

**AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL PLAYER & OFFICIAL NATIONAL  
DEREGISTRATION POLICY**



**December 2012**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The Deregistration Policy has been developed to provide a risk management framework and policy basis for community football administrators to recognise a duty of care with respect to players/officials who could pose an unacceptable risk to other players/officials.

It is imperative that all Leagues and State Bodies adopt this policy to ensure that a consistent approach is applied to the deregistration of players/officials.

## 1.2 Definitions

**Club** means an Australian football club entitled to field a team in a competition conducted by a League.

**Deregistration** means the withdrawal of a Player's permit to play or an Official's capacity to officiate in any form of Australian football.

**League** means a league associated with a State Body via an affiliation agreement.

**Reportable Offence** means any reportable offence identified in the Laws of Australian Football, as amended from time to time.

**Official** includes but not limited to coaches, assistant coaches, officers, trainers, runners, employees or any person performing any duties (paid or unpaid) for or on behalf of a Club, League or State Body.

**Player** means a player who participates in any Australian football match administered by a League.

**State Body** means the governing State and Territory football bodies affiliated to the AFL as follows:

- (a) AFL NSW/ACT
- (b) AFL Queensland
- (c) AFL Northern Territory
- (d) AFL Tasmania
- (e) AFL Victoria
- (f) South Australian National Football League
- (g) West Australian Football Commission

**Suspension** means a period during which a Player or Official is not allowed to play or officiate in a game of Australian football.

## 1.3 Application

- (a) The Deregistration Policy applies to all State Bodies and their affiliated Leagues and Clubs.
- (b) Headings and indexes are only included for ease of reference and do not affect interpretation.

## 1.4 Variation

The AFL may from time to time, and in consultation with State Bodies where necessary, alter the procedures for Deregistration in its absolute discretion.

## 2. POLICY AIMS

The policy aims to:

- (a) Deregister a Player who is found guilty of a Reportable Offence(s) where such offence or offences cause the tribunal history of such Player to fall beyond an acceptable level for Australian football;
- (b) Deregister an Official who is found guilty of a Reportable Offence(s) (at any level) where such offence or offences are deemed to fall beyond an acceptable level for Australian football;
- (c) Apply the Deregistration of a Player/Official to both roles so that a deregistered Player cannot officiate in any capacity and a deregistered Official cannot participate as a Player;
- (d) Prevent a Player from transferring between Leagues with the view to creating a “clean slate” with the new League. The tribunal history shall follow the Player to allow the new League to make an informed judgement regarding initial registration taking into account past and current tribunal sentences.

## 3. DEREGISTRATION PROCEDURES

### 3.1 General

- (a) The full tribunal history of a Player is to be forwarded to the new League from the previous League upon a Player being cleared from one League to another (as per the National Player Transfer Regulations, as amended from time to time). It is noted that **all guilty verdicts** determined by a League (tribunal, investigation, appeal or similar process) shall be forwarded to the new League for their records together with the clearance / transfer details.
- (b) The full tribunal history of a Player (including tribunal record at all previous league/s) shall be considered when determining penalties for offences and also potential Deregistration.
- (c) A League that suspects that an Official may have a tribunal history is to seek information from the Official's previous League/s.
- (d) Club imposed penalties will not be considered on the permanent record for a Player or Official.
- (e) Information regarding suspended sentences will be transferred between Leagues and Leagues would only consider such sentences relevant to possible Deregistration if and when the Suspension from such suspended sentence is served.

### 3.2 Deregistration Process

#### 3.2.1 Notification

##### (a) Leagues

- i) State Leagues must advise all Clubs of the details of the policy and make the policy readily available to their Clubs, Players and Officials.
- ii) Once a Player/Official has accumulated a Suspension history of ten (10) weeks or more, the League must advise the Player/Official and their Club in writing that the Player/Official faces the risk of automatic Deregistration should the Player/Official incur further Suspension(s)

that results in him/her reaching or exceeding the sixteen (16) week total Suspension history.

- iii) Notification of Deregistration shall be made in writing to the Player/Official and their Club.
- iv) State Bodies shall be notified in writing of all decisions to deregister a Player/Official, by the Player's/Official's Club. A central database of all deregistered players/officials will be kept by all State Bodies.
- v) Should a Player/Official's tribunal history already have reached or exceed a combined total of sixteen (16) weeks Suspension at the time of implementing this policy, the League is to formally advise the Player/Official and the Player's/Official's club that the Player/Official faces automatic Deregistration should the Player/Official incur another Suspension.

**(b) Clubs**

- i) Clubs must advise all of their Players/Officials in relation to this policy.
- ii) Clubs must at all times strive to ensure their Players and Officials do not get themselves into a position of potentially being deregistered. Anger management training is seen as a critical component of this prevention for Clubs to arrange.

**3.2.2 Criteria for Deregistration**

**(a) Players**

- i) Players shall be automatically deregistered and not allowed further registration with the same or another League if the Player has **accumulated a combined total of sixteen (16) weeks Suspension (or greater)** in a football career (including AFL career, subject to section 3.2.2(a)(iii) below).
- ii) For the avoidance of doubt, only Suspension periods served by a Player after attaining the age of 16 years will count for the purposes of this Deregistration policy.
- iii) Any Suspension period served by a Player during his AFL career shall carry over, however such Suspension period shall be halved for the purposes of this Deregistration policy. For example, if a Player receives a total of six (6) weeks Suspension whilst playing in the AFL, only three (3) weeks shall carry over for the purposes of this Deregistration policy.

*First Offence*

- iv) Should a Player receive sixteen (16) weeks or more Suspension as a "first offence" it shall be at the Leagues discretion as to whether or not that Player will be deregistered, following his/her Suspension.

**(b) Officials**

Officials shall be deregistered and not allowed to officiate in any form in the same or another League if they have accumulated a combined total of sixteen (16) weeks Suspension (or greater) throughout their whole Australian football career.

**(c) Players / Officials**

A combined total of sixteen (16) weeks or greater as a Player and/or Official shall result in automatic Deregistration.

### **3.3 Appeal of League Decision to Deregister**

After a Player/Official has been deregistered in accordance with section 3.2 above, that Player/Official may appeal to their State body in accordance with the rules set out in section 3.4 below where such Player/Official can demonstrate exceptional circumstances as to why he/she should not be deregistered.

### **3.4 Appeals to State Body**

- (a) A deregistered Player/Official can appeal a decision of their State Body in accordance with their State Body's rules, regulations, by-laws and/or guidelines regulating tribunal and appeals procedures, as amended from time to time.
- (b) It is the obligation of the Player/Official to present their case with all necessary witnesses and relevant documents to the State Body and show cause why he/she should be reregistered.
- (c) Such appeal shall be heard within a period determined by the State Body.
- (d) Notwithstanding any provision within a State Body's rules, regulations, by-laws and/or guidelines, the State Body reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to impose any time limits relating to appeals as it deems appropriate.
- (e) The decision of the State Body shall be final and binding on all parties.

## **4. DEREGISTERED PLAYERS/OFFICIALS SEEKING RE-REGISTRATION**

- (a) A Player/Official shall not be eligible for re-registration unless the Player or Official gains an exemption to reregister from the relevant State Body. Such exemption shall only be granted under exceptional circumstances (i.e. where the relevant State Body is satisfied that the Player/Official is genuinely rehabilitated and unlikely to re-offend).
- (b) A Player/Official may only submit one (1) application for Re-registration in any one Australian football year.
- (c) A deregistered Player cannot officiate in or at any Australian football match unless an exemption is given by the relevant State Body.
- (d) A deregistered Official cannot participate as a Player or officiate in or at any Australian football match.
- (e) A deregistered Player/Official who is successful in gaining an exemption to play/officiate and subsequently re-offends will automatically be deregistered with no further right to apply for an exemption or to appeal.