

# Western Suburbs PSSA

## 2024 AFL Rules

### **Main Modifications From 2023:**

- Touch instead of bearhug
- Players have 3 seconds to dispose the ball correctly (handball or kick)
- If a player is touched after a bounce or bounces the ball after a touch, it is considered prior opportunity (defenders free kick)
- If a player is touched after playing on from a mark or playing on from a kick-in, it is considered prior opportunity (defenders free kick)
- Only Forwards can score - identified through a different coloured bib (schools to supply)

### **Playing Ground:**

- Modified ground is used roughly 60m in length (20m per zone).
- Cones to mark each zone.
- Goals are 3-4m wide, with behind posts 2-3m on either side of the goal posts (approximately 10m from behind post to behind post)

### **The Team:**

- The team shall consist of 9 players on the field.
- The team shall consist of 3 forwards, 3 midfielders & 3 defenders on the field.
- Players begin in their nominated position (zone) for the centre square ball up (after each goal). Once ball-up has taken place, players may move out of their zone.
- At the end of each **quarter**, players must move up a zone. Players are not permitted to play in the same position for the whole game.
- Interchange or replacement of injured players may take place at any time. The new player taking the field must play the replaced player's position until the end of the **quarter**. The order is as follows: defense □ midfield □ forward

**Playing Time Juniors & Seniors: 4x 7 min** quarters with a **3 minute break** in between each quarter.

### **Start of Play:**

- The game shall be started with a ball-up (and restarted after each goal) between two players in the centre of the ground. Players contesting the ball-up should be of similar size and be rotated where possible.
- A player may not grab the ball at the ball-up and play on. They must tap the ball and cannot play the ball again until another player has touched it.
- Players stay within their zones until the ball-up has finished.

### **Out of Bounds:**

- When the ball goes out of bounds a free kick is awarded against the team to last touch the ball. A player **cannot** kick for a goal from an out-of-bound free kick. If the umpire cannot determine which team last touched the ball then play will be restarted by a throw-in (**or ball up**) from where the ball went out of bounds.

## Defending:

Players can:

- Defenders are to touch the player (or ball) with a single hand. After a touch is made the umpire will count down from 3,2,1. The attacking player has that time to dispose of the ball with a handball or kick and is able to move with the ball.
- Defenders may block a handball attempt or smother a kick but can not strip the ball off the ball of the attacker
- Prior opportunity will result in a free kick to the defending player. The criteria is:
  - If the attacking player has not disposed of the ball correctly after the 3 second countdown by the umpire
  - If an attacking player is touched after playing on from a mark, free kick or out-of-bounds kick in
  - If an attacking player has taken a bounce prior to the touch, or takes a bounce after a touch
- The person taking the free kick must be the defender that touched the attacking player first, if they toucher is inside the attacking zone and is a forward, they may take a shot at goal.
- Shepherds are allowed provided they are **not unduly forceful** (i.e. shepherds cannot make contact with an opponent above their shoulder including the collar bone, neck and head area).
- If two players grab the ball at the same time, the umpire will do a ball up with those two players.

## Players cannot

- Trip an opponent whether accidentally or intentionally.
- Push or tackle the opponent
- Bring the ball carrier to the ground
- Make contact with an opponent above their shoulders including the collar bone, neck and head area.
- Make a touch below the knees of the attacking player.

All instances of these offences will **result** in a **free kick** to the non-offending team.

## Mark:

- A free kick is awarded to any player who fairly catches a kick by another player (known as a mark) providing the kick travels at least **five metres**.
- An opposing player may stand on the mark where the ball was caught and **may not** move from this spot until the ball has cleared the ball carrier's foot or the ball carrier has deviated more than 1m to the left or right from a direct line to their goal in an **intentional attempt** to "play on".

## Bouncing the Ball:

- A player in possession of and running with the ball is permitted to travel 12 steps before they must either **bounce** the ball (**once only**) or **dispose** of the ball by kicking or handballing to a teammate or aiming for the goal. A player can only keep possession of the ball for a further 12 steps after bouncing the ball (once only) before they **must dispose** of the ball either by kicking or handballing to a teammate or aiming for the goal.
- A player who travels further than 12 step (before the first bounce) or 24 steps (after the first bounce) whilst in possession of the ball will have a free kick awarded against them for travelling too far.

- The rule resets after each disposal (kick or handball) by the player in possession of the ball.
- If a player has bounced the ball and is touched, it will be a free kick to the defender (see Defending rules)

## **Kicking the Ball**

### **Off the Ground:**

- Players are not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground. Any instances shall result in a free kick to the non offending team.

### **Scoring:**

- A goal (6 points) is awarded when the ball is kicked between the two major posts without being touched by the opposition by a forward within their forward zone.
- Forwards need to be identified by a braid or bib
- Forwards must be within their forward zone at the start of the quarter and after each goal.
- If the ball is touched before passing the two major posts (by any player), hits the major posts or passes between the minor and major posts, 1 point is awarded (behind).
- No score is awarded if the ball touches the minor posts, and out of bounds rules apply
- After a goal is scored, play restarts with a ball-up in the centre.
- After a behind is scored, play restarts with a kick from the defending team from between the two major posts.
- Scores from other players or from outside the forward zone do not count
  - A kick in (like a behind) will then take place to restart the match
- After a goal is scored, play restarts with a ball-up in the centre. After a point is scored play restarts with a kick from the defending team from between the two major posts.
- A **mercy rule** applies once a team is **leading by 60 points or more. Play shall continue to the end of the match**, however, the final score for the match will be that which was present at the time one team is leading by 60 points or more over the opposing team. For example, if Team A scores a goal which takes them to a 67 – 4 lead over Team B then the final score for the match shall be 67 – 4 with Team A being declared the winner.
- An attempt at a goal may be made from a free kick due to foul play, deliberately kicking the ball off the ground, travelling too far in possession of the ball or during general play with the exception of a free kick due to an out of bounds offence.

### **Order Off Rule**

- Players may be ordered from the field for unnecessary rough play or abusive language. Time period to be served is umpire's discretion.

### **Coaches and Umpiring:**

- Coaches are not permitted to coach whilst umpiring, umpires can instruct on the rulings they have made. Parents are not permitted to umpire.

### **Equipment:**

Mouthguards are compulsory for a player to take the field.