

Umpire Expectations

A FIDA umpire's role is to officiate each match with integrity, creating an environment where every player enjoys participating and feels safe. Achieve this, and you've successfully played your role!

Key Expectations:

1. Have a sound understanding of the AFL's laws of Australian Football as well as all laws modified by FIDA
2. Have a sound understanding of the 'Spirit of FIDA' and apply these principles accordingly during a match
3. Arrive to the ground punctually
4. Wear correct uniform which includes carrying a whistle and cards
5. Complete the Umpiring Checklist at each match
6. Submit all reportable offences through the 'Player Report' link (QR code found inside)



1.1 If, in the Umpire's determination, the care provider is acting as an on-field Coach, or in any way influencing the game in any manner greater than the individual support being provided, the Umpire shall warn the care provider to cease

1.2 If in the Umpire's determination, the care provider continues to function as an on-field Coach, or in any way continues to influence the game in any manner greater than the individual support being provided, the Umpire shall direct the care provider to leave the ground. (This may have an impact on the safety of the Player concerned, and the Coach of the respective Team shall have the full and total responsibility of determining whether the Player can safely continue to play or not.)

1.3 All Care Providers **MUST** be registered as volunteers with their respective clubs through PlayHQ. They will not be allowed to provide on-field support if they are not registered.

Any questions, clarifications etc. please contact:

Umpire Coordinator - Patrick Nickeas

umpire@fida.org.au

FIDA Card System

The Order Off rule shall apply to all Matches.

Only a field Umpire may order a Player off the ground

When a Player has been ordered from the playing arena under **Competition Regulation 33.2**, they must go immediately to their team's coaches box area, through the designated interchange, and the team runner must report to the timekeepers.

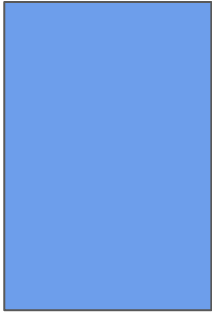
With all cards, players sent off the field may be replaced by an interchange player immediately

Where a card is used the umpire must;

1. Show the player the card applicable for minimum 5 seconds
2. Ask the player to leave the playing surface immediately
3. Clearly state what they are being asked to leave the playing surface for (i.e disputing the umpire)

Blue Card (Cooling Off, No Report)

A Blue Card is used to rest and settle down a player who is aggressive or creating potential trouble on the field



A player shown a Blue Card is not eligible to return to the playing surface until five (5) minutes actual playing time has elapsed and Club Officials are suitably convinced the player has calmed down and can return to play without causing further incident

Clubs are responsible for ensuring that they do not allow a player to return to the playing surface that may continue to cause problems. If you feel a club is not adhering to the spirit of this rule please report to the league.

Any player that receives five (5) blue cards in a season is automatically suspended for 1 match

On-field Care Providers/Support Workers

- 1.1 Where a Player has a care provider employed as part of a formal support program to provide close-proximity physical, sensory, or behavioural support, that carer may accept a position on the ground with the Player.
- 1.2 Any Care Provider taking up on-field support must wear an orange high-vis vest to assist in identifying them to umpires and players.
- 1.3 Care Providers may not act in any coaching capacity or influence the game in any manner whilst providing care.
 1. Carers may not pick up a ball whilst in dispute
 2. Carers may not interact with general play
 3. Carers may assist a player with possession and/or disposal of the football should their designated Player be awarded a kick by the controlling umpire

Rules for On-Field Coaching Cont.

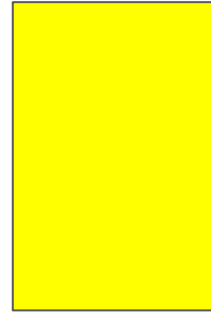
4. On-Field coaches may not be accompanied by any other personnel (including other match officials or players)
5. No On-Field coach shall be in the 50-meter arc when a defensive player is taking a kick in following a behind, unless attending to an injured player or making a genuine effort to vacate the area
6. Runners may not act as on-field coaches, only a coach in official FIDA vest may undertake this role

Penalties

1. If in the Umpire's determination, the on-field coach is interfering directly with play, or otherwise infringing on the natural state of play, the umpire may ask the on-field coach to cease.
2. If in the Umpire's determination, the on-field coach fails to heed the official warning and continues to breach the allowances, the umpire may ask the on-field coach to leave the field of play and return to coaching from the bench.

Yellow Card (Minor Breaches, No Automatic Report)

A yellow card is issued for players in breach of minor offences. These may include but not be limited to;

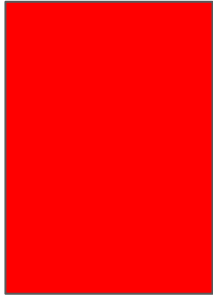


- a. Abusing Umpires and/or Opposition
- b. Disrespectful, Aggressive and/or threatening behaviour
- c. Attempting to Strike another player
- d. Disputing Decisions
- e. Unnecessary contact with Umpires
- f. Prohibited boots, jewellery etc

A Player issued a Yellow Card is not eligible to return to the playing arena until ten (10) minutes actual playing time has elapsed. This player may be replaced immediately from the interchange bench Any player who receives two (2) yellow cards in a match shall be automatically reported for misconduct and not allowed to return to the playing surface.

Red Card (Automatic Report)

A Red card is issued for players in breach of more significant reportable offences. These may include but not be limited to;



- a. Striking, Kicking etc. with significant impact
- b. Rough Conduct
- c. Striking an Umpire
- d. Serious Misconduct

A player issued a red card is not eligible to return to the playing surface for the remainder of the match and may be replaced immediately from the interchange bench

A Player who receives a red card must also be reported through to the league as an official match report.

It is the obligation of all umpires to report any incident that qualifies as a reportable offence under the Laws of Australian Rules Football, or any other appropriate breaches witnessed

On-Field Coaching

Permitted Grades and Conferences

Coaches may coach on-field in the following Grades and Conferences

- a. Central Conference
- b. Metropolitan Conference - C Grade
- c. Northern Conference
- d. Western Conference

On-Field Coaching is **not permitted** in;

- a. Metropolitan Conference - A Grade
- b. Metropolitan Conference - B Grade.

Rules for On-Field Coaching

1. One (1) Accredited Coach may coach on-field to help direct players
2. On-Field Coaches may not directly engage in play and must make all effort to remain 10+ meters from active play
3. The designated on-field coach **MUST** wear either the Official FIDA Coach or Assistant Coach Vest

Positions

1. A Non-Tackle player may not take up the position of Ruck
2. A Non-Tackle player may not be involved in any ball up around the ground
3. A Non-Tackle player stationed in the goal square may not remain there for more than half a quarter at a time, and must move away from the goal square position if they kick a goal (i.e. move to Centre Half Forward etc.)
4. A Non-Tackle player may return to the goal square after their team scores another goal or 5 minutes game time has elapsed

Penalties

1. A Player that tackles a non-tackle player will have a free kick awarded against them
2. An Umpire should award a 15 meter penalty in the case where non-tackle players have been tackled more than once in the same game.
3. A non-tackle player who travels more than 5m with the ball will have a free kick awarded against them

Modifications to the Laws of the Game

General

All matches played under the control of FIDA shall be played under the AFL's Laws of Australian Football

The most recent version of the Laws of the Game is always applicable

The AFL's Laws of Australian Football also allows for a controlling body to adopt its own rules and interpretations in some instances and FIDA follows the below rules and interpretations across all its competitions:

Centre and Field Ball Ups

A Player may not take full possession of the ball at a centre ball up or any ball up around the field. The ball must go to another Player or touch the ground before the Player winning the knockout can take possession of the ball.

Kicking off the Ground

A Player is not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground. A free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent when this occurs.

Out of Bounds

Inside 50: If the ball goes out of bounds whilst in dispute (not out of bounds on the full) the controlling umpire will bring the ball in 10 meters from the boundary and conduct a ball up.

Between the Arcs: If the last touch before the ball goes out of bounds is a clear disposal - kick or handball - a free kick shall be awarded to the opposing team (as per the AFL's laws of Australian Football). If the last touch is not a clear disposal, then the controlling umpire will bring the ball in 10 meters from the boundary and conduct a ball up.

Marking

A mark is to be paid to a Player who marks the ball from a kick, provided that the kick has travelled at least Ten (10) metres and has not been touched in transit.

The controlling field umpires shall award a mark to a low or extremely low functioning player where an attempt by that player has been reasonably made

Bouncing the Ball

A Player in possession may bounce the ball a maximum of Two (2) times and then must make a genuine attempt to dispose either by hand or by foot.

4. A Non-Tackle Player may not physically impede their opposition (this includes but is not exclusive to blocking a running players path, initiating any form of contact, moving into a congested contest area, moving into space already occupied by another player, causing contact)
5. A Non-Tackle player will not be considered impeding another player should the opposition player move into the space already occupied by the Non-Tackle Player
6. The Umpire may award a non-tackle player possession where they have made reasonable effort to take possession (attempted mark)
7. A Non-Tackle player taking possession or awarded possession shall take possession as a free-kick
8. A Non-Tackle player who elects to 'play-on' over the mark may not move further than 5 meters before disposing of the ball

The Non-Tackle position is strictly reserved for players who have been authorised by FIDA. It is not for temporary use by injured players

Permitted Numbers

For the 2026 season the permitted number of non-tackle players allowed on field at any one time in all Conferences is 3 players (per team)

Rules regarding Non-Tackle Players

1. All Non-Tackle Players must be identified on all Team Sheets with a 'T' manually written next to their name
2. A Non-Tackle Player may not be tackled by any other players
3. A Non-Tackle Player may not initiate contact with any other players (including but not limited to tackling, pushing etc.)

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15 Meter Penalty

A 15-meter penalty shall replace the 50-meter penalty in all Official FIDA matches

Standing the Mark

A player standing the mark when the opposition player is awarded a mark or a free kick may still move laterally or backwards, however is not permitted to move forwards over the mark until the umpire calls 'play on'.

Minimum Numbers:

Each team taking the field must have the minimum number of their own registered players before a match can commence for competition points:

- a. Metro Competition Grades - 14 Players
- b. Central/North/Western Conference - 10 Players

In Metro Grades where a Member Club has a second team participating, the minimum drops to 12 Players for the team in the lower grade

Evening Up:

Where one team has the minimum number of players but not enough for a full side, the second team may field a side with maximum two (2) more players on the field

Teams and Umpires must meet prior to match start to confirm numbers

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Mercy Rule

The mercy rule is applied in all official FIDA matches.

The Mercy Rule comes into effect if either team is leading by the designated margin at any stage during the game.

Metropolitan Conference - 40 points

Central Conferene - 20 points

Western Conference - 30 points

Northern Conference - 30 points

The following actions will apply until the margin between teams is below the designated points above;

1. Centre ball up will cease & the trailing team will kick out from the centre
2. If the leading team kick a behind the trailing team will take the kick out from the back of the centre square

Clubs must ensure players remain in their positions, there should be no 'dropping of players behind play,' flooding etc.

Non-Tackle Player

A Non-Tackle player is a player who for medical reasons has been authorised by the league to participate in the main Conferences with the allowance of not being tackled

All non-tackle players are identified by a long-sleeve high-vis yellow vest under their playing jumper

Permitted Grades and Conferences

Non-Tackle Players are permitted to participate in the following Grades and Conferences within FIDA

- a. Central Conference
- b. Metropolitan Conference B Grade
- c. Metropolitan Conference C Grade
- d. Northern Conference
- e. Western Conference

Non-Tackle Players are not permitted in Metropolitan A Grade