



**AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL
LEAGUE**

PLAYERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Commitment and consultation

The AFLPA represents AFL Players participating in the AFL Football competition organised by the AFL. The AFLPA and its members are committed to promoting the positive image of AFL Players and their professional and proper conduct.

With these aims in mind, the AFL and the AFLPA, in consultation with each AFL Club, have agreed to formulate this Code of Conduct (“the Code”) for AFL Players.

1.2 Purpose

The Code seeks to promote and strengthen the good reputation of Australian Rules Football, the AFL Competition, the AFL, AFL Clubs and AFL Players by establishing standards of performance and behaviour for AFL footballers. In addition, it seeks to deter conduct which could have an adverse affect on the standing and reputation of the game, the AFL, AFLPA and all participants.

An AFL Player is entitled to have his privacy including that of his family and friends respected and the Code is not intended to apply to activities engaged in by a Player of a private nature, which may include activities with family, friends and/or other AFL Players.

1.3 CBA and Player Contracts

This Code is intended to clarify the duties and obligations set out in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (“the CBA”) and the Standard Playing Contract (“the Contract”) binding the AFL, AFL Clubs, the AFLPA and AFL Players. However, it is not intended that this Code supplant the CBA or the Contract. Where inconsistencies appear between this Code and the CBA or Contract, the latter two shall prevail to the extent of such inconsistency.

1.4 Discipline

In addition to breaching this Code, misconduct by an AFL Player may give rise to actions against the AFL Player under or pursuant to any one or more of the following:

- (i) civil and/or criminal laws;
- (ii) the AFL Rules (which deals with “conduct unbecoming” and an AFL Player could be deregistered); and
- (iii) the Contract (where the Contract may be terminated for misconduct).

2 General Responsibilities

2.1 Behaviour

AFL Players must at all times behave in a sportsmanlike manner and uphold the highest standards of professional conduct so as not to compromise the integrity and dignity of AFL Football, the AFL, AFL Clubs, the AFLPA and other AFL Players.

Where an AFL Player commits a significant or serious breach, the AFL Player shall forfeit:

1st breach	Forfeiture of up to \$5,000
2nd breach	Forfeiture of up to \$10,000

2.2 Fitness

AFL Players must present themselves at all AFL Matches, AFL Club training sessions and other related activities in an acceptable state of fitness. AFL Players must also endeavour to maintain such state of fitness during periods between AFL seasons.

An acceptable state of fitness may be determined by each AFL Club and may be measured by body weight, body fat, and/or endurance/aerobic capacity.

Where an AFL Club adopts such measures, written notice should be given to each player of the Club's requirements for that player.

AFL Clubs should implement a consistent and fair system of forfeitures which are appropriate to the breach and may provide for the withholding of amounts due to AFL Players of up to \$5,000.

2.3 AFL Rules and Regulations

AFL Players must make reasonable endeavours to be and to remain familiar with the rules, regulations and policies of AFL Football as set out in the AFL Rules and Regulations and AFL Player Rules ("the Rules"). AFL Players must abide, at all times, with the Rules.

2.4 Property

AFL Players must show due regard for the property and facilities of the AFL, AFL Clubs and staff of those bodies and the property, facilities and staff of other providers (including hotel, bus and aeroplane operators) which an AFL Player may utilise during any authorised activities in which the AFL Player may be engaged.

Where an AFL Player breaches this provision, he shall pay the relevant person or body an amount equivalent to the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged property and/or facility.

3 Football Responsibilities

3.1 Playing

AFL Players must not wilfully engage or participate in any activity which may cause or aggravate any injury or illness and which prevents AFL Players from playing AFL Football to the best of their ability.

3.2 On-field behaviour

AFL Players must, during AFL Matches and AFL Club training sessions, behave in the same manner as required in Clause 2.1 of this Code.

Findings by the AFL Tribunal of misconduct against an AFL Player will be dealt with in accordance with the AFL Rules.

3.3 Attendance and apparel

AFL Players must (unless granted express permission otherwise or provide an explanation satisfactory to the AFL Club) attend, and attend punctually, all AFL Matches, AFL Club training and related events, including (without limitation) weight training sessions, swimming skills sessions, physiotherapy appointments and rehabilitation programs.

AFL Players must wear appropriate apparel during all AFL Matches and AFL Club training.

Where an AFL Player breaches this provision, the AFL Player shall forfeit:

1st breach	Forfeiture of up to \$100
2nd breach	Forfeiture of up to \$200
Subsequent breaches	Forfeiture of up to \$500

3.4 Vilification

AFL Players must not vilify other AFL Players on the basis of their race, religion, colour, sex, sexual orientation or other related characteristics.

Breaches of this provision are to be dealt with in accordance with AFL Rules.

4 Public and Related Responsibilities

4.1 Public conduct

AFL Players must, at all times and while in public, behave in a manner which upholds and promotes the highest standards of integrity and dignity. AFL Players must not behave in any way so as to bring AFL Football, the AFL, AFL Clubs or the AFLPA into disrepute.

Public behaviour includes, without limitation, behaviour during travel to or from Matches, participation in authorised Matches (including overseas Matches), AFL or AFL Club excursions, Functions (see Clause 4.2), Promotional events (see Clause 4.3) and other public venues where the AFL Player is participating in authorised activities.

Breach:	Forfeiture of up to \$5,000
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4.2 Public comment

- (i) AFL Players must not make adverse public comments concerning AFL Umpires or decisions made by AFL Umpires during AFL Matches. Such comments could result in fines being imposed by the AFL.
- (ii) AFL Players must not make any public comments whatsoever concerning any aspect of an AFL Tribunal hearing, either before or after such hearing, even if the AFL Player is personally involved in such hearing.

4.3 Functions

AFL Players must (unless granted express permission otherwise) attend, and attend punctually, AFL, AFL Club and AFLPA functions. Such functions include (without limitation):

- authorised after-Match functions
- AFL Brownlow Medal dinner
- AFL Club annual presentations of guernseys
- AFL Club “best and fairest” functions
- AFL Club annual general meeting/s
- AFL Club player orientation/family days, or other similar functions
- AFL Club balls
- authorised autograph sessions
- other authorised AFL, AFL Club and AFLPA functions.

During such AFL, AFL Club and AFLPA functions, AFL Players must wear appropriate apparel.

Non-attendance generally	Forfeiture from \$250 to \$1,500
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Non-attendance at AFL Brownlow Medal dinner	Forfeiture of up to \$5,000
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4.4 Promotional events

AFL Players must (unless granted express permission otherwise or a satisfactory explanation provided):

- generally promote AFL Football, the AFL, AFL Clubs and the AFLPA
- assist the AFL, AFL Clubs, AFLPA and Sponsors in promotional and developmental activities
- attend, and attend punctually, AFL, AFL Club and AFLPA promotional events, and
- attend media-related activities including (without limitation) after-Match interviews, television appearances and other related activities.

During such promotional events, AFL Players must wear appropriate apparel.

Non attendance - Forfeiture of up to \$1,000

4.5 Sponsors

AFL Players may promote the interests of AFL and/or AFL Clubs' Sponsors in accordance with AFL Licensing Operational Guidelines. AFL Players may also be required to attend, and attend punctually, AFL and AFL Club Sponsors' promotional events in accordance with arrangements made under the AFL Licensing Operational Guidelines.

Furthermore, AFL Players must not accept any sponsorship, endorsement or other commercial arrangement which would compel or require them to promote or endorse any supplier of goods and/or services which compete with AFL Protected Sponsors' or AFL Club protected sponsors.

Non attendance - Forfeiture of up to \$1,000

4.6 Vilification

AFL Players must refrain from making public comment that vilifies or tends to vilify persons on the basis of their race, religion, colour, sex, sexual orientation or other related characteristics.

Breaches of this provision shall be dealt with in accordance with the AFL Rules.

5 **Substance abuse**

AFL Players must refrain from the taking of illicit and/or performance-enhancing substances and must comply with AFL Rules and AFL Anti-Doping Code which prohibits the taking of such substances.

Breaches of this provision shall be dealt with in accordance with the AFL Rules.

6 Dispute resolution procedure

- (i) Before seeking formal review as provided in sub-clause (ii) below, an AFL Club must undertake to fully investigate, consider and, if so requested by the relevant AFL Player, review its decision to impose a disciplinary measure on an AFL Player for breach of this Code.
- (ii) If such informal review fails to satisfactorily resolve the AFL Player's dispute, the relevant AFL Player may formally appeal (within [24 hours] from the date of the AFL Club's decision to impose a disciplinary measure) to a Dispute Resolution Panel.
- (iii) The Dispute Resolution Panel shall consist of the General Manager of the relevant AFL Club, or other AFL Club appointee and three AFL Players as nominated by the AFLPA/AFL Players of the Club from time to time, subject to approval by the relevant AFL Club.
- (iv) The Dispute Resolution Panel must conduct a fresh investigation of the alleged breach by the relevant AFL Player and form its own view about the appropriate disciplinary measure, if any, to be taken. Its decision must be made within [72 hours] from the date when the relevant AFL Player first instituted his appeal and must be communicated in writing to the AFL Player.
- (v) The decision of the Dispute Resolution Panel shall be final and binding on the relevant AFL Player.
- (vi) The time limits set out in this clause may be extended by agreement between the AFL Player and the AFL Club.

7 Confidentiality

7.1 AFL or AFL Club material

AFL Players must maintain the confidentiality of all material provided in confidence by the AFL or AFL Clubs to AFL Players. Such material includes (without limitation) the details of training methods, coaching manuals and confidential records of an AFL Club.

7.2 AFL Player medical records

AFL Players will be entitled to confidential treatment of their medical records by the AFL, AFL Clubs and other AFL Players. Such medical records must not be divulged to any person or authority without the relevant AFL Player's written consent, except pursuant to Section 4.1 of the AFL Anti Doping Code.

7.3 Disclosure

AFL Players must, so far as is reasonable, disclose to their AFL Club any matter which might adversely affect their performance.

8 Discipline

8.1 Purpose

This section aims to ensure that the principles and standards set out in this Code are adhered to by all parties, particularly AFL Players.

8.2 Disciplinary measures

The particular disciplinary measure which an AFL Club chooses to impose on the relevant AFL Player must be consistent with and in accordance with the provisions of this Code. Such measures may include (without limitation) the imposition of forfeitures or suspension from AFL Matches and training.

8.3 Forfeitures

The maximum allowable amount that an AFL Club may withhold from amounts which are due to the relevant AFL Player for breach of this Code are specified in this Code.

The amounts that may be forfeited by an AFL Player are not cumulative. That is, a single act by an AFL Player may breach several clauses of this Code, but the forfeiture of monetary amounts must be no more than the highest single, applicable maximum.

An AFL Club may, in appropriate circumstances, require an AFL Player to do the following (without limitation) in lieu of a monetary forfeiture as prescribed by this Code:

- (i) attend a promotional event or Club activity,
- (ii) provide a community service,
- (iii) attend a football clinic, and/or
- (iv) attend or perform any other similar event or activity as agreed between the AFL Player and the AFL Club.

8.4 Withholding of amounts due to an AFL Player

Where an AFL Player breaches this Code in a manner which amounts to non-performance of the obligations under his Contract, the relevant AFL Club shall be entitled to withhold from any amount due to the AFL Player the amount applicable to the breach as provided in this Code.

8.5 Relevant considerations

When imposing a disciplinary measure, an AFL Club may, amongst other things, take the following matters into account:

- the seriousness of the breach;
- the extent to which the AFL Player's breach brings the AFL or the relevant AFL Club into disrepute;
- whether the offence has been repeated by the relevant AFL Player; and
- the income of the relevant AFL Player.

9 Monetary Forfeitures

Where an AFL Player forfeits monetary amounts for breach of this Code, the amount of the monetary forfeiture shall be distributed as follows:

- 50 per cent to be retained by the relevant AFL Club;
- 50 per cent to be paid to a registered charity nominated by the AFLPA.