

Federation Competition Regulations

7 a side Grades

(AFF Boys & Girls Youth 9th & 10th Grades)



1. Reference to General Provisions

These regulations are specific competition regulations governing aspects of play and procedure as allowed under Section 6 of the Federation Competition Regulations, Youth 9th to 17th Grade, General Provisions. ***The General Provisions shall apply to these Grades as well as these specific competition regulations.***

2. FIFA Regulations

All Youth Grades shall be conducted under the current FIFA regulations except as otherwise specified in these specific competition regulations.

3. Number of players per side

Teams shall be 7 a side, with one player designated as the Goalkeeper. The recommended squad size in 7 a side grades is 10 players, with only 7 players to be on the field at any one time.

4. Duration of matches:

9 th Boys and 10 th Boys	2 x 25 min halves plus 5 min half time
9 th Girls and 10 th Girls	2 x 25 min halves plus 5 min half time

In the event of a late start for any reason, if it is known or can be ascertained prior to kick-off that there is *no* later match scheduled for the pitch which would be disrupted by so doing, the match, at the sole discretion of the appointed referee or if there is no appointed referee by mutual agreement of both teams coaches/managers, shall be extended to its normal duration in two equal halves.

If there *is* a match scheduled to follow on the same pitch, *or if it is not known whether there is such a match to follow*, the time available may at the sole discretion of the appointed referee or if there is no appointed referee by mutual agreement of both coaches/managers shall be divided into equal halves with an allowance for half time, so that the match shall end at the scheduled finish time and the next match on the same pitch may commence at the time scheduled on the fixtures.

The agreed game duration shall not be changed once the game has commenced, *even if it becomes clear that there is no match following.*

No injury time or referee's added time shall be played.

5. Substitutions

Up to five substitutes may be used, with unlimited interchange of players at any time in the match. Each substitution shall require the permission to enter the field of play from the referee, and proceed as follows:

- i) the player leaves the field completely before the substitute goes on
- ii) substitutions are made during a stoppage in play
- iii) players always enter and leave from the half-way line.

6. Match Balls

A size 4 FIFA **sanctioned** match ball shall be provided by the home team.

7. Shin guards

Shin guards must be worn at all times, and must not be exposed.

8. Goal Kicks

A restart after the ball has crossed the goal line for a goal kick may be taken from the goalkeeper's hands (kicked, thrown or rolled) OR from a place kick on the ground. Where the ball has been received by a goalkeeper in the normal course of play, FIFA Laws of the Game will apply.

9. Corner Kicks

If the game is being played on a marked small pitch, or on portion of a senior pitch, the corner shall be taken from within 1 metre of the flag, cone or other marker marking the corners of the pitch.

10. Referees

If there is no appointed official, the home team may provide a Club Based Referee (CBR) with current accreditation (by way of a current CBR ID card with Membership Number) to control the whole fixture. If a CBR is provided he or she shall provide his/her name and membership number to the visiting coach/manager, and is required to wear their CBR shirt. If the home team does not have a CBR, and the visiting team does, then the visiting CBR shall control the fixture. If none of the above is available, the home team shall provide a referee for the first half and the visiting team shall provide one for the second.

Alternatively, teams may agree at the start of the game that one referee shall officiate the whole game, or at the start of the second half that the referee from the first half may continue to referee to the end of the game. Once agreed the referee should not be changed during a half other than for injury or on the mutual agreement of both team coaches. In any event, the referee controlling any part of the fixture has the same rights and obligations as an appointed official.

The prime purpose of anyone refereeing in these grades is to add to the enjoyment of the players through the application of the FIFA Laws of the Game, these regulations, common sense and fair play.

11. Field Sizes

In most cases for operational ease, play will be on 1/4 of a standard pitch. For specially marked fields as well as where standard pitches are used, the recommended dimensions are minimum 45m x 30m, max 55m x 35m.

12. Goals and Markings

The approved goals, and marked grounds with corner flags, cones or other markers to mark the corner of the pitch must be supplied by the home team and must be in place before the scheduled kick-off time. Nets are recommended for all Federation Youth Competition matches. Where portions of standard senior pitches are used there is no requirement for additional markings to be provided.

Goal size should be minimum 3.8m x 1.8m inside measurements, recommended size is 4m x 2m inside measurements.

It is recommended, but is not obligatory, that clubs indicate, by cones or other suitable markers, on the side lines and goal lines not on the field of play, a goalkeepers area approx 15 metres wide and 9 metres deep. Referees in these grades should award penalty kicks (to be taken from 9 metres) for foul play *clearly* inside this area, **or a free kick for handball against** goalkeepers handling the ball *clearly* outside it. Whether or not the markers are in place, and whether or not assistant referees have been provided, the referee is the sole judge of whether to halt play and award a free-kick or penalty.

13. Offside

The off-side law **WILL NOT** be applied in these grades. However, referees and coaches must discourage players from consistently standing in an off-side position — this is not in the spirit of the game.

14. Uniform Clashes

Where there is a clash of colours, the away team (ie second-named team) in the fixture must provide a change of shirts that does not clash with the home team's registered colours. Failing to provide such a change, or playing in unregistered colours that creates a clash, may incur a fine for Incorrect Strip as set out in the AFF Schedule of Fees.

Home teams must not deviate from the colours notified to AFF and published on the AFF website to all other teams. Away teams will be deemed to have complied with this regulation if they arrive with a strip that does not clash with the home team's registered colours as noted on the website. It shall then be the responsibility of the home team to revert to their published colours or find an alternate strip that does not clash with the away team.

15. Defaults / Forfeits

Defaults must be notified in writing to the Competitions Manager by the Club Secretary or other recognised club official no later than 12.00 noon on the Friday preceding the fixture so that the ground may be used for an alternate fixture and any referee allocation can be changed.

Clubs may be fined for defaults not notified before this deadline in accordance with the AFF Schedule of Fees published from time to time by the Federation. Any team defaulting two games consecutively, or three in a season, may be further fined and may be expelled from the competition. It is recommended that defaulting teams also advise their opposition as a matter of courtesy.

Please advise your club secretary or club youth representative of the default, so that they can notify AFF by email of the default.

Defaults shall be recorded as a 3-0 win to the non-offending team. If both teams are deemed to have defaulted or forfeited the match, a 'no result' shall be recorded unless the AFF Competition Manager decides to reschedule the game.

A team sanctioned with a forfeit is considered to have lost the match by 3-0. If the goal difference at the end of the match is greater than three in favour of the opposing team, the result on the pitch is upheld.

16. Team Mastercards and Player Eligibility

It is a Club's responsibility to ensure that a player is eligible to play and is properly registered using their legal name as recorded on a legal document such as a birth certificate or passport, with their Club's own Federation using the National registration form in Goalnet and be marked active in 2016 season, and that all necessary clearances from previous Clubs are obtained from the Club and via other Federations or FIFA member countries as required in NZF Regulation on the Status and Transfer of Players (including provisions for players playing under any loan agreement), *prior to taking the field.*

It is the Club's responsibility to sight a copy of proof of age of the player, such document to be a birth certificate, passport or other internationally recognised legal document. The Club is required to produce proof of age if requested by the Federation.

Clubs must provide one copy of their team mastercard to their Federation on the approved Federation Mastercard, authenticated by an official of the club, by the advised date prior to the commencement of the competition. The Mastercard shall include for each player the national identification number, given names and family names as registered in the Goalnet database, date of birth, gender, address, email and any dispensation information.

A player may be included on more than one Team Mastercard. A player must be eligible by way of Federation approved dispensation to be included on any Team Mastercard more than one year above **his**/her correct age grade.

Unless dispensation has been sought and granted by the Federation, players shall normally play in their Youth age-grade competition as determined by the age they turn during the calendar year.

Where a player is playing up from a lower grade to fill in or make up a team, the Team Mastercard for the higher grade team does *not* need to be amended.

A Club may play (i.e. they take the field) a maximum of three players in any Youth Grade match from a lower division team or grade provided that a) no player is playing more than one year above their certified age (unless granted dispensation by the Federation) and b) such players are correctly registered on their regular team's Mastercard.

Players recorded on a team mastercard in a higher grade or division may not play down. The ranking of divisions is as follows :

1. Premier
2. Division 1
3. Division 2
4. Division 3
5. Division 4
6. Division 5

Divisions with the same number but listed as North or South and/or City, Town or Country are of equal standing. Divisions named with A or B, Division A is deemed to be the higher division.

A Team Mastercard template is available from the AFF website.

Failure to lodge the Team Mastercard before the first game of the season or subsequently may incur a fine to the Club in accordance with the AFF Schedule of Fees.

Teams must produce their Team Mastercards if requested by the opposition. Failure to produce the Team Mastercard on request may incur a fine to the team's Club in accordance with the AFF Schedule of Fees.

In the event of any protest or enquiry into player eligibility the Team Mastercard will be checked against the Goalnet database.

Where a team is found to have played an ineligible player(s), the team will forfeit the **match(es)**. A team sanctioned with a forfeit is considered to have lost **each** match by 3-0. If the goal difference at the end of the match is greater than three, the result on the pitch is upheld.

The offending team's club may incur any Ineligible/Unregistered Player fine as set down in the AFF Schedule of Fees.

17. Dispensations

In special circumstances a Club may apply for age dispensations. Applications for age dispensation, accompanied by the reason for request, must be approved by the Federation before the player can take the field.

Players should normally play within their correct age grade. Age grade is determined by the year of birth, not school year, eg 10th Grade is for players who will *reach* their 10th birthday at any time during the calendar year, (not those who are 10 at the *start* of it).

Clubs may seek dispensation for players to play in lower age grades as noted in the Federation Competition Regulations, Youth 9th to 17th Grade, General Provisions. In 7-a-side competitions a maximum of one **dispensated** player (2 **dispensated** players for girls-only competitions) **to play down** may **play on the field at any one time**. The player must be no more than one age grade older than the grade in which he/she is dispensated to play.

The Federation may grant dispensation to a team for more players than allowed on the field at any one time, due to limited number of players available within a club for that age group.

Any application for a player to play more than one year *above* their age grade must be on the relevant dispensation form with a signature obtained from the parent or caregiver of the player.

Clubs seeking to play an entire team or squad, where all players or five or more of the players are eligible for a lower grade, in a higher grade than their own age-grade, must seek team dispensation from the Federation, who will consider the application based on player development and safety, and on the grade played in previous seasons.

A full list of all dispensated players shall be furnished to every club at the start of the season and as it is updated during the season.

Failure to obtain necessary dispensation renders the player ineligible for the competition and will incur a fine to the Club in accordance with the AFF Schedule of Fees.

In special circumstances a Club may request, and the Federation may approve, dispensations outside those allowed for in Clause 18. **para 1, especially in circumstances involving medical conditions.**

18. Coaches and Supporters

Coaches may only coach from the sideline, not from behind the goal line. If a coach takes the field as a referee they are not allowed to coach from on the field of play.

Spectators and supporters should be along the sidelines not behind the goal line. Spectators guiding or advising a goalkeeper from behind the goal line are deemed to be coaches. Referees and opposing coaches are entitled to request that coaches, spectators and supporters move from behind the goal line to the sideline, and all coaches and Clubs should support and be prepared to adhere to this regulation.

Where the alignment of portions of a senior pitch mean that spectators (so as not to be walking and standing within the bounds of a senior field) are sited at one end of the pitch in use, they shall be at least 3 metres behind the goal line so as not to interfere with play. Clubs may consider the erection of a rope barrier to preserve this safety zone and to protect the wear along the edges of the fields in use.

19. Fixtures & Postponements

Competition in the 7-a-side grades shall normally be played with grading rounds, followed by one round of Championship. However, AFF at its absolute discretion may vary this to effectively run or complete a competition or division.

AFF shall determine times, dates and grounds for any fixture and shall have the right at all times to amend, postpone or cancel any fixture.

If both teams have a minimum of five players the match must start on time. The home team (the team named first on the fixture) is expected to be ready to start on time. In the event of the home team not being ready with a minimum of five players to begin the game at the scheduled time, or the away team not being ready with a minimum of five players 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, the team present and ready to start may claim the match as a default.

By agreement between both teams' coaches/managers, matches may be played with reduced equal numbers on each side.

Proposed postponement/abandonment of any match prior to the scheduled kick-off time, for any reason, shall be reported immediately to the AFF Competitions Manager, by the referee if present, or if no referee is present, by the home club.

In exceptional circumstances postponements may be proposed by Clubs through the Club Secretary or other recognised club official. Such proposed postponements must be received by the Federation no less than 24 hours before the scheduled time of kick-off, and will be accepted or rejected at the sole discretion of the Competitions Manager.

AFF may:

- Confirm the match is postponed, or
- Transfer the match to another venue on the same day at the same time, a later time or
- By mutual agreement with the clubs and official involved, reschedule the match to be played later on the same day, the next day or on another day, at the original or a different venue.

Any match abandoned after kick-off, for any reason, shall be reported immediately to the AFF Competitions Manager, by the referee if present, or if no referee is present, by the home club. The Competitions Manager may decide that:

- The score at the time of the abandonment shall stand, or
- The match shall be awarded to one of the teams as a forfeit win, or
- The match shall be rescheduled to another date.

Matches not played for any reason other than forfeit can, with the written agreement of both clubs *and* AFF, be rescheduled to another date. If no date can be mutually agreed (including by AFF) within 10 days after the date of the original fixture, AFF shall at its sole discretion reschedule the match at a suitable date, time and venue.

Planned postponements and changes to individual fixtures *after* the initial publication of fixtures for the season may be requested by the home club, accompanied by the permission in writing from an authorised official of the opposing club/team. Such request for a change of fixture shall be made to the AFF Competitions Manager at least 10 days prior to the scheduled game. AFF may in its sole discretion agree to the change.

In exceptional circumstances or emergencies, requests for change of fixtures, venues and kick-off times *not* accompanied by the permission in writing of an authorised official of the opposing team/club, AFF may seek the cooperation of the opposing/team or in its sole discretion agree to or decline the change.

Other changes to individual fixtures may be made at the sole discretion of AFF, not instigated by a club and not requiring permission in writing from the opposing club/team or club. Such changes shall ordinarily be made with notice to both clubs of at least 10 days. However, in exceptional circumstances or emergencies such a notice period may not be possible.

Any costs of night matches scheduled at the request of a club shall be borne by the club making the request. Any costs of night matches scheduled by AFF shall be equally shared by both clubs unless exempted in writing by the host federation.

Teams may be required to play rescheduled fixtures at night at the direction of AFF provided at least 10 days notice in writing is given to both clubs.

Changes to fixtures, venues and kick-off times for all matches shall be published by AFF 5.00pm on the Monday prior to the match, except where such changes are due to weather, poor pitch conditions or ground availability. All changes must be instigated by or have the approval of AFF.

20. Competitions

Three points shall be awarded for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss.

Following any grading rounds, the team with the highest points at the end of competition in each league shall be declared the league champion. Goals for and against and goal difference

shall not be used to determine competition winners, and teams equal on points will be declared joint champions.

21. Results

Results for all Youth Grades must be **entered** directly into the Federation Competitions Management website, no later than 12.00 noon on the Monday after the match for a weekend fixture, and 12.00 noon the day following the match for a mid-week fixture. Teams failing to **enter** results in time may incur a fine to the Club for Late Result as noted in the AFF Schedule of Fees.

Results and ladders are not shown on the AFF Competitions website as per the NZ Football Whole of Football Plan but are required to be entered for grading purposes.

22. Other Matters

These specific competition regulations should be read in conjunction with the appropriate NZ Football statutes, regulations and codes, Federation Rules and Youth playing regulations, Federation and NZ Football codes of Ethics, **the NZ Football Code of Conduct** and FIFA Fair Play which shall apply to matters not provided for in these regulations.