



## JUNIOR MODIFIED AFL RULES

### 1. AIM

The aim of the NTJFA Junior Modified AFL Rules is to ensure all children regardless of size, ability and gender can develop the skills required to successfully play football in a safe and friendly environment.

*Junior Football is the perfect environment for kids to have fun learning through play, make new friends and create memories that last a lifetime. Rules of matches are modified so children can continue to develop their skills in an enjoyable, safe atmosphere.*

### 2. RATIONALE

The NTJFA have developed the modified rules based on the PlayAFL National Guidelines. Umpires adjudicating these age groups should be familiar with the rules to ensure consistency throughout the Competition. Part of the role of Umpires is to educate players and give clear instructions, including reasons for penalties and free kicks.

*Our Junior Footballers aren't fully grown adults with the same skill level as AFL & AFLW players, so we modify gameplay to suit their needs. From modified tackling to smaller ground size and a smaller ball for junior hands!*

### 3. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Part of the role of those volunteers in Junior football is to provide a positive experience for beginning players. This involves all aspects of the game as well as comradery and learning how to display good sportsmanship and the spirit of the game. Coaches, players, and umpires are encouraged to shake hands after the Match.

### 4. ZONING

- a) Zones are to be implemented in all junior games. Rotation of players to occur at least every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions including the interchange.
- b) Midfield players must wear an armband as provided by their Club and may be penalised if they move outside the midfield position, with a free kick awarded to the opposition.

### 5. PARTICIPATION



| Competition | Players on the field | Interchange | Minimum numbers for a match |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| U8 B & G    | 6                    | N/A         | 6                           |
| U9 B & G    | 9                    | N/A         | 6                           |
| U10 B & G   | 12                   | N/A         | 9                           |

- a) There is no cap on benches for the **Junior** age groups, however, should you have excessive players (i.e. > 6) on the bench the expectation will be your club work with NTJFA and AFL Tas to submit a second team.
- b) Where a team is short on players and the opposing team has extra players available, clubs are encouraged to loan those additional players to the opposition to help balance team numbers.
- c) Each child, regardless of ability, **must** receive equal Match time.
- d) Players of similar size and/or ability should be matched up. Whenever a discrepancy is observed, coaches from both teams should work together to balance this out.
- e) Interchange rotations should occur if numbers allow.

## 6. PLAYING RULES

- a) A player with the ball may be tackled with a wrap-around tackle below the shoulders and above the knees. Tackling from the side or behind is allowed, but pushing in the back is not permitted.
- b) If a player is brought to the ground while being tackled, they will be awarded a free kick. However, if the umpire determines they fell deliberately to gain a free kick, they will be penalised for holding the ball.
- c) A tackled player must be given a fair chance to dispose of the ball by kick or handball. If they fail to do so, a free kick is awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- d) Players are allowed to shepherd using their arms.
- e) The umpire will call a ball-up if a player is tackled and the ball is held to their body, unless they had enough time to dispose of it, in which case a free kick is awarded to the tackler.
- f) The umpire will allow play to continue if the ball is knocked accidentally out of a player's hands by an opponent.
- g) A player who does not have possession of the ball and is held by an opponent will be granted a free kick.
- h) Bumping, slinging, or intentionally bringing an opposing player in possession of the ball to the ground is prohibited; a free kick will be given.
- i) Under no circumstances can the ball be kicked off the ground. A free kick will be awarded for any violation.
- j) Barging, chopping, or fending off is not allowed. Any violation will lead to a free kick and/or a ten (10) metre penalty.
- k) A player running with the ball is permitted only one (1) bounce. Any additional bounces will result in a ball-up.
- l) When a player is rucking, they are not allowed to lift their knees or gain clean possession of the ball.



## 7. OUT OF BOUNDS

When the ball goes out of bounds, a free kick against the player who last kicked the ball. If the ball is forced over the line by hand during play, the Central Umpire will throw the ball up.

## 8. GAMEDAY VOLUNTEERS

Only Coaches and Trainers are permitted on the ground during play. Coaches may assist in educating players but must remain clear of the action. The Match Manager has the authority to remove anyone violating this rule.

## 9. BEHAVIOUR

- a) Field Umpires are responsible for addressing misdemeanours, inappropriate language, and misconduct. If required, play may be stopped to facilitate a conference between the umpires, coaches, and the Match Manager to resolve the issue.
- b) Serious breaches of the Laws and Spirit of the Game may be addressed through the Tribunal system; however, its use is discouraged for players in the Junior Competition. Any infringement should be reported to the Competition Manager, who will determine the appropriate course of action. Field Umpires have the authority to apply the send-off rule to manage and de-escalate situations as needed.

## 10. ADMINISTRATION

- a) All Game Day incidents must be documented on the Match Manager Checklist Form (Attachment G).
- b) Team sheets must be submitted to the Match Manager at least 15 minutes before kick-off.
- c) All Match Officials must be listed on the team sheet and wear NTJFA/Club official vests during the game.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

AFL National Community Football Handbook

PlayAFL Junior Rules Program Handbook