



EASTERN SUBURBS  
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

# Competitive Football Operations Guide

# 2018

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

For clarity and consistency, any discrepancy found in this document will be superseded by the ESFA Winter Competition Rules.

## 10 ESFA Match Facts

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

## Age Group Information

Age Group	Ball Size	Field Size	Players	Halves (Match)	Max Subs	
<b>U6-7</b>	3	Mini (30 x 20m)	4 v 4	15-20min (30-40min)	3 interchange	
<b>U8-9, G8-9</b>		¼ (40-50 x 30-40m)	7 v 7	20min (40min)	4 interchange	
<b>U10-11, G10-11</b>	4	½ (60-70 x 40-50m)	9 v 9	25min (50min)	5 interchange	
<b>U12, G12</b>				30min (60min)		
<b>U13</b>				35min (70min)		
<b>U14, G14</b>	5	Full field	11 v 11	45min (90min)		7 interchange
<b>U15-16, G16</b>						5 substitutes
<b>U18, G18</b>					7 interchange	
<b>AAM, AAW</b>						
<b>AAM Championship</b>						
<b>O35M, O45M</b>					7 interchange	

## Requirements Pre-Match

### Match sheets

Teams competing in competitions from U12/G12 Championship up must correctly complete the ESFA approved match sheet. Please note that the use of incorrect match sheets may result in a fine being imposed against clubs. Each team must provide the Sports TG match sheet for their team. All RTOs are expected to receive access to Sports TG.

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

The match sheet must contain the following information:

- Name of Club and Team
- The Competition (e.g. AA1, U12 Div. 2)
- Whether the sheet is from the Home or Away Team
- For teams U12 and above, Name, FFA number and shirt number of all players participating in the match (please note under no circumstances shall two players be playing in the same team at the same time, be wearing the same shirt number)
- If players are registered with another team other than the one to which the match sheet applies (i.e. borrowed players), then the name, FFA number, shirt number and team for which the player is registered shall be noted on the match sheet and a valid Player ID Card or Player ID Sheet must be shown. When borrowing players, please refer to Competition Rules 7.6 and 7.7.
  - Junior competitions (12-18)

In Junior competitions (12-18), players registered in lower teams may play up an unlimited amount of times up until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018 a player in boys' competitions may only play up three (3) times in higher competitions, and on fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) time the player shall be re-graded.

For girls' competitions a player may only play up four (4) times, and on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) time, will be re-graded.
  - Senior competitions (19+)

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

For women's competitions, a player may only play up four (4) times and on the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) time, will be re-graded.
- If a player is standing down from a match due to suspension, this should be noted on the match sheet
- Should a player change shirt throughout the match, the RTO must notify the Referee immediately to be noted by the Referee on the match sheet
- Name of coach and manager are to be printed on match sheet, along with the coach and/or RTO FFA number. All coaches and managers are expected to register with their Club in My Football Club.

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

## Dressing The Ground

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

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

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

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

## Alternate Strip

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

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

## Match Ball

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

## Player Identification

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

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

### ID Checks

To perform the ID check:

- Players should line up in the centre circle holding their ESFA issued Player ID card for easier identification wherever possible.
- When checking player IDs, always check the photo matches the player, as well as the team that the player is registered with.

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

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

### No ID = No Play

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

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

### After the game

If a player receives a red card during the match, the Referee will retain that player's ID card for forwarding to ESFA. If a borrowed player is sent off and has used a Player ID Sheet for the ID check, the club must provide the Player ID Card to ESFA.

Once the player's suspension has been served, the card must be collected from ESFA for the player to be eligible to play again.

It is the club's and/or player's responsibility to ensure the card is collected by close of business the day prior to the match.

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

## Requirements During the Match

### Forfeits/Walk offs

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

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

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

### Control of Spectators

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

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

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

### Substituting Players

It is the RTO's responsibility to:

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

### RTO and Club Officials Behaviour

RTOs and Club Officials must:

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

## Requirements After the Match

### Match sheets and Send Offs

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

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

### Incident Reports

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

### Results Entry

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

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

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

## Wet Weather

### Cancellation Procedure

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

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

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

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

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

### Wet Weather Update Channels

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

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

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

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

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

For training ground closures, check with your club.

ESFA aim to have closed grounds announced by 8:00am weekend days. However, Clubs may still close the ground throughout the day if the field becomes unfit for play.



## Referees

### Appointed Referees:

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

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

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

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

### Club Referees:

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

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

In the case that a Club Referee issues a yellow card or a red card, they must submit a report on the official form (available from the Library on the ESFA website: <http://www.esfa.com.au/Library.aspx>).

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

All cautions and send offs by a Club referee are to be forwarded to the Referees Coordinator by email by 9:00am Monday following the match. Send Off's and Caution Reports are available in the ESFA library on the website.

### Referee Safety:

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

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

### Referee Evaluations:

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

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