



**FOOTBALL
VICTORIA**

DISPENSATION POLICY

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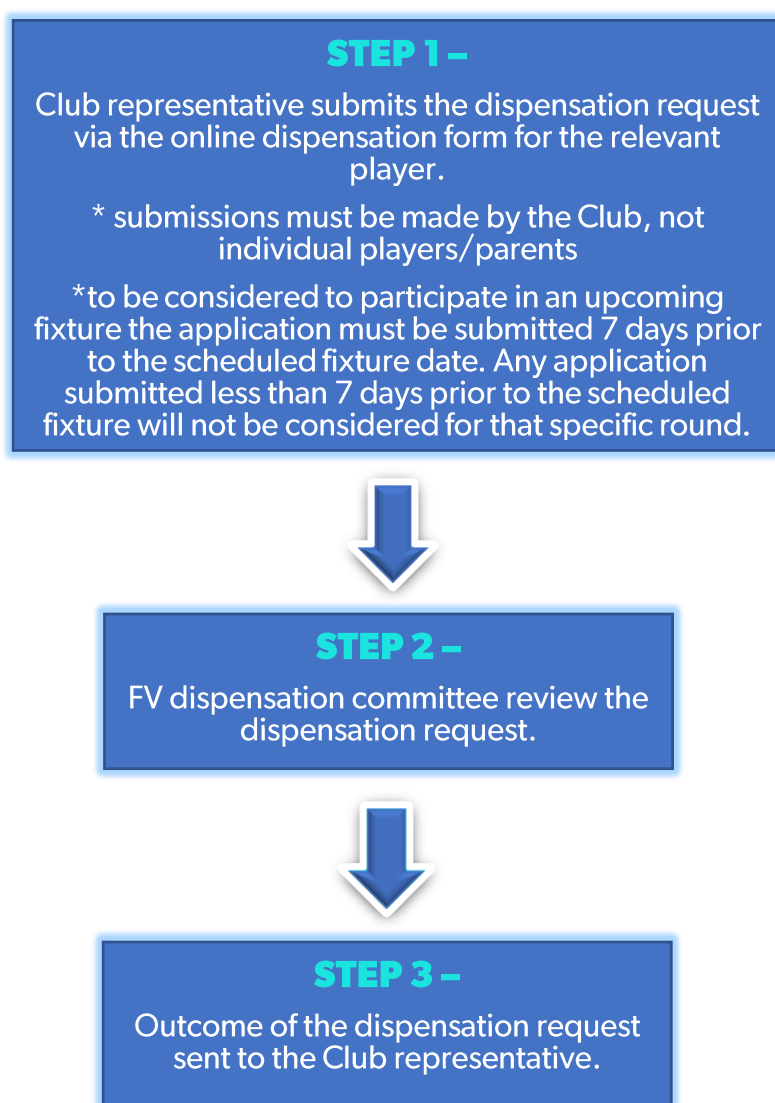
OVERVIEW

The purpose of this policy is to provide all stakeholders with a clear and concise process to dispensation requests.

Dispensation requests allow Clubs to submit a request for a player(s) to be granted exemption from FV to participate in competitions that they would otherwise not be eligible.

To ensure all requests receive due consideration in line with the policy, FV has formed a dispensation committee that includes representatives from all relevant departments including but not limited to the competitions, technical and registrations department. The purpose of this committee is to provide relevant expertise to assist in evaluating each request.

DISPENSATION PROCESS



*Any Club that requests to submit further supporting documentation or information after the outcome of the request has been determined will incur a 're-review' fee of \$75 charged to the Club account.

FACTORS IN DETERMINATING A DISPENSATION APPLICATION

There are a range of various factors FV consider when determination the outcome of a dispensation application. A number of these factors may include and are not limited to.

- Maintaining the integrity of FV competitions
- Playing history of the player
- Alternate reasonable opportunities for the player to participate at the Club in an age eligible age group
- Alternate reasonable opportunities for the player to participate at a Club within reasonable distance in an age eligible age group
- The number of requests made for a certain team
- The number of requests made for a certain Club
- Supporting documentation from the national body - FFA
- Supporting documentation from a certified medical practitioner
- The Club being able to provide the player with the assistance needed to prepare the player to play in an age eligible the following year
- Dispensation history of the player
- The submission being made in line with the stipulations surrounding the relevant dispensation category
- The wellbeing and safety of all participants
- Any other relevant circumstance or relevant supporting documentation

SUBMITTING A DISPENSATION APPLICATION

All dispensation requests must be submitted by the Club on behalf of the relevant player. Submissions from individual parents/guardians/players will not be accepted.

To be considered to participate in an upcoming fixture the application must be submitted 7 days prior to the scheduled fixture date. Any application submitted less than 7 days prior to the scheduled fixture will not be considered for that specific round.

To submit a dispensation application please fill out the [Online Dispensation Application Form](#).

Please ensure that prior to submitting a dispensation request you are equipped with the following.

- FFA ID number - to progress through the process the player must have an FFA ID number. Please contact the registrations department via registrations@footballvictoria.com.au for any queries regarding a player's FFA ID number.
- All relevant information required to be submitted.
- Any relevant documentation as per the below regulations.

It is important to note that Clubs submit dispensation application requests however approval is not guaranteed nor should Clubs anticipate approval prior to the dispensation request receiving due consideration through the process.

Should the dispensation requests outcome be one of approval– approval is only for the competition season relevant to the year in which the request is made and the provided approval letter must be evident on match day.

MINIROOS BOYS & GIRLS (U7 – U11)

Clubs are to nominate teams into MiniRoos age eligible competitions or nominate for teams to be in MiniRoos competitions in line with their development and skill levels.

FV do not require dispensation to be submitted for any player who is age eligible to participate in the MiniRoos competition (ages between 7 and 11 years old).

The below dispensation categories are available for the MiniRoos level of competition.

Note: Dispensation for this level of competition is only required to be submitted for players that wish to play in MiniRoos competitions however are not age eligible for Under 11's. This is specific to a player who is turning 12 during the respective calendar year and is not age eligible for the Under 11 MiniRoos competition.

• **MEDICAL DISPENSATION**

FV recognise that it may be necessary in some circumstances to provide dispensation for an individual to play in an FV competition a maximum of one (1) year below their chronological age due to a physical disability, intellectual impairment, or physical size development consideration as identified and diagnosed by a certified medical practitioner.

A certified medical practitioner is a medical specialist including both sports physicians and paediatricians.

The Club must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A supporting letter from the players parent (s) or guardian
- Current (within minimum 12 months of the application unless chronic) medical evidence to support the application from the players medical specialist detailing the condition and need for dispensation.
- Any other information the club wishes to submit in support of the application.

• **FIRST YEAR DISPENSATION**

First year dispensation is granted to a player who has not previously been registered with FFA or FV. This form of dispensation is to allow an individual to play in an FV competition a maximum of one (1) year below their chronological age and is only valid for one competition season, this dispensation cannot be reapplied for the following competition season.

Note: Strictly for season 2021 only – due to the impact of COVID-19 resulting in competitions being cancelled in season 2020 the club may reapply for a player/s first-year dispensation request. The dispensation does not automatically role over in this exceptional circumstance, it must be reapplied for.

FV may refuse to grant a dispensation requested under this regulation in circumstances where the player in question has played football in school or other competitions not administered by FV or FFA. FV may seek further information from the Club in question before making a determination under this regulation and the Club must submit that information as part of the dispensation request.

• **PLAY FOOTBALL DISPENSATION**

• **One year dispensation – “bridging”**

- a. In the opinion of FV, it benefits the interests of one or more of the following to allow the dispensation:
 - i. the player;

- ii. the Team;
- iii. the Club;
- iv. the League in which the Team participates;
- v. football in Victoria in general.

JUNIOR BOYS (U12- U21) & JUNIOR GIRLS (U12 – U19)

• **MEDICAL DISPENSATION**

FV recognise that it may be necessary in some circumstances to provide dispensation for an individual to play in an FV competition a maximum of one (1) year below their chronological age due to a physical disability, intellectual impairment, or physical size development consideration as identified and diagnosed by a certified medical practitioner.

A certified medical practitioner is a medical specialist including both sports physicians and paediatricians.

The Club must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A supporting letter from the players parent (s) or guardian
- Current (within minimum 12 months of the application unless chronic) medical evidence to support the application from the players medical specialist detailing the condition and need for dispensation.
- Any other information the club wishes to submit in support of the application

• **FIRST YEAR DISPENSATION**

First year dispensation is granted to a player who has not previously been registered with FFA or FV. This form of dispensation is to allow a player to play one age group below their eligible age group and is only valid for one competition season, this dispensation cannot be reapplied for the following competition season.

Note: Strictly for season 2021 only – due to the impact of COVID-19 resulting in competitions being cancelled in season 2020 the club may reapply for a player/s first-year dispensation request. The dispensation does not automatically role over in this exceptional circumstance, it must be reapplied for.

FV may refuse to grant a dispensation requested under this regulation in circumstances where the player in question has played football in school or other competitions not administered by FV or FFA. FV may seek further information from the Club in question before making a determination under this regulation and the Club must submit that information as part of the dispensation request.

• **ABOVE AGE DISPENSATION**

Request for a player to play more than four (4) years above their age group.

• **GENDER DISPENSATION**

Everyone has a right to participate in football regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation and intersex status. These are protected characteristics under the law. The below guidelines and policy points relate to the inclusion of trans and gender diverse athletes, as well as athletes with intersex variations. A full policy related to the

community guidelines and policy on the inclusion of trans and gender diverse athletes will be released from FV which will give more comprehensive and detailed information for clubs and leagues. FV wishes to reinforce FV's commitment to diversity and inclusion within football, and has a strict no-tolerance approach to transphobia.

For purposes of clarity, the following terminology is explained:

Transgender: A person with a gender identity that is different from the gender/ sex assigned at birth

- Transgender man: someone with a male gender identity who was assigned female at birth.
- Transgender woman: someone with a female gender identity who was assigned male at birth.
- Cisgender: a non-transgender person, who identifies as the assigned gender at birth.
- Non-binary: Some people do not identify as exclusively female or male. As their gender identity is outside the female/ male binary, they are often referred to as 'non-binary'.

Transition: The legal steps a transgender person takes to affirm their gender identity

Intersex: The status of having a genetic, physical, or hormonal feature(s) that are not easily identified as being:

- Neither wholly female or male
- A combination of female and male
- Neither female or male

A person with an intersex variation may identify as man, woman, neither or both

Players 14 years and Under, including Transgender, non-binary and Intersex Players.

Under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act, it is unlawful to discriminate on the ground of gender up until the age of 12 years.

Football Victoria allows any player up until under 14 years of age to play in whatever gendered competition they choose and under the following guidelines:

- Players who identify as male may only play in female competitions in accordance with the *Equal Opportunities Act 2010* up until Under 12 girls. The player must turn 12 or below during the 2021 calendar year and may play in their equivalent age group of female competitions without the prior approval of FV.
- Players who identify as female are permitted to participate in male competitions up until Under 13 boys. The player must turn 13 or below during the 2021 calendar year and may play in their equivalent age group of male competitions without the prior approval of FV.
- Players who identify as non-binary are permitted to participate in the competition of their choice, up to the age of u12 for a girl's competition, and up to the age of u13 for a boy's competition.

Players 14 years and Over, including Transgender, non-binary and Intersex Players.

- Players who have affirmed their gender identity by transitioning to a gender that is different to their sex assigned at birth; are in the act of transitioning via gender affirming practices; or are non-binary people, are eligible to nominate to play in a competition of their choosing conducted for their affirmed gender and not sex assigned at birth, unless it gives cause to a risk to themselves or others.

- Players who identify as female are not permitted to participate in male competitions from Under 14 and above with the exemption of the player falling into one of the below categories.
- ➔ The player is currently registered to a regional club without any reasonable female pathway available to the player. To be clear a regional club is classified as a Club that has received prior written approval by FV to participate in FV metropolitan community competitions excluding Geelong based clubs.
- ➔ The player receives prior written approval by the FFA technical department.

Regional players and FFA mandated players must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A signed letter from the players Club president supporting the application
- A signed letter from the players Technical Director supporting the application
- A signed letter of consent from the players parent or guardian supporting the application
- A document listing general medical details of the player by a medical professional including height and weight
- The club/player must provide FV with any further information requested

All decisions in relation to the gender rules are final and at the discretion of the FFA & FV technical team and FV competitions team. These decisions are not appealable.

- **PLAY FOOTBALL DISPENSATION**
- **One year dispensation – “bridging”**

b. In the opinion of FV, it benefits the interests of one or more of the following to allow the dispensation:

- vi. the player;
- vii. the Team;
- viii. the Club;
- ix. the League in which the Team participates;
- x. football in Victoria in general.

- **FINALS ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION DISPENSATION**

To allow a player that has played less than (5) Regular Season Competition Fixtures to qualify for Finals.

FV will only consider dispensation in exceptional circumstances and where a club/team can establish it is unable to field a team for a final due to insufficient player numbers as a result of unavailability (including injury). Any Club wishing to submit for finals eligibility exemption must apply to FV.

- in writing
- at least (5) working days before the Final is due to take place
- setting out the reasons it requests an exception be granted
- with evidence to support player unavailability
- providing FV with any further information required

VPLW/ WOMENS STATE LEAGUE / GEELONG SENIOR WOMENS

- **SENIOR WOMENS AGE DISPENSATION**

A player who is under the age of 14 years old as of 1 January of that relevant competition season requesting to play in a Senior Womens Competition.

Players must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A signed letter from the players Club president supporting the application
- A signed letter from the players Technical Director supporting the application
- A signed letter of consent from the players parent or guardian supporting the application
- A document listing general medical details of the player by a medical professional including height and weight
- The club/player must provide FV with any further information requested

- **SIX (6) MATCH DISPENSATION (WSL)**

Enabling a player to play more than six (6) Competition Fixtures for a team in a lower division due to another players long-term injury or illness (WSL)

FV must receive supporting documentation from a medical practitioner indicating a player's long-term injury or illness as part of this application.

- **FINALS ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION DISPENSATION**

To allow a player that has played less than (5) Regular Season Competition Fixtures to qualify for Finals. (WSL or Geelong Senior Womens competitions only)

FV will only consider dispensation in exceptional circumstances and where a club/team can establish it is unable to field a team for a final due to insufficient player numbers as a result of unavailability (including injury). Any Club wishing to submit for finals eligibility exemption must apply to FV;

- in writing
- at least (5) working days before the Final is due to take place
- setting out the reasons it requests an exception be granted
- with evidence to support player unavailability
- providing FV with any further information required

MEN'S STATE LEAGUE

- **SENIOR MENS AGE DISPENSATION**

A player who is under the age of 15 years old as of 1 January of that relevant competition season requesting to play in a Senior Men's Competition.

Players must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A signed letter from the players Club president supporting the application
- A signed letter from the players Technical Director supporting the application

- A signed letter of consent from the players parent or guardian supporting the application
- A document listing general medical details of the player by a medical professional including height and weight
- The club/player must provide FV with any further information requested

MEN'S METROPOLITAN / GEELONG SENIOR MEN'S

- **SENIOR MENS AGE DISPENSATION**

A player who is under the age of 15 years old as of 1 January of that relevant competition season requesting to play in a Senior Men's Competition.

Players must provide FV with the following documentation in support of their application.

- A signed letter from the players Club president supporting the application
- A signed letter from the players Technical Director supporting the application
- A signed letter of consent from the players parent or guardian supporting the application
- A document listing general medical details of the player by a medical professional including height and weight
- The club/player must provide FV with any further information requested

- **FINALS & PLAYOFFS ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION DISPENSATION**

To allow a player that has played less than (5) Regular Season Competition Fixtures within that relevant competition season to qualify for Finals.

FV will only consider dispensation in exceptional circumstances and where a club/team can establish it is unable to field a team for a final due to insufficient player numbers as a result of unavailability (including injury). Any Club wishing to submit for finals eligibility exemption must apply to FV.

- in writing
- at least (5) working days before the Final is due to take place
- setting out the reasons it requests an exception be granted
- with evidence to support player unavailability
- providing FV with any further information required

MEN'S METROPOLITAN MASTERS

- **AGE DISPENSATION**

Can be applied for a player who turns the age of 35 within the calendar year for that relevant competition season requesting to play in Metropolitan Masters Competitions.

- **FINALS ELIGIBILITY EXEMPTION DISPENSATION**

To allow a player that has played less than (5) Regular Season Competition Fixtures within that relevant competition season to qualify for Finals.

FV will only consider dispensation in exceptional circumstances and where a club/team can establish it is unable to field a team for a final due to insufficient player

numbers as a result of unavailability (including injury). Any Club wishing to submit for finals eligibility exemption must apply to FV.

- in writing
- at least (5) working days before the Final is due to take place
- setting out the reasons it requests an exception be granted
- with evidence to support player unavailability
- providing FV with any further information required

OTHER FV COMPETITIONS

This policy is relevant to FV Community and Geelong competitions.

For further information on other FV competitions please see contacts details below.

NPL COMPETITIONS: nplvictoria@footballvictoria.com.au

FUTSAL COMPETITIONS: futsal@footballvictoria.com.au

GO FOOTBALL COMPETITIONS: via the GO Football website.

ALL ABILITIES COMPETITIONS: selin.arpaci@footballvictoria.com.au

CONTACT US

If you have any further questions regarding the dispensation application process or community/Geelong competitions dispensations more generally, please contact FV on 9474 1800 (Press 2 for competitions) or email competitions at competitions@footballvictoria.com.au