



VICTORIAN AMATEUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

CONDITIONS OF PLAY IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

The VAF A is committed to achieving a complete and uninterrupted season in 2022 for all competitions.

The health and safety of the community remains the highest priority, however unless advised otherwise by the Victorian State Government and/or AFL Victoria's Return to Training and Playing Protocols (available via the VAF A Portal), the VAF A will continue to play matches as fixtured through the season even if teams experience COVID-19-related player shortages at different stages of the season.

Clubs and players should also, wherever possible, stay ready to play as the VAF A will seek to use all available weekends to complete the season.

The VAF A will be guided by the following conditions if confronted with the unique challenges of COVID-19 during the season. By producing these conditions, the VAF A is attempting to find the right balance between ensuring all matches continue to be played as well as guaranteeing that the integrity of the competition remains protected.

1. Positive COVID-19 Player or Official

In the event that a registered player or official from a club test positive to COVID-19 and has been directed to isolate by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) at any time during the 2022 VAF A season, the impacted player or official shall immediately notify their club. The club must then follow the advice of the Public Health Authority or Chief Health Officer who will determine the requirement for quarantining individuals, groups or teams and whether the training facility can be used.

2. Home and Away Matches

In the event a club is unable to secure a minimum of eighteen (18) available players for one of their teams to take the field for a home and away match, due to players receiving a positive COVID-19 result or isolating as a confirmed close contact, the club must inform the VAF A General Manager Football and Umpire Operations in writing as soon as possible.

In this case, the impacted club can choose to either still take the field for the home and away match with less than eighteen (18) available players or request to VAFA Football Operations that the match be rescheduled.

A final decision on whether VAFA Football Operations reschedules a match will be made within three (3) business days of the original fixtured match.

Factors considered by VAFA Football Operations when considering rescheduling a match include:

- Approval from the two competing clubs
- Access to venues and facilities
- Proof of COVID-19 isolation directives from the DHHS
- The number of bye rounds remaining in the season*

** Note, when a bye round is required to accommodate a whole round of rescheduled home and away matches, the round of rescheduled home and away matches will be given priority and the rescheduled individual match will be deemed forfeited by the team who was unable to take the field for the original fixtured match (unless the two competing clubs, in conjunction with the VAFA, agree to reschedule the match to another date and time).*

No home and away match will be rescheduled to a date that is scheduled for the Finals Series of that section.

If the match is unable to be rescheduled, the match will be deemed forfeited by the team unable to take the field.

Forfeits

The following rules and section rankings apply to forfeits for home and away matches in the men's competition, noting that matches in the Men's Premier Competition (MPC) or Men's Divisional Competition (MDC) shall take precedence:

1. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Men's Thirds Competition (MTC) (if applicable), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the Under 23 Men's competition (if applicable) in the same round.
2. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Men's Reserves Competition (MRC), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the MTC (if applicable) and the Under 23 Men's competition (if applicable) in the same round.
3. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Under 19 Men's competition (if applicable), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the Men's Reserves Competition, the MTC (if applicable) and the Under 23 Men's competition (if applicable) in the same round.

4. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Men's Premier Competition (MPC) or Men's Divisional Competition (MDC), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the Under 19 Men's competition, (if applicable), the MRC, the MTC (if applicable) and the Under 23 Men's competition (if applicable) in the same round.

The following rules and section rankings apply to forfeits for home and away matches in the women's competition, noting that matches in Women's Premier Competition (WPC) or Women's Divisional Competition (WDC) shall take precedence:

1. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Women's Reserves Competition (WRC) (if applicable), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the Women's Thirds Competition (WTC) (if applicable) in the same round.
2. A club which forfeits a home and away match in the Women's Premier Competition (WPC) or Women's Divisional Competition (WDC), shall be deemed to have forfeited a home and away match in the WRC (if applicable) and WTC (if applicable) in the same round.

In season 2022, the VAFA will waive all fines associated with "one-off" forfeits in any section.

3. Home and Away Rounds impacted by a Lockdown

In the event the DHHS orders a temporary ban on all outdoor community sport (i.e. a lockdown) during the 2022 season, the VAFA will make a final decision within three (3) business days of this announcement to either reschedule that round of home and away matches to a weekend following the advertised conclusion of the lockdown period or cancel all matches in that round and deem them incomplete matches.

Factors considered by VAFA Football Operations when attempting to reschedule a round of matches impacted by a lockdown will include:

- The length of the ban on all outdoor community sport
- Access to venues and facilities
- The number of bye rounds remaining in the season

A round of home and away matches will not be rescheduled to a date that is scheduled for the Finals Series of that section.

In the event that the round of matches are cancelled and deemed incomplete matches, the ladder of that competition will revert to a match ratio calculation (calculated as per point 7 below).

4. Finals Matches

In the event a club is unable to secure a minimum of eighteen (18) available players for one of their teams to take the field for a finals match, due to players receiving a positive COVID-19 result or isolating as a confirmed close contact, the club must inform the VAFA General Manager Football and Umpire Operations in writing as soon as possible.

In this case, the impacted club can choose to either still take the field for the finals match with less than eighteen (18) available players or request to the Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee that the match be rescheduled.

A final decision on whether the VAFA Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee reschedules the finals match will be made within three (3) business days of the original fixtured finals match.

Factors considered by the VAFA Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee when considering rescheduling a finals match impacted by COVID-19 will include:

- Proof of COVID-19 isolation directives from the DHHS
- Access to venues and facilities

A finals match will only be rescheduled up to a maximum of seven (7) days from the original fixtured date of the finals match.

In the event that the finals match is unable to be rescheduled, the finals match will be deemed forfeited by the team unable to take the field.

Note, different outcomes may apply to different competitions depending on their season length and the number of available weeks to complete the Finals Series.

5. A Week of Finals Matches Impacted by a Lockdown

In the event the DHHS orders a temporary ban on all outdoor community sport (i.e. a lockdown) during the 2022 Finals Series, the VAFA Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee will make a final decision within three (3) business days of this announcement to either reschedule that week of finals matches to a weekend following the advertised conclusion of the lockdown period or cancel all finals matches in that week and deem them incomplete matches.

Factors considered by the VAFA Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee when attempting to reschedule a week of finals matches impacted by a lockdown will include:

- The length of the ban on all outdoor community sport
- Access to venues and facilities

In the event that the week of finals matches are cancelled and deemed incomplete matches, the higher ranked team will be deemed the winner of the finals match.

Note, different outcomes may apply to different competitions depending on their season length and the number of available weeks to complete the Finals Series.

6. Return to Home and Away Matches following a COVID Lockdown

In the event the temporary ban on all outdoor community sport (i.e. a lockdown) occurs during the home and away season and concludes within 28 days of the first announcement, the home and away season may recommence at the next scheduled round of the home and away season (i.e. no minimum training period before the next game will be enforced).

If the temporary ban on all outdoor community sport (i.e. a lockdown) occurs during the home and away season and extends past 28 days of the first announcement, or occurs during the scheduled Finals Series, the VAFA Football, Growth and Integrity Sub-Committee will determine the exact return to play date and/or adjust the fixtures if necessary.

7. Match Ratio Calculation

The match ratio calculation reflects the number of wins by each team against the number of matches played by each team.

An example match ratio calculation at the end of a season is included below:

- Team 1 plays 18 matches for 9 wins: $9 \text{ wins} / 18 \text{ matches} = 50\%$
- Team 2 plays 18 matches for 10 wins: $10 \text{ wins} / 18 \text{ matches} = 55.5\%$
- Team 3 plays 17 matches for 9 wins: $9 \text{ wins} / 17 \text{ matches} = 52.9\%$

Ladder positions at the end of a season based on the match ratio calculation would be as follows:

1st – Team 2 (match ratio 55.5%)
2nd – Team 3 (match ratio 52.9%)
3rd – Team 1 (match ratio 50%)

If two teams finish the home and away season with the same match ratio, the team with the higher percentage (total points scored against total points against) will be entitled to the higher ladder position.

8. Cancellation of the VAFA Season

The VAFA Board may, based on any advice and direction provided to them by the Victorian State Government, cancel the 2022 VAFA season at any point. In the instance where every team has played every other team in that section at least once during the home and away season, the VAFA will award a Premiership Trophy to the

club that occupied first position on the ladder in that section at the conclusion of the most recently completed round of home and away matches.

9. Promotion and Relegation

In the event that not all fixtured home and away matches were able to be completed (i.e. due to a round of matches being cancelled because of a lockdown), promotion and relegation as per VAFA Rules 13, 13A and Schedule E (or unless alternative movements are determined by the VAFA prior to the start of the 2022 season) shall still occur provided that at least 50% of sections in that competition achieves every team playing every other team in that section at least once during the home and away season.

In the event that not every team has played every other team in that section at least once in at least 50% of sections in that competition at the conclusion of the home and away season, promotion and relegation shall not occur even if a Finals Series is successfully completed.

For clarity, a forfeited match will be deemed as one team playing another team in that section.

10. Player Suspensions

A. Cancelled Matches

Suspensions for Reportable Offences as per Schedule D of the VAFA Rules (which are in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football). are all in terms of matches played and not dates.

Therefore, matches that are deemed cancelled shall not count as part of the suspension served for a player who has committed a Reportable Offence as per Schedule D of the VAFA Rules (which are in accordance with the Laws of Australian Football).

B. Forfeited Matches

Only a player from the team forfeited to, will have a forfeited match count as part of their suspension served for committing a reportable offence in accordance with the AFL's Laws of Australian Football. However, this shall not apply to a player from the team that was unable to take the field.

11. Vaccination Requirements

In line with the current [COVIDSafe settings in Victoria](#), if venues are used for community sport (e.g. a local footy match), patrons participating or facilitating community sport (e.g. players, coaches, volunteers) do not need to be vaccinated to access the facility.

However, attendees wishing to enter a social room must be fully vaccinated, be under 18 or have a valid medical exemption.

Please note, the following VAFA clubs require all patrons participating or facilitating community sport to be fully vaccinated as a condition of entry to a venue. This is a mandate imposed by their local government authority or facility owner (i.e. school or University).

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY FC	Tony Sheehan Oval
MARCELLIN OC	Marcellin College
MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB FC	Beaumaris Secondary College
MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S FC	University Oval, Crawford Oval
MHSOB	Woodfull Miller Oval
MONASH BLUES	Frearson Oval
OLD MENTONIANS	Keysborough Playing Fields
OLD TRINITY	Marles Playing Fields
PEGS	PEGS Sporting Fields
RMIT FOOTBALL CLUB	RMIT Bundoora
UNIVERSITY BLACKS	University Oval, Crawford Oval
UNIVERSITY BLUES	University Oval, Crawford Oval
WESTBOURNE GRAMMARIANS	Westbourne Grammar School
WHITEFRIARS OC	Whitefriars College

The VAFA will not reschedule any matches if non-vaccinated players are unable to access a venue or facility due to a vaccination mandate in place.

12. Ineligible Players

A. Vaccination Mandates

Any player who does not comply with a venue's condition of entry (as imposed by their local government authority or facility owner) may be investigated to determine whether they have breached a venue's condition of entry.

Any player found guilty of breaching a venue's condition of entry will be declared an ineligible player.

A club which includes an ineligible player shall forfeit all matches in which such player played together with all scores registered by such club in such matches. Each such match shall be awarded to the opposing club which shall have the option of including both scores in its percentage or not including either, but if such option be not exercised within seven (7) days, both scores shall be included.

Where an umpire or club believes that a player has breached the venue's condition of entry, they must inform the VAFA General Manager Football and Umpire Operations in writing by no later than 12.00pm Monday following the match.

B. AFL COVID-19 Top-Up Players

In the event a player plays an AFL men's match in the current calendar year as a COVID-19 Top-Up player, they become ineligible to play in any remaining VAFA home and away matches and finals matches.

A club which includes an ineligible player shall forfeit all matches in which such player played together with all scores registered by such club in such matches. Each such match shall be awarded to the opposing club which shall have the option of including both scores in its percentage or not including either, but if such option be not exercised within seven (7) days, both scores shall be included.

13. Finals Eligibility

As soon as a ladder reverts to a match ratio calculation for any section, finals eligibility criteria will also be adjusted in line with the number of matches that are deemed cancelled and incomplete.

To help clubs understand what changes apply to finals eligibility for each section in the event rounds of matches are lost, please refer to the tables on the following page.

Men's Competitions (as per VAFA Rules 55C and 55D.1)

MPC and MDC – No changes apply (except for VFL or NAB League players)

Under 19 Men's

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (Any U19 Men's Section)	
18		4
17		4
16		4
15		4
14		3
13		3
12		3
11		3
10		3
9		2
8		2
7		2
6		2
5		1
4		1
3		1
2		1
1		1

Under 19 Men's (higher ranked games threshold included)

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (Any U19 Men's Section)	Minimum Games (MPC/MDC)
18	6	6
17	6	6
16	6	6
15	6	6
14	5	5
13	5	5
12	4	4
11	4	4
10	4	4
9	3	3
8	3	3
7	3	3
6	2	2
5	2	2
4	2	2
3	1	1
2	1	1
1	1	0

MRC

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (MRC or MTC)	Maximum Games (MPC/MDC or U19)
18	3	8
17	3	8
16	3	8
15	3	7
14	3	7
13	3	6
12	2	6
11	2	5
10	2	5
9	2	4
8	2	4
7	2	3
6	1	3
5	1	2
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

Under 23 Men's

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (Under 23 Men's)	Maximum Games (MPC/MDC, U19 or MRC)
18	4	10
17	4	10
16	4	9
15	4	9
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

MTC

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (MTC)	Maximum Games (MPC/MDC, U19, MRC or U23)
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

Masters

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (MTC)	Maximum Games (MPC/MDC, U19, MRC, U23 or MTC)
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

VFL or NAB League Players

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (For team they wish to represent in finals)	Minimum Games (Any Section)
18	5 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	8
17	5 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	8
16	5 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	7
15	5 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	7
14	4 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	7
13	4 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	6
12	4 (2 after 30 June/1 July)	6
11	3 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	5

10	3 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	5
9	3 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	4
8	3 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	4
7	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	3
6	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	3
5	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	2
4	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	2
3	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	2
2	2 (1 after 30 June/1 July)	2
1	1	1

Women's Competitions (as per VAFA Rules 55C and 55D.1)

WPC and WDC

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (For club they wish to represent in finals) <i>*Premier Women's only</i>	Minimum Games (For club they wish to represent in finals)
16	2	
15	2	
14	2	2
13	2	2
12	2	2
11	2	2
10	2	2
9	2	2
8	1	2
7	1	1
6	1	1
5	1	1
4	1	1
3	1	1
2	1	1
1	1	1

WRC

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (WRC or WTC)	Maximum Games (WPC/WDC)
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3

5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

WTC

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (WTC)	Maximum Games (WPC/WDC or WRC)
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

VFLW or NAB League Girls Players

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games (For club they wish to represent in finals) <i>*Premier Women's only</i>	Minimum Games (For club they wish to represent in finals)
16	4	
15	4	
14	4	4
13	4	4
12	3	4
11	3	3
10	3	3
9	3	3
8	2	3
7	2	2
6	2	2
5	2	2
4	1	1
3	1	1
2	1	1
1	1	1

Clubs fielding more than one team in a Men's or Women's competition (as per VAFA Rule 55D.4)

MTC (different sections) – to be eligible to play for the lower ranked MTC team

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements
	Maximum Games (MTC higher ranked team)
14	10
13	9
12	8
11	8
10	7
9	6
8	5
7	5
6	4
5	2
4	2
3	1
2	1
1	0

MTC (same sections) – to be eligible to play for MTC finals team, noting the player must play more games for the finals team than the other team

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements
	Minimum Games (MTC finals team)
14	4
13	4
12	4
11	3
10	3
9	3
8	3
7	2
6	2
5	2
4	1
3	1
2	1
1	1

Under 19 Men's (different sections) – to be eligible to play for the lower ranked Under 19 Men's team

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements
	Maximum Games (Under 19 Men's higher ranked team)
18	8
17	8
16	7
15	7
14	6
13	6
12	5
11	5
10	4
9	4
8	4
7	3
6	3
5	2
4	2
3	1
2	1
1	0

More than one team playing finals on the same weekend (as per VAFA Rule 55D.5)

Men's Competitions

MPC/MDC and MRC playing (Rule 55D.5(i))

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements
	Minimum Games played in MPC/MDC, MRC or MTC to qualify for MRC
18	2
17	2
16	2
15	2
14	2
13	2
12	2
11	2
10	2
9	1
8	1
7	1
6	1
5	1
4	1
3	1

2	1
1	1

MRC and MTC playing (Rule 55D.5(ii))

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games played in MRC or MTC to qualify for MTC	Maximum Games played in MPC/MDC, U19, MRC or U23 to qualify for MTC
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0

Women's Competitions

WPC/WDC and WRC playing (Rule 55D.5(v))

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games played in WPC/WDC or WRC to qualify for either WPC/WDC or WRC	
16	2	
15	2	
14	2	
13	2	
12	2	
11	2	
10	2	
9	2	
8	2	
7	1	
6	1	
5	1	
4	1	
3	1	
2	1	
1	1	

WPC/WDC, WRC and WTC playing (New Rule 55D.5(vii))

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games played in WPC/WDC, WRC or WTC to qualify for either WPC/WDC, WRC or WTC	
16		2
15		2
14		2
13		2
12		2
11		2
10		2
9		2
8		2
7		1
6		1
5		1
4		1
3		1
2		1
1		1

WRC and WTC playing (New Rule 55D.5(viii))

Completed VAFA Games	Finals Eligibility Requirements	
	Minimum Games played in WRC or WTC to qualify for WTC	Maximum Games played in WPC/WDC or WRC to qualify for WTC
14	3	8
13	3	7
12	3	7
11	3	6
10	3	6
9	2	5
8	2	4
7	2	4
6	2	3
5	1	3
4	1	2
3	1	2
2	1	1
1	1	0