances:

- You are eligible to officiate in the specific role on the given fixture
- Your name is notated on the relevant match sheets

## **17.4. Can I claim any expenses or travel?**

FFNC will reimburse the cost for initial accreditation (i.e. Starter Package) after you have completed ten (10) appointments. Written evidence of the payment made (and being claimed) must be submitted to FFNC.

FFNC may offer a nominal payment for travel where such round trip (for appointments) is beyond 150kms.

FFNC will make an assessment of any specific claim lodged with approval to pay (or decline) being at the absolute discretion of FFNC.

FFNC does not impose any fee for an individual to register as a match official. Each individual who registers as match official (except Starter Package) is required to meet the payment imposed by Football Australia and Northern NSW Football when registering as a Match Official in PlayFootball annually.

## **17.5. How do I make a claim for a reimbursement or expense?**

Refer to the QR code found on the back of the handbook or alternatively in Referee Headquarters on the FFNC website.

If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding match official payments, please email [referees@ffnc.net.au](mailto:referees@ffnc.net.au) or contact 0434 856 992 if you wish to discuss personally.

## **18. NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT & ETHICS REGULATIONS**

The Code of Conduct & Ethics Regulations is to provide individuals with an indication of the standards expected of them at ALL times (regardless of whether you are officiating on a match or otherwise).

### **Conduct**

- Ensure a smart appearance is maintained on and off the field, including wearing the uniform neatly and correctly and wearing the prescribed Match Officials polo shirt to and from games (where appropriate).
- Ensure that your knowledge of the Laws of the Game is up-to-date and thoroughly understood.
- Allow sufficient time to properly arrive and prepare for your appointment/s (arrive a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game).
- Ensure that you are at the expected level of fitness to fulfil your duties at the required standard.
- Social activities after games on club premises shall be kept within reasonable limits. If in doubt, ask yourself if your conduct could be used to the detriment of yourself or colleagues in the future.
- Complete all administrative tasks (e.g. post-match reports) within the time and the standards required. Ensure that relevant reports/information is forwarded promptly to Football Far North Coast.
- Ensure adequate notice is given when unavailable for appointments because of planned and known activities, by updating this information in the online appointments system.
- Limit your comments when dealing with club officials, players, media etc. or even fellow match officials. If there is a need to speak, only speak in FACTS. Opinions can be misinterpreted and misconstrued and rebound in a way that you may not intend to occur.
- Ensure that you treat your colleagues with the same respect and courtesy that you would expect of them.

### **Ethics**

- Match Officials play an important role within the realm of football. As a match official, you have decided to pursue a unique course within the football fraternity that includes clubs, players, spectators and others. Participants and spectators will variously disagree with some decisions you make, but regardless, they should respect you as a match official.
- You shall carry out your duties as a match official without fear or favour and maintain the highest standards of integrity and honesty. Similar standards shall be maintained in associated off-field activities.
- You will continually be observed and judged, even when away from the immediate vicinity of clubs or grounds. Keep this in mind and act in an appropriate manner at ALL times.
- Conduct yourself with dignity and do not act in such a manner as to bring yourself, your colleagues or Football Far North Coast into disrepute.
- You shall assist and support in the development and promotion of match officials and match official activity. Negative comments and continual criticism do nothing to constructively assist individual match officials or Football Far North Coast, nor enhance your standing within the football community.
- Maintain your best at all times, on the field, at training, at meetings and socially. Standards of conduct that are anything less are self-defeating and unacceptable.

## 19. FINALS SERIES PROCEDURES

(including ANZAC Day Cup & Callan McMillan Memorial Shield Finals)

### 19.1. Overview

- For ALL junior (Grade 12) and senior competitions, there will be **10 minutes extra time each way** if the match is drawn at full time. There is NO "Golden Goal" in any competition, and the FULL extra time period (10 minutes each way) must be played.
- There is NO allowance for time lost in any junior or senior fixture (unless otherwise determined by FFNC).
- A strict adherence to the commencement of play as per the scheduled time, half-time and conclusion of time at the end of the match is to apply.
- The Match Officials appointed to each Final/Grand Final, will be asked to nominate a player of the match, prior to the presentation of medallions and trophies.
- Refer to back cover of handbook for QR code to access links relevant to FIFA Laws of the Game

### 19.2. Junior Competitions Finals and Grand Finals

- For ALL junior competitions (Grades 12 to 16 age groups inclusive), if the match is drawn at full time there will be **10 minutes extra time each way**.
- For Grades 12 to 14, if the match is still drawn after extra time, the team which finished highest in the point score shall advance (Joint Premiers will be declared in a Grand Final where applicable in such circumstances).
- For Grades 15 and 16, if the match is still drawn after extra time, *a penalty shoot-out will apply to determine the winner*.

### 19.3. Senior Leagues Finals and Grand Finals

- If the match is drawn at full time, there will be **10 minutes extra time each way**.
- If the match is still drawn after extra time, *a penalty shoot-out will apply to determine the winner*..

### 19.4. Completing Match Sheets in the case of Extra-Time or Penalties to decide the Winner of a Match:

- If a Match is decided after Extra-time;
  - Complete the match sheets as usual – i.e. All goal scorers are noted and the *Total Goals* and *Match Result* should indicate the goals scored by each team following the conclusion of extra-time.
- If a Match is decided after Penalties;
  - Complete the match sheets with all details up until the conclusion of EXTRA-TIME. The *Total Goals* and *Match Result* will indicate an even amount of goals scored by each team. To confirm the final result (after penalties), write the result of the penalties in the *Remarks by Referee* section near the bottom of the match sheet – e.g. "Rock FC def. Paper FC 5 - 4 after penalties".

## **20. STANDARD OF DRESS & UNIFORM**

Your responsibility starts from the moment you arrive at the ground to the moment you leave it, so it is important to look professional.

## **20.1. Where do I get my Match Official Clothing and Gear?**

**Umbro** is the official Northern NSW Football (and Football Far North Coast) supplier for match official gear.

Most match official items will need to be purchased online from the Umbro.

[www.umbroteamwear.com.au/collections/northern-nsw-referees](http://www.umbroteamwear.com.au/collections/northern-nsw-referees)

## **20.2. What match officials gear and equipment is available from the FFNC office?**

Football Far North Coast has a limited supply of match officials gear and equipment available for purchase at the Football Far North Coast office – Suite 5/32 Gum Tree Drive, Goonellabah.

The office generally operates between 9am – 4pm on business days, however normal football activities may mean that the office is closed between these hours on occasions. If you need to pick-up or purchase gear, please contact 0434 856 992 before visiting the office.

- Clothing and Gear must be paid for by direct credit (prior to collection) into the Football Far North Coast account by notating your name on the bank transaction or paid in cash (when collected). There are no Eftpos facilities available.

Financial Institution: Newcastle Permanent Building Society

Account Name: Football Far North Coast

BSB: 650 300 Account Number: 509 829 102

Reference: Your Name

The following items can be purchased from the FFNC office, noting that some items may need to be ordered from a supplier, so you may anticipate a 2-3 week waiting period upon your request.



## **20.3. What should I wear to and from fixtures that I am appointed to?**

Match Officials should arrive to and leave from the ground wearing the official Football Far North Coast polo shirt (or previous Referees polo shirt). Match Official polo shirts are provided to each new first-year match official.

ALL Match Officials should wear appropriate pants or shorts and shoes.

Match Officials appointed to Men's and Women's Premier and Men's Championship League matches are encouraged to wear long dress pants and black dress shoes, when arriving at and leaving a venue.



## **20.4. What items am I required to wear (and have) when officiating?**

- The ONLY clothing (i.e. shirt, shorts, socks, cap, spray jacket) that can be worn by match officials is that which is approved by Football Far North Coast.
- Before, during and after matches, match officials should ensure their on-field shirts are tucked in and socks are up (not above the knee), with shirt sleeves down.
- Watch(es) in good running order (it is suggested to have a spare with you).
- NO JEWELLERY (except watches) is permitted to be worn by match officials.
- Whistle(s) in good working order (*and is the prescribed Fox 40/good buddy model whistle*).
- Any Match Officials wearing skins/undergarments must adhere to the same guidelines issued to players in the FIFA Laws of the Game.
- Ensure refereeing shirt and shorts are clean and, if necessary, ironed.
- Socks must be BLACK (not faded or otherwise) and clean, not mud-stained. Keep them up!!
- Footwear MUST be predominately *BLACK* and should be clean and polished.
- Flags are clean (washed and ironed if necessary).
- You have a coin to complete the toss before the match.
- Approved referee caps (badged as Football Australia) is the only approved type that can be worn when officiating.

## 20.5. Match Day Checklist



Football League/Grade:			Venue:			Date:					
Home Team		Team Captains	Away Team			Name					
Name	Colour	Ref.	Ref.	Score	First Half	Second Half	Colour				
Cautions (Note: If the caution is sent off, it was issued to a Team Offense)			Number	Offence	Time	Number	Offence	Time	Cautions (Note: If the caution or send-off was issued to a Team Offense)		
Send-offs See above for Team Offense Notes/			Number	Offence	Time	Number	Offence	Time	Send-offs See above for Team Offense Notes/		
Notes/ Remarks									Remarks		



Watch



Whistle



Flag



Coin



Card Set



Match Record Sheet



Pens (x 2)



Water

## 20.6. What colour shirt should I wear on my appointed fixtures?

- Match Officials should wear a colour shirt that does not clash with the colours on the playing strips of either team in the fixture. We encourage match officials to have at least three colour options available to avoid any colour clashes with teams in fixtures they officiate.
- FFNC publishes the colour/design for the primary and alternate playing strips for each club on our website. This may be used as a resource for you to plan ahead and select the most appropriate colour shirt.
- If the Referee is wearing a coloured shirt (not black) BOTH Assistant Referee's should wear the same colour as the Referee, when possible. If this is not possible then BOTH AR's must wear BLACK\* (\*unless match official(s) are GREEN SHIRTS)
- If the Referee is wearing a black shirt then both Assistant Referee's MUST wear BLACK. \* (\*unless match official(s) are GREEN SHIRTS)



\* Green Shirt for First-Year Match Officials

## 21. SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOL

Match Officials using social media need to be aware of the ramifications of posting comments online, regardless of what platform is used. Match Officials are reminded of the following:

- Social media is not an approved forum relevant to match officials activity.
- Critical or derogatory comments regarding specific matches, players, coaches, other match officials etc. are UNACCEPTABLE on ANY social media forum and such conduct by individuals is liable for disciplinary action by FFNC.
- Comments posted can create the inference of bias, noting that match officials must always remain impartial.
- Players, coaches and spectators also use social media, so consider this when making comments online.
- While some comments you make may be meant as a joke or not meant seriously, you just don't know how others will interpret what you publish.

Football Far North Coast has a Facebook and Instagram account open to the football and broader community (except persons aged 16 or younger). This will include promoting match officials activity across the zone.

- Facebook: **Football Far North Coast**
- Instagram: **@footballfnc**

## 22. FOOTBALL FAR NORTH COAST WEBSITE

There is a dedicated area on the FFNC website for match officials, called "*Referee Headquarters*". The FFNC website provides access to useful resources, including forms and important information relating to match official activity.

To view the Referee Headquarters on the Football Far North Coast website visit: [www.footballfarnorthcoast.com.au/referee-headquarters](http://www.footballfarnorthcoast.com.au/referee-headquarters).

The website continues to be updated. Resources will include:

- Coaching Resources – may include: coaching videos, documents, PowerPoint presentations etc.
- Forms – Match Forms (e.g. Send off Form), Administration Forms (e.g. Bank Account Details Form)
- Payment Information for Individual Match Officials

Most information can be found within the Referee Headquarters or this handbook (including the QR code on the back of this publication).

## **23. TRAINING, COACHING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

All match officials are expected to take part in some training or coaching sessions throughout the season, with online Zoom sessions also a possibility. Attendance/participation may be used to assist in the appointments process during the Pointscore season and also the Finals Series.

Throughout the season, all reasonable efforts will be made to implement the following strategies:

- Match Day Assessment of each match official by an experienced FFNC Match Official
- Practical training sessions
- Theoretical training sessions (including by Zoom)
- Engagement with the Northern NSW Football (NNSWF) Regional Referee Education & Development Officer
- Identification of Talented Junior Match Officials to attend accelerated training activities
- Provision of resources to facilitate personal support (where requested)
- Scheduling of activities (e.g. social) to provide recognition and connection for match officials
- Implementation of effective communication channels

### **23.1. Senior Match Officials - Mentoring**

Regardless of experience, senior match officials are often seen as role models and “mentors” to junior match officials. While this may be an unofficial role, it is important for senior match officials to recognise the integral role that they play in the development path of all new referees.

Junior or younger match officials, in particular, often look up to senior match officials and seek their support and guidance on a range of refereeing matters. Senior match officials are encouraged to offer support on (and off) the field to junior match officials, in particular, while talking with them in a friendly and respectful manner.

When junior match officials are appointed on senior matches, senior match officials are reminded of the important role they can play in giving confidence to a young or new match official. Be mindful of not “overruling” excessively and only when decisions are obviously incorrect. In these situations, discuss the incident/s in a constructive manner, reminding them that this is all part of the learning experience.

Any senior match officials who have any questions regarding the role that they can unofficially play in the development of match officials should email [referees@ffnc.net.au](mailto:referees@ffnc.net.au) or contact 0434 856 992.

### **23.2. Coaching / Laws of the Game Questions**

Do you have a referee coaching related question? It might be based on an incident in a game that you officiated or a question related to the laws of the game that you want answered?

Contact [mcarter@northernnstfootball.com.au](mailto:mcarter@northernnstfootball.com.au) about officiating/Laws of the Game questions

Contact [general.manager@ffnc.net.au](mailto:general.manager@ffnc.net.au) or 0438215593 about any incidents or general concerns

### **23.3. Referee Accreditation System**

#### **C3 Referee (previously known as Level 4):**

The C3 Referee training program is for those that wish to start officiating as an official referee on junior or youth football matches within their zone. Upon completion of the theory section of a C3 Referee course, they can register with their zone and start their refereeing career.

#### **C4) Referee (previously known as Level 3):**

The C4 Referee training program is for referees 16 years of age or older who have registered with their zone and are appointed to higher graded junior and youth matches on a regular basis. These referees enjoy what they are doing, show a level of commitment, want to continually improve and would like to officiate up to the lower levels of adult football. Many of these referees will create the base for Northern NSW Football's future referees at the highest levels.

#### **T1 Referee (previously known as Level 2):**

T1 referees have made a decision to focus strongly on their refereeing career. They attend training and coaching sessions on a regular basis. Completing the T1 Referee training program allows a match official to receive more advanced coaching in a group environment by highly regarded referee coaches. These referees have the qualification to officiate up to the penultimate level of football within Northern NSW and show an aptitude towards developing their skills. This is the minimum level to be a referee in the national A-League Women's Competition.

#### **T2 Referee (previously known as Level 1):**

T2 referees are extremely dedicated to officiating and want to reach the highest level of refereeing in Northern NSW Football and beyond. These elite referees are professional in outlook and work ethic and are on the top referee panels within Northern NSW Football. They are expected be at every training session and are regarded as our leaders within the state's football refereeing community. This is the minimum level to be a referee in the national A-League Men's Competition.

Contact [mcarter@northern NSW football.com.au](mailto:mcarter@northern NSW football.com.au) about Accreditation questions

## 23.4. Referee Pathways and Development

Northern NSW Football continues to invest in refereeing to provide opportunities for people to get involved in the world game, start a rewarding career, be given development opportunities and further their knowledge and skills through being supported by experienced coaching staff.

Within refereeing, there are three development pathways for referees to consider – community football refereeing, premier football refereeing and becoming a referee assessor or instructor.

Community football refereeing is directed towards match officials working within local amateur competitions. This pathway begins with the FA Laws of the Game online training program and is then followed by undertaking the C3 (Level 4) and C4 (Level 3) Referee courses. The qualifications gained from these courses prepare referees to officiate in junior, youth and lower divisions of senior football.

The pathway for premier football refereeing can commence with the FA Laws of the Game online training program or can involve a transition from community football refereeing. Premier football refereeing involves more advanced level courses which are designed for match officials working on the Northern NSW Football Premier Competitions and within regional, state and national competitions. Extending upon the C3 (Level 4) qualifications, the next steps to become a premier referee comprise the C4 (Level 3), T1 (Level 2) and T2 (Level 1) Referee training programs. Referees who complete all of these advanced training programs will be eligible to officiate on matches ranging from junior football to adult football and through to the top tier of state football and potentially the national level.

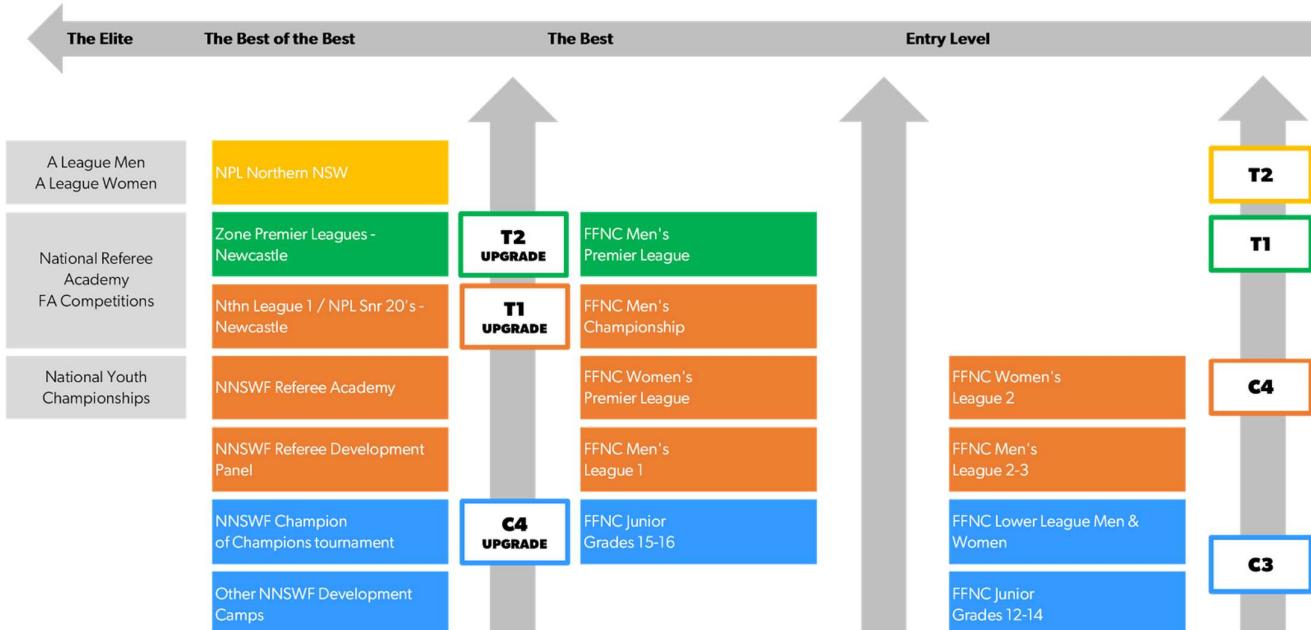
Referee assessors and instructors are crucial to the development of their peers, in addition to building on their own skills as match officials. Accreditation for both roles also follows a tiered accreditation system, with three levels for assessors and two levels for instructors. Assessors are qualified to assess and provide match day coaching to match officials, while instructors conduct courses and training programs.

## 23.5. Football Far North Coast Match Officials Pathway

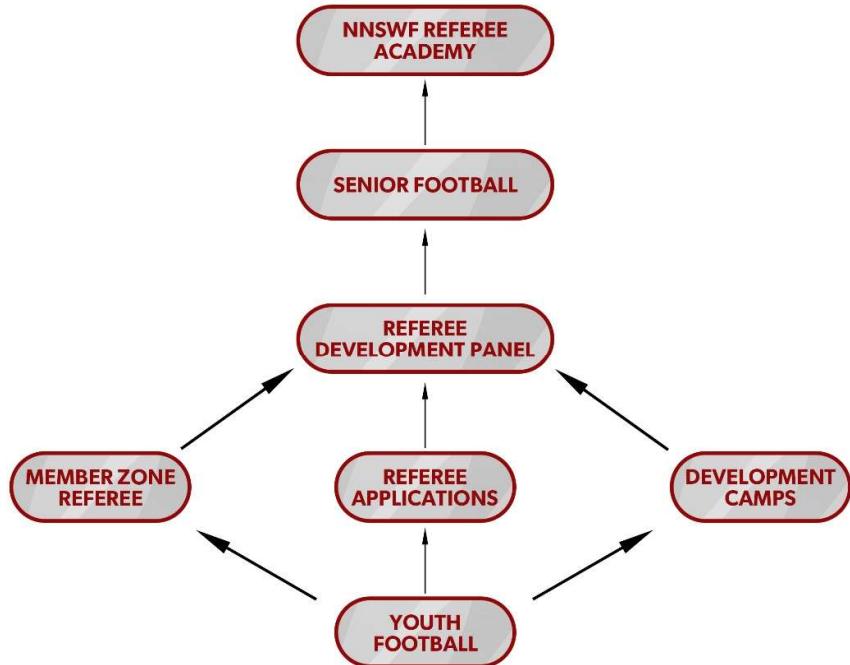
UPDATED DECEMBER 2025



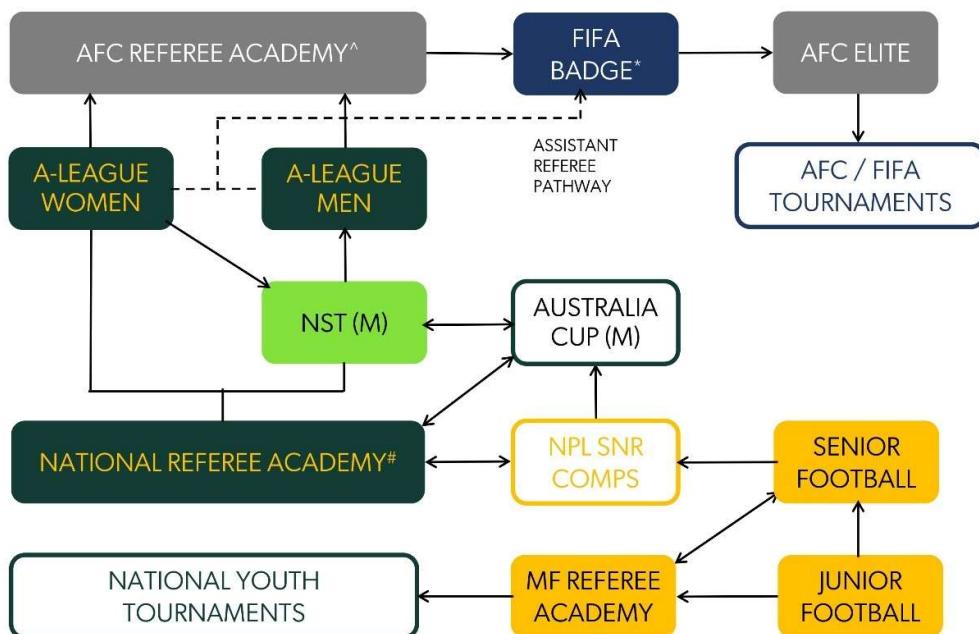
Football Far North Coast > Senior & Youth > Male & Female



## 23.6. Northern NSW Football Referee Development Pathway



## 23.7. Football Australia Match Official Pathway

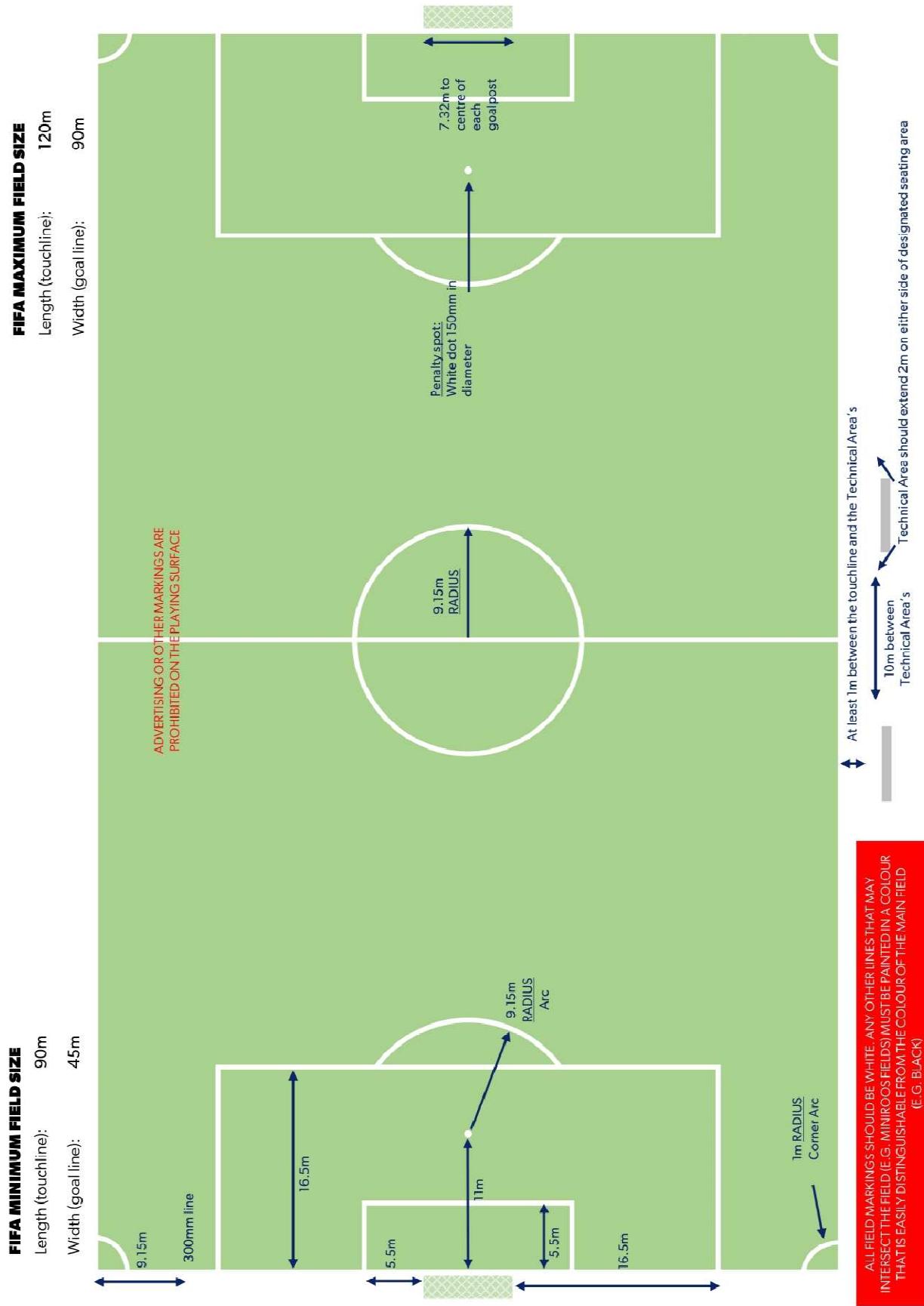


<sup>#</sup>A position on the National Referee Academy does not guarantee selection to national competitions

<sup>\*</sup>A position on the AFC Referee Academy does not guarantee a FIFA Referee badge. Age restriction 25-29yrs.

\*FIFA badge does not guarantee selection for the AFC Elite Panel  
Selection is based on need and merit

## 24. FIFA FIELD MARKING GUIDE



## **LIST OF COMPLETED APPOINTMENTS**

List your completed appointments below and on the following pages. This can act as your Officials Log when required for upgrading your Match Officials Qualification and/or provide a record to confirm match payments made by FFNC.

## **Yellow Card Offences**

### **Players or Interchange Players**

- Y1 Unsporting behaviour
- Y2 Dissent by word or action
- Y3 Persistent offences (no specific number or pattern of offences constitutes 'persistent')
- Y4 Delaying the restart of play
- Y5 Failing to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a dropped ball, corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- Y6 Entering, re-entering or deliberately leaving the field of play without the referee's permission

## **Yellow Card Offences**

### **Team Officials**

- Y7 Any cautionable offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)

## **Red Card Offences**

### **Players or Interchange Players**

- R1 Serious foul play
- R2 Violent conduct
- R3 Biting or spitting at someone
- R4 Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a handball offence (except a goalkeeper within their penalty area)
- R5 Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick (unless as otherwise outlined in the Laws of the Game)
- R6 Using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or action(s)
- R7 Receiving a second caution in the same match

## **Red Card Offences**

### **Team Officials**

- R8 Any sending-off offence by a Team Official (as listed in the Laws of the Game)

## **Scan the QR Code shown below for access to:**

- Schedula (for appointments)
- Laws of the Game
- Player of the Match (Men's Premier League OR Women's Premier League ONLY)
- Send-Off Report and/or Incident Report
- Claim for Reimbursement Jotform
- National Code of Conduct and Ethics Regulations
- National Member Protection Framework
- FFNC Website & Coaching Resources

