

CIRCULAR



PERTH FOOTBALL
L E A G U E

Subject: Abuse Towards Umpires

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Audience: Club Committees

Summary: Strategy to deal with unacceptable behaviour and abuse toward umpires	Action: Please forward this circular to all coaches, team managers and on field support staff.
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In 2022 the League together with Umpiring WA, developed a strategy to deal with unacceptable behaviour and abusive language coming from coaches, players and other on field support staff toward Umpires. Over the first half of the season we are seeing a gradual rise in unacceptable behaviour towards umpires, and we ask clubs to read the below which was sent to you all in June 2022.

PLAYERS/RUNNERS ON-FIELD BEHAVIOUR

Field Umpires shall issue a **YELLOW CARD** against a Player, Runner or official who:

1. Uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;
2. Behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire;
3. Disputes a decision of an Umpire;
4. Fails to follow the instruction of an Umpire; or
5. Intentionally or carelessly engages in conduct which affects, interferes with or prevents an Umpire from performing their duties.

Field umpires shall issue a **RED CARD** against a player, coach, runner or official who enters their personal space, and as a result feels threatened.

This includes any abuse directed at an Umpire or Player that is either:

1. Threatening, abusive, insulting or obscene, racial motivated – with further ramifications
2. Disability
3. Sexually orientated
4. Any other provoked abuse that the umpire deems unnecessary

Umpires will receive ongoing education and guidance around the difference between abuse/threats, disputing a decision and a player simply asking a question of an Umpire. i.e. the difference between what is unacceptable and what is acceptable. Some examples are outlined below.

Acceptable

Asking for clarification in a respectful manner or asking what was the freekick was for at a convenient time is considered acceptable as we encourage dialogue between players and Umpires.

Unacceptable

Personal comments that offend the Umpire (e.g. reference to sex, weight, cultural background, looks, sexual preference, disability), disputing of decisions, aggressive behaviour, offensive language or demonstrative behaviour will not be tolerated.

COACH/BENCH BEHAVIOUR

Laws of Australian Football states:

“Umpires shall be protected from unreasonable contact and behaviour whilst performing their duties and their decisions should be respected and followed by Players and Officials.”

Free Kicks - Umpires A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Coach or Official who:

- (a) uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards an Umpire;
- (b) behaves in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards an Umpire;
- (c) intentionally, unreasonably or carelessly makes contact with an Umpire;
- (d) disputes a decision of an Umpire;
- (e) fails to follow the instruction of an Umpire; or
- (f) intentionally or carelessly engages in conduct which affects, interferes with or prevents an Umpire from performing their duties.

Field umpires can issue a **RED CARD** to any coach. They also can report a coach to the league for poor behaviour after the conclusion of the match.

Notwithstanding the above, there will now be a three (3) step process implemented if there is unacceptable abuse or threats coming the Coaches Box.

- *Step 1:* Free kick
- *Step 2:* Free kick and 50m penalty
- *Step 3:* Any further instances of abuse will result in ongoing free kicks and 50m penalties.

If, during the match, a team has been penalised to the point where Step 3 has been reached it will be entered in the Match Day Report and the following penalties will apply:

- First Offence: \$500 Fine
- Second Offence: \$750 Fine
- Third Offence: \$1,000 Fine & 5 Coach Demerit Points.

Umpire recruitment and retention is being given the highest priority across every competition in WA and every club, coach, player, and official is expected to play their part in providing a safe game day environment for all participants in the game.