

In 2016 there have been no new rules introduced within the Laws of Australian Football; however, there have been some alterations to wording of these.

This memo aims to outline in brief form the alterations which have occurred within the Laws for your communication as you see fit.

Law 1.1

The following definitions have been added to the Laws of Australian Football;

Active Bleeding – Has the meaning described in Law 22.1

Club – An entity fielding a team in an Australian Football competition conducted by the Controlling Body.

Member Protection Policy or MPP – means the policy endorsed by the AFL Executive, that provides governance to affiliates of the AFL, including Affiliated State & Territory Bodies to promote ethical and informed decision-making and responsible behaviours within Australian Football.

Protective Equipment – has the meaning described in Law 9.1.

Within the Immediate Proximity of the Arena – any area within 500 metres of an Arena where a Match is conducted.

Law 3.5.1

The addition of maximum heights for goal and behind posts.

3.5.1 Position

- (a) Two posts, to be called goal posts, shall be a minimum height of 6 metres and a maximum height of 15 metres and be placed at each end of the Playing Surface at a distance of 6.4 metres apart.
- (b) A further two posts, to be called behind posts, shall be a minimum height of 3 metres and a maximum height of 10 metres and be placed at a distance of 6.4 metres on each side of the goal posts so that a straight line can be drawn on the ground to join each post.

Law 11.2.1

An alteration to the number of times the timekeeper is required to sound the siren as an indicator to interchange players to leave the playing surface prior to the start of the match from three to two.

11.2.1 Readiness to Commence Play

- (a) All Interchange Players must leave the Playing Surface two minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of a Match, being the time when the Timekeepers sound the siren twice.

Law 15.2.3

A reordering of the previous Law and replacing 'kick or handball' with 'Correctly Dispose of'

15.2.3 Holding the Football – Prior Opportunity/No Prior Opportunity

- (a) Where the field Umpire is satisfied that a Player in possession of the football:
 - (i) has had a prior opportunity to dispose of the football, the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against that Player if the Player does not Correctly Dispose of the football immediately when they are Correctly Tackled;
 - (ii) has not had a prior opportunity to dispose of the football, the field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against that Player if, upon being Correctly Tackled, the Player does not Correctly Dispose or genuinely attempt to Correctly Dispose of the football after being given a reasonable opportunity to do so; or
 - (iii) has driven their head into a stationary or near stationary opponent, the Player shall be regarded as having had prior opportunity.
- (b) Except in the instance of a poor bounce or throw up by the field Umpire or a throw in by the boundary Umpire, a Player who takes possession of the football while contesting a bounce or throw up by a field Umpire or a boundary throw in by a boundary Umpire, shall be regarded as having had prior opportunity.

Law 15.4.1

Alteration of the wording for clarification.

15.4 FREE KICK – PERMITTED AND PROHIBITED PHYSICAL CONTACT

15.4.1 Correct Tackle or Correctly Tackled

- (a) For the purposes of these Laws, a Player executes a Correct Tackle or a Player is Correctly Tackled if:
 - (i) the Player being tackled is in possession of the football; and
 - (ii) that Player is tackled below the shoulders and above the knees.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, a Correct Tackle may be executed by holding (either by the body or playing uniform) a Player from the front, side or behind, provided that a Player held from behind is not pushed in the back.

Law 15.8

Removal of the previous final clause ‘... which may affect whether a goal or behind is scored.’

15.8 FREE KICKS – SHAKING GOAL POST OR BEHIND POST

15.8.1 Awarding Free Kick

Unless Law 15.8.3 applies, a Free Kick shall be awarded against a Player or Official who intentionally shakes a goal or behind post (either before or after a Player has disposed of the football).

Law 16.1

Capitalisation of the final two words ‘...as “The Mark”.’

Please note that during the NAB Challenge series **16.1.2 Protected Area** is going through review of whether the distance of the Protected Area is altered to 8 metres or 10 metres. This change will be communicated once it is known.

16.1 STANDING THE MARK AND THE PROTECTED AREA

16.1.1 Standing The Mark

When a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick or is Kicking into play after a Behind has been scored, one Player from the opposing Team may stand at the position on the Playing Surface where the Mark or Free Kick was awarded or where the field Umpire otherwise directs the Player to stand. The position on the Playing Surface where the opposing Player stands is known as “The Mark”.

16.1.2 Protected Area

The Protected Area is a corridor which extends from 5 metres either side of The Mark to 5 metres either side of, and a 5 metre radius behind, the Player with the football, as illustrated in Diagram 2. No Player shall enter and remain in the Protected Area unless the field Umpire calls ‘Play On’ or the Player from the opposing Team is accompanying or following within 2 metres of their opponent.

Law 16.5.1 (b)

An alteration to the wording of the law.

- (b)** If a Player who is awarded a Free Kick or a Mark takes their Kick from outside the Playing Surface beyond the Boundary Line, the football shall be deemed to be Out of Bounds and the boundary Umpire shall throw in the football back into play at the spot where the original Free Kick or Mark took place if the Player:
 - (i)** fails to bring the football into play; or
 - (ii)** attempts to play on from outside the Playing Surface beyond the Boundary Line; or
 - (iii)** does not bring the football into play in accordance with Law 16.5.1(a).

Law 18.1

A wording alteration with the removal of gender specific terms.

18.1 WHEN IMPOSED

Where a field Umpire has awarded a Free Kick or a Mark to a Player, the field Umpire shall also award a Fifty-Metre Penalty in favour of that Player if the field Umpire is of the opinion that any Player or Official from the opposing side:

- (a)** has encroached The Mark;
- (b)** engages in Time Wasting;
- (c)** uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;
- (d)** behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire or disputes the decision of an Umpire;
- (e)** enters the Protected Area, except when the Player is accompanying or following within 2 metres of their opponent;
- (f)** has not returned the football directly and on the full to the Player awarded the Free Kick or Mark;
- (g)** engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would ordinarily be awarded, in accordance with 16.7 (b);
- (h)** when not in the immediate contest, holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or who has been awarded a Free Kick; or
- (i)** when in the contest unreasonably holds a Player after that Player has been awarded a Free Kick or has Marked the football.

Law 19.1

The removal of the previous Law 19.1.2: 'Within the Immediate Proximity of the Arena'. This clause has been moved into the definitions, 1.1.