

# 2019 Rule Changes

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

# Summary - Rule Changes / Interpretations

## ***Traditional Playing Positions at Centre Bounce***

- Implementation of a traditional set up at centre bounces – Clubs must have six Players inside both 50-Metre arcs, with one Player required to be inside the Goal Square. Four Midfield Players are positioned inside the Centre Square with the Wingmen required to be placed somewhere along the Wing.

## ***Kick-Ins***

- For Kick-Ins from a Behind, a Player will no longer need to kick to himself or herself to Play On out of the Goal Square.
- Following a Behind, the Person on the Mark will be positioned 10 metres from the top of the Goal Square (currently 5 metres).

## ***Marks / Free Kicks:***

- For all Defenders who take a Mark or gain a Free Kick within 9 metres of their own Goal, the Person on the Mark for the attacking team will be brought in line with the top of the Goal Square.

## ***Runners and Water Carriers***

- Team Runners may only enter the Playing Surface once a goal has been kicked and must exit the Playing Surface before play Recommences.
- Water Carriers are not permitted to enter the Playing Surface during live play.

## ***Umpire Contact***

- Players will be prohibited from setting up behind the Umpire at each Centre Bounce.

## ***50-Metre Penalty***

- Stricter on the infringing player, allowing the Player with the ball to advance The Mark by 50 metres without the infringing player delaying the game.
- In addition, the Player with the Football will be able to play on during the advancement of the 50-Metre Penalty.

## ***Kicking for Goal post-siren***

- A Player who has been awarded a Mark or Free Kick once play has ended will now be able to Kick across their body using a Snap or Check-side Kick. The Player shall dispose of the football directly in line with the Person on the Mark and the Goal.

## ***Marking Contest***

- 'Hands in the Back' rule interpretation to be repealed, allowing a Player to place his hands on the back of his opponent to protect his position in a Marking contest but not to push the Player in the back.

## ***Ruck Contests – Prior Opportunity***

- A Ruck 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, will not be regarded as having had Prior Opportunity. Where there is uncertainty over who is the designated Ruck, the Ruck for each Team will continue to nominate to the field Umpire.

# 1. Traditional positions Centre Bounce (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
How much time do the players have to set up in starting positions (post goal)?	Approximately 45 seconds from the time the umpire indicates all clear (post goal).
What if a player(s) is not in correct starting position prior to umpire being ready to commence Centre Bounce?	Play will not commence until players are in correct starting positions, if a team is inconsistent in getting into position a “delay of game” free kick will be paid (post warning).
What if the player makes a mistake where they position themselves?	The umpires will attempt to assist the players by informing them of numbers in an area. If a player doesn't adjust in time “delay of game” free kick will occur (post warning).
How many warnings will a team receive before a free kick is paid?	Each team is entitled to one warning per game, this will be made clear to the team captain (where possible) if not the ruck will be advised.
Where will the free kick be taken from and by who?	The free kick will be taken from the centre circle, it will be awarded to the ruck.
What if a player shows no intent to move once in the wrong position?	The umpires can pay a free kick plus a 50 metre penalty for a deliberate action. If the team has not had a previous warning, the umpires will wait for the players to re-position.
Why a free kick and 50 metre penalty?	So teams do not have an advantage from positioning an extra defender in their Defensive 50. The free kick plus 50 metre penalty results in a shot at goal.
What if multiple players from both teams are out of position, when the umpire is ready? e.g. in the case of a melee.	Umpire will wait for players to be in correct position.
What if a player steps across either the goal square, 50m or centre square line before the Umpire has completed the Centre Bounce?	A free kick is award to the opposing Ruck, to be taken from centre circle. Identical to current breach of centre square rule. If the player is pushed across a line, the player pushing will concede a free kick.
What if a player is delayed from getting off the ground post goal (by an opponent), which delays his team mate from being in position?	Umpire would be reliant on communication from Emergency Umpire. The Umpire will wait for the player to be in position. It could result in a free kick being paid by the emergency umpire.
Can a team start with more than one player out of the goal square?	Yes, the attacking team may position multiple players in the goal square. However, the defensive team does not have to match anymore than one player.
Is there a way to make rotation times more effective to avoid “delay of game” frees?	The wing closest to the interchange could be the last position filled as they have the space from the width of the square out to the boundary, allocated as being in position.
If a team is one or more players down, what can they adjust with regards positioning?	A team with less than 18 players available can reduce the numbers in any area with exception of the goal square. They can not exceed the numbers in any area e.g. cannot play 7 defenders.

## 2. Kick Ins (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Can a player go to the ball bag to grab a football?	No an AFL appointed Ball Attendant will be responsible for passing the football to a player from the team kicking the ball in!
When can you receive the ball? Where do you have to be positioned to receive the ball?	As soon as the Goal Umpire has signaled, the Ball Attendant will pass the ball to a player who must be positioned between the goal line and the fence.
Can a player use a ball that remains in the field of play. e.g. bounced off fence or post etc?	Yes, a player is entitled to pick up the ball that remains in the field of play and use it for the kick in.
How quickly can the player kick the ball in?	As soon as the goal umpire has signaled, the player is free to kick the ball in.
Must the kicker start in the goal square?	Yes, the player must start with both feet in the goal square with the ball in their possession.
Do you have to kick to yourself before you exit the goal square?	No longer does the player kicking in have to kick to themselves.
Can a player handball from within the goal square?	No, the player must kick the ball back into play, however once the umpire calls “ <b>play on</b> ”, the player may handball (from the goal square).
Once a player has exited the goal square, can they handball?	Yes, the player is free to kick or handball once they have left the goal square.
How far can the kicker run with the football?	15 metres from where they exit the goal square, before having to dispose or bounce the football.
Will a free kick remain for a kick in that goes out of bounds without being touched by any player?	No, umpires will only award a free kick if player doesn't demonstrate sufficient intent to keep the ball in play.
Explain the protected area for kick ins?	The protected area is 19 x 19m (from point post to point post out to the player on the mark). Opposition players must make every effort to vacate the protected area.
What is the penalty for an infringement by the player on the mark, an opposition player in protected area or by a player prior to kick in?	The penalty would be advancing the mark by 50m (69m from goal).

# 3. Marks/Free Kicks: Deep D50 (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why has the rule changed for a mark or free kick deep in Defensive 50?	To provide the player in possession with an opportunity to kick the ball more effectively off multiple steps. It also opens up other areas of the ground.
So how will this work?	For any mark or free kick in Deep D50, the umpire will move the mark (in line), adjacent to the end of the goal square (9 metres out from goal line).
How will the umpire determine the correct positioning of the mark?	The media exclusion line (on each side of the ground) will be moved at every venue to align with the end of the goal square. This will provide umpires with 2 reference points.
What happens if the defensive team kicks laterally within the area, does the next mark also get reset to 9m?	Yes, this could be a way of maintaining possession if the opposition don't press up to defend. The mark will always be reset to 9m.
Will the umpire delay play to set the mark?	No, the player who takes a mark will be entitled to play on at their discretion. In most instances the mark from a free kick will be reset to 9m.
Does the normal Person on the Mark rules apply?	Yes they do, once the mark is set the opposition should adjust quickly to stand the mark correctly.
Can an Opposing player press up on The Mark, prior to an umpire re-setting to 9m?	Yes, a player is entitled to press up on the mark to limit the marking player from playing on. They cannot run over the mark. The umpire will then reset the mark to 9m.
Will umpires assist players in adjusting to new rules?	Yes, the umpires will attempt to engage with players to provide direction and to limit any confusion, where possible.

# 4. Hands in the Back (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why has the interpretation changed for Hands in the Back?	It has changed to enable a player to play with instinct - hands instead of forearms.
In what situations can players put Hands in the Back?	In the Marking Contest, a player can protect space, stop a player from coming back on them by putting their hands in the opponents back.
What if they use 2 motions - Hands in the Back and then up to Mark?	As long as the player does not push their opponent in the back, it will be a play on call or mark.
Will a player putting Hands in the Back and then extending their arms be a cue for Umpires to pay a Push in the Back?	No, the Umpires will be adjudicating whether a player has Pushed in the Back or whether the player in front position has reacted to contact and leant forward?
Will this be a difficult for Umpires to adjudicate correctly?	Yes, Marking Contests are one of the most difficult areas to umpire in the game, there will be no difference.
Will players throwing themselves forward in the marking contest become more apparent?	Hopefully not, players that attempt to draw free kicks for exaggerating contact could be subject to MRO, if it is believed the player is engaging in an act of staging refer Law 19.2.2 (p)

# 5. Kicking for Goal post-siren (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Does the player have to stay on the line of the mark for their shot at goal?	No, the player will be allowed to go to their preferred side, enabling them to choose whichever type of kick they prefer.
Does the player have to kick over the line of the mark?	Yes, the player must kick the ball over the line of the mark.
What if the player goes past the line of the mark before taking the kick for goal?	The umpire will call “play on” and the shot at goal will not count (game over).
To ensure the player having the shot at goal is adhering to rules, is there a recommendation for how they could check?	Engage the umpire e.g. I’m going to kick around the corner, start here and kick over the mark - is that ok?
What can the defensive team do in this situation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure player on the mark doesn’t overstep</li> <li>2. Ensure players are outside the set protected area and don’t adjust to the kickers positioning.</li> </ol>

# 6. 50m Penalty advantage (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why has this interpretation changed?	To provide more options for the attacking player that has been infringed against.
Once the defensive player has fallen behind the player who has been awarded the 50m penalty, can they sprint passed them to stand the mark?	No, once the defensive player is behind, they must show intent to clear the (moving) protected area.
Who can stand the mark, if the initial defender is out of play by vacating the protected area?	Any player who is either; (A) Up with the umpire (B) Forward of the mark or (C) Has run around the moving protected area
Can the player award the 50m penalty, play on at any time prior to the marking being set?	Yes, the player who has been awarded the 50 penalty has the freedom to play on at anytime up to the mark being set.
When does the attacking player in receipt of the 50m penalty, get called to play on?	The player will be called to play on if they deviate off the line of the mark in the lead up to the mark being set.
Once the player has played on who can pressure the player.	Once the umpire has called “play on” any opposition player can pressure, however it is crucial that all defensive players are not caught within the protected area prior to the play on call.
If you are the player that infringed and conceded the 50m, how would you recommend they react?	By getting up with the umpire as quick as possible, to enable you to retreat and remain vigilant to any play on call.



# 7. Ruck Contest prior opportunity (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why has this rule changed?	We believe that the Ruck should be entitled to take the ball out of the ruck contest.
Is this the same prior opportunity as a player picking up a ground ball or receiving a handball?	Yes, identical to those situations. The current holding the ball rule applies.
Could this be too much of an advantage to the taller Rucks?	This might be the case depending on match ups, however most likely it will encourage teams to play Rucks at stoppages to limit an individuals dominance.
Explain the AFL Charter for laws of the game in regards to player types?	It states that “Players of various sizes, football and athletic ability have an opportunity for success in the game played at the highest level.”
Does this rule change along with not allowing 3rd Person Up at Ruck contests encourage Taller players to play AFL.	We hope that allowing Rucks to take the ball out of the ruck contest, along with the outlawing of the 3rd Person Up rule (player safety) will provide some encouragement for Talls to remain in or take up AFL.

# 8. Umpire Contact @ Centre Bounce (FAQ)

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why are we being stricter at Centre Bounce with umpire contact?	The umpires bounce and then exit backwards at speed, this puts them in a more vulnerable position compared to around the ground Ball Ups.
Is there a way that umpires can help avoid the possibility of contact?	Yes, Umpires are prepared to observe where players are set up and if the opposite side of the circle is less populated - flip across to the opposite side circle to execute the bounce.
Could umpires remind players which way they will exit?	Yes, Umpires will clearly signal which side of the circle they be exiting, ensuring they engage with players in the vicinity.
Can players set up behind the umpire at Centre Bounce?	Yes they can, however they will be liable for any contact.
What about players that start away but run a path behind the exiting umpire?	As above, they will be liable for any contact.
What if a player is pushed into the umpires path?	The player that pushes an opponent into the umpires path would be fined (free kicked if clearly seen) for initiating umpire contact.
Can a free kick be paid for making contact with an umpire?	Yes, if an umpire can clearly see which player made or instigated the umpire contact a free kick will be paid.
What if the umpire doesn't exit straight back, will that be taken into account?	It may be taken into account but the player runs the risk if they make contact, that they could be free kicked / fined.
Can a Tagged player use the umpire to split away from their opponent?	No, the tagged player will be liable for any contact by MRO and can be free kicked if clearly seen by an umpire.

# 9. Runners / Water Carriers - FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
When are runners able to deliver messages to players?	Runners are allowed on the ground after a goal is scored. They may also enter the field when a stretcher is called for an injured player.
How long do they have to deliver their message?	Approximately 45 seconds, which is the time that it takes for the broadcast to return for the next Centre Bounce.
Does the runner have to be off the ground by the time the umpire is ready to commence the Centre Bounce?	Yes, the runner should have returned through the interchange area by the time the umpire is commencing their approach to bounce.
What happens if the runner gets delayed on the ground?	A free kick could be awarded to the opposition team refer Law 15.11.1 (b), they could also be fined / suspended by MRO.
What if a goal has not been scored for long period, how will we get our messages to players for rotations?	The AFL is investigating having boards available to the clubs at each venue, to deliver the next player to be rotated.
When are water carriers able to enter the playing surface?	Post goal only.
How long are they allowed to be on the ground?	They must be off the ground by the time the umpire is commencing their approach to bounce.
What happens if the water carrier is late to exit the ground?	A free kick could be awarded to opposition team refer Law 15.11.1 (b), they could also be fined / suspended by MRO.
Will there be any change to the amount of times water carriers can be used in hot weather?	The AFL Heat Policy will be in place, the water carriers will be able to deliver water as per 2018 rules (ensuring that they do not interfere with play and exit ASAP).



# 2019 Summary Rule Changes

## Unique to AFLW

### **Boundary Throw Ins (in 10m)**

- Boundary umpire to bring in the ball off the boundary line by 10m for all Throw Ins
- The ruck contest will now occur approx. 25m into the field of play

### **Last Disposal (kick or handball) : Midfield only / Between the arcs**

- In AFLW 2018 the Last Disposal rule was in place full ground, this has been changed to midfield only for the upcoming season
- Deliberate out of bounds remains in play for kicks looking to gain territory rather than to a team mate.



# 1. Boundary Throw In - in by 10m (FAQ)

Unique to AFLW

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why has this rule been introduced?	In VFLW trials, there was a reduction in the number of repeat stoppages from hit outs directed towards the boundary line.
Is there any other advantages to the rule?	Yes, as the ball was thrown in deeper into the corridor - there was more space created around the ruck contest.
Could this effect positioning ahead of / behind the ball?	It certainly could, in the trials the football was transitioned to the open side of the field more regularly.
How far will the ball be thrown into the field?	Approximately 25m from the boundary line, this could vary slightly between boundary umpires.
Will the field umpires assist Rucks with positioning?	Yes umpires will be encouraged, particularly early in the season to remind Rucks that the boundary umpires will be coming in 10m, prior to throwing the ball into play.
Could this lead to more scores from this source?	Possibly, when combined with “Last Disposal between the Arcs” rule change - it could result in more opportunities from F50 stoppages.



## 2. Last Disposal between the arcs (FAQ)

Unique  
to AFLW

Frequently Asked Questions	Response
Why the change from 2018 full ground “Last Disposal”	We believed that the full ground Last Disposal was too harsh when the attacking team had a long shot / snap at goal that bounced out of bounds adjacent to the point post.
Could teams possibly exploit the rule by kicking the ball forward to achieve a Boundary Throw In?	The “Intent to keep the ball in play” rule remains in place, this would capture the instance when the ball is kicked to territory rather than to a team mate.
What about the defensive team kicking the ball out of bounds in D50?	As above, the umpires will assess whether there is sufficient intent to keep the ball in play.
Is Last Disposal deemed as a kick or handball only?	The umpires will pay a free kick for any legal - kick or handball that results in the ball going out of bounds.
What is deemed a legal kick?	A legal kick is either when a player: (A) Has possession and disposes by a kick (B) Elects to kick off the ground. (C) Elects to kick out of mid air
What is a player attempts to gather the ball and it inadvertently comes off their foot?	We don’t believe that this is a kick, however the umpire may award a free kick for insufficient intent to keep the ball in play.