



**Auckland Football Federation  
U9 – U12 Age Groups “McDonald’s Mini Football”  
Rules & Regulations  
Season 2019**



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## 1 DEFINITIONS

The terms given below denote the following:

- 1.1. **Competition;** any competition, tournament or league administered by AFF including pre-season, season proper, finals series and any post season tournament or knockout cup competition.
- 1.2. **Season;** The period of time starting with the first official match of the Competition and ending with the last official match of the Competition.
- 1.3. **Regulations;** Means these Competition regulations.
- 1.4. **NZF;** New Zealand Football Incorporated.
- 1.5. **AFF;** Auckland Football Federation
- 1.6. **Club;** An affiliated member club of NZF or of AFF that enters at least one team in a Competition.
- 1.7. **Competitions Manager;** means the official appointed by AFF from time to time to administer the AFF Competitions
- 1.8. **Home Venue;** A match played at a Club's own nominated match venue.
- 1.9. **Home Team;** the Club named first on the Competition fixture.
- 1.10. **Home Club;** The Club responsible for the organisation and management of matches played at their own nominated match venue.
- 1.11. **Away Team;** The Club playing a match at an opponent's nominated match venue.
- 1.12. **Player;** Any football player registered as such with a Club, and **Players** shall be construed accordingly.
- 1.13. **Playing;** Means taking the field of play including as a substitute. Being named on the Match Information/Team List and not taking the field of play does not constitute as playing
- 1.14. **Health and Safety Regulations;** The Health and Safety Act 2015 and all other relevant regulations.
- 1.15. **COMET;** Means the NZF National Registration System and Competitions Management System.
- 1.16. **Regional Association Disciplinary Committee;** The Disciplinary Committee of a Regional Association/Federation
- 1.17. **NZF Disciplinary Committee;** The Disciplinary Committee of NZF.
- 1.18. **Age classification (U9, U10, U11 and U12) – Any player in these competitions must have achieved the required age during the current calendar year i.e. U9 player must have turned 9 during the calendar year of the current season.**

## 2 COMPETITION

- 2.1 These Regulations regulate the rights, duties and responsibilities of all Clubs in these competitions. These Regulations are binding for all parties participating and involved in the preparation, organisation and hosting of these competitions.
- 2.2 The NZF Statutes and Regulations, the FIFA Statutes and all FIFA Regulations in force shall apply. Any reference in these Regulations to the NZF Statutes and Regulations, the FIFA Statutes and FIFA Regulations, refers to the Statutes, Rules and Regulations valid at the time of application.
- 2.3 All matches shall be played in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game with limited exceptions outlined in these regulations.
- 2.4 Final decisions on interpretations of any part of these regulations shall rest with the Federation.
- 2.5 Participation in AFF Junior Competitions shall be open to invited clubs within the boundaries of Auckland Football Federation.
- 2.6 The entire control and management of these competitions shall be vested in AFF. AFF shall have the power to do all other things necessary to ensure the progress of these competitions through all its stages and may take appropriate action to bring about such results. All or any of the powers vested in AFF may be delegated to a nominee.
- 2.7 AFF shall determine the number of teams that may compete in these competitions. The decision of AFF as to the composition and execution of these competitions shall be final and binding.
- 2.8 AFF may appoint a Competition Manager or similar who shall be responsible for administration of these competitions. The Competition Manager holds jurisdiction as per the NZF Disciplinary Code.
- 2.9 Each club wishing to compete in these competitions shall, on or before a date advised by the Competitions Manager, confirm in writing their acceptance of an invitation to compete in said Competitions.
- (a) Written confirmation is to be submitted via direct entry of teams into relevant competitions in COMET.
- 2.10 Entry to, and continued participation in, these competitions may be restricted or revoked by AFF having regard to:
- (a) The Clubs satisfying criteria established from time to time by AFF on a continuing basis.
- (b) The Club satisfying terms set by AFF from time to time.
- 2.11 From time to time AFF may set costs of participation above and beyond the normal federation and NZF levies which shall be payable to AFF.
- 2.12 Results and standings will not be published for any division in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade competitions in the 2019 season.
- 2.13 Results for all age grades must be entered by the Home Club in COMET by 12 noon on the day after the match and no later than 12 noon the Monday following a weekend fixture.

2.14 All clubs must have a signed MOU with the Federation before their team entries will be approved.

### 3 DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

3.1 Disciplinary incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the NZF Disciplinary Code and the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

3.2 The Clubs, their Players and Officials, agree to comply with the IFAB Laws of the Game and with the FIFA Statutes and Regulations, in particular the FIFA Disciplinary Code, the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations, the FIFA Code of Ethics (in particular in matters regarding the fight against discrimination, racism and match-fixing), the FIFA Code of Conduct and NZF Statutes and Regulations, in particular the NZF Disciplinary Code, the NZF Anti-Doping Regulations, the NZF Code of Ethics, the NZF Anti-Match Fixing and Sports Betting Regulations and the NZF Code of Conduct.

### 4 DISPUTES AND PROTESTS

4.1 Any Club in these competitions may bring a dispute or protest to AFF who shall make a decision or refer to the appropriate Judicial Body according to NZF Disciplinary Code, and advise the party or parties concerned in accordance with the relevant regulations providing that;

- (a) The protest must be in writing to the Competitions Manager, setting out the full details of the incident or protest and must be accompanied by the prescribed Incident Report Form.
- (b) A protest shall be made by the Club Secretary or other recognised club official, no more than three (3) working days of the alleged breach.
- (c) Clubs or players may appeal a decision through the process set out in the NZF Disciplinary Code.

### 5 EQUIPMENT

#### Playing Strips

5.1 Home teams must not deviate from the colours notified to AFF and published on the AFF website to all other teams. In addition, each Club shall select two contrasting colours for goalkeepers. These goalkeeper strips must be distinctly different and contrasting from each other as well as different and contrasting from the Club colours and alternate strips.

5.2 Where there is a clash of colours, the Away Team (i.e. second-named team) in the fixture must provide a change of shirts that does not clash with the Home Team's registered colours. Failing to provide such a change, or playing in unregistered colours that creates a clash, may incur a fine for Incorrect Strip.

5.3 Home teams must not deviate from the colours notified to AFF and published on the AFF website to all other teams. Away teams will be deemed to have complied with this regulation if they arrive with a strip that does not clash with the home team's registered colours as noted on the website. It shall then be the responsibility of the home team to revert to their published colours or find an alternate strip that does not clash with the away team.

5.3 Where necessary to ensure a game is played, training bibs may be used to differentiate colours of the two competing teams.

### **FIFA/IFAB Requirements**

5.4 All players shall comply with IFAB Laws of The Game - Law 4.

#### **Numbers**

5.5 Shirt/Shorts numbers are not compulsory in AFF Junior Competitions.

5.6 It is however preferred for shirts to be numbered. If numbered, there shall be no duplication of numbers within a team. Shorts, if numbered, must carry the *same* number as the shirt number worn by an individual player.

#### **Official Match Balls**

5.7 The Home Club should ensure that all match balls used are the appropriate size designated for the grade in Appendix A of these regulations and are of appropriate quality and are of no risk to player health and safety.

### **6 MATCH VENUES, DATES AND KICKOFF TIMES**

6.1 AFF shall publish a fixture list including the match venues, dates and kick-off times for the season. All matches shall be played on the dates, times and venues as published by AFF, and shall not be varied without the prior written approval of AFF.

- (a) If any Club wishes to change the match date or kick off time, they must advise both the opposing club and AFF (in writing) no less than 15 days prior to the scheduled game, setting out in full their reasons for requiring the change. In the event of both Clubs agreeing to the change, the Federation shall take that into account prior to giving its decision.
  - i. AFF may approve the request to change; or
  - ii. AFF may not approve the request to change; or
  - iii. AFF without the opposing Club's agreement may in its sole discretion agree to the change.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances, postponements may be proposed by Clubs through the Club Secretary or other recognised Club official. Such proposed postponements must be received by AFF no less than 24 hours before the scheduled time of kick-off and will be accepted or rejected at the sole discretion of the Federation.
  - i. In exceptional circumstances or emergencies, requests for change of fixtures, venues and kick-off times not accompanied by the permission in writing of an authorised official of the opposing team/Club may be considered by AFF.
- (c) Other changes to individual fixtures may be made at the sole discretion of AFF, not instigated by a club and not requiring permission in writing from the opposing club/team or club.
- (d) Any proposed postponement must, at the time of the proposal, include a confirmed rescheduled date for the fixture. Failure to provide a confirmed date will result in the fixture having been declared a default.

6.2 Any additional cost incurred in changing a previously agreed match date or kick-off time shall be borne by the Club making the request.

### **Security - Health & Safety**

- 6.3 The Host Club shall be responsible for taking all practicable measures to ensure:
- (a) That all facilities and equipment comply with the Health and Safety Regulations.
  - (b) The orderly behaviour of the crowd and safety of the match officials, players and officials of the teams and all spectators.
- 6.4 Each Club must make every effort to ensure that the NZF Code of Conduct is communicated and made available to its staff, players, coaches, volunteers and spectators.

### **7 FIELD OF PLAY**

- 7.1 All Host Clubs are to ensure that their grounds comply with the IFAB Laws of the Game, Law 1 – The Field of Play.
- 7.2 Matches may be played on natural, hybrid or approved artificial surfaces. Where artificial surfaces are used, the surface must meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf.
- 7.3 Refer to Appendix A of the regulations for the appropriate field size requirements per age grade.

### **8 PLAYING OF FIXTURES**

- 8.1 Clubs must take all reasonable steps to arrive at a match on time.
- 8.2 Teams shall have the requisite maximum number of players on the field at any time for their age grade as per Appendix A.
- 8.3 Any team having six (6) or more players present in 9v9 format or four (4) in 7v7 format play must be ready to commence its match within ten (10) minutes after the published start time. Any team that does not comply shall forfeit the match.

#### **Postponed Matches**

- 8.4 In the event of a match being postponed due to any of the following the Federation will reschedule the match to be played at the soonest possible time;
- (a) Aborted travel arrangements
  - (b) Adverse or unforeseen weather
  - (c) Field of play conditions or
  - (d) Any other reason preventing the commencement of the game.
- 8.5 In the event of a late postponement by the Competitions Manager on the day of the fixture but where the two teams arrive at the ground unaware of the postponement and the game is played, the Competitions Manager shall at their absolute discretion determine whether the result of the game shall be recorded as played, postponed or abandoned.

### **Unforeseen Changes**

- 8.6 In the event of a change of match venue being necessary prior to a match because of unforeseen weather or field of play conditions, the Home Club shall take all reasonable steps to give adequate notice to the Federation and the Away Team as to the new match venue. AFF shall make the final decision, which will be binding on all parties.

### **Defaults**

- 8.7 Any default will be recorded as a 3-0 win to the opposing team.
- 8.8 Notification of a team's default must be made in writing to the Competitions Manager by the Club secretary or other recognised Club official.
- 8.9 A team which defaults either two (2) matches in succession or a total of three (3) matches in the season may be disqualified from the Competition at the discretion of the Federation.
- 8.10 If both teams are deemed to have defaulted, a 'no result' of 0-0 may be recorded or the match may be rescheduled at the sole discretion of the Federation.
- 8.11 Where a team claims a match by default on the day of the match, the Club must notify the Competitions Manager in writing via email.

### **Suspended or abandoned matches**

- 8.12 In the event of adverse weather conditions occurring during a match, where in the view of the Referee endangers the Players or Officials, the Referee may at their sole discretion suspend play for a period of up to ten (10) minutes to allow time for conditions to improve to a point where the match is able to recommence.
- 8.13 Where weather/ground conditions preceding a fixture raise doubts as to whether play shall take place, the Home Club and/or referee shall call the Competitions Manager to discuss whether the ground is fit for play. Due notification of these circumstances shall be communicated to the Away Team by the Competitions Manager. The above procedure shall be initiated with the travelling time of the Away Team in mind.
- (a) In these circumstances, if the Away Team has been notified that a match is to be played, then all reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that the match proceeds in accordance with these regulations.
- 8.14 Any match abandoned after kick-off, for any reason, shall be reported directly to the Federation by the referee if present and the Home Club. Upon review, the Competitions Manager may decide that:
- (a) The score at the time of the abandonment shall stand, or
- (b) The match shall be awarded to one of the teams as a forfeit win with a recorded score line of 3-0, or
- (c) The match shall be rescheduled by the Federation.



## 9 REFEREES

- 9.1 AFF will not appoint match officials for any junior fixture. The home team may provide a Club Based Referee (CBR) with current accreditation to control the whole fixture.
- 9.2 If a CBR is provided he or she shall provide his/her name and membership number to the visiting coach/manager and is required to visibly wear their CBR shirt.
- 9.3 If the home team does not have a CBR, and the visiting team does, then the visiting CBR shall control the fixture.
- 9.4 Alternatively, teams may agree at the start of the game that one volunteer referee from each team shall officiate one half each. Once agreed, the Referee should not be changed during a half other than for injury or on the mutual agreement of both team coaches. In any event, the referee controlling any part of the fixture has the same rights and obligations as an appointed official.
- 9.5 The prime purpose of anyone refereeing in these grades is to add to the enjoyment and safety of the players through the application of the IFAB Laws of the Game, these regulations, common sense and the philosophy of fair play.

## 10 SUBSTITUTION RULES

### Substitution Procedures

- 10.1 The procedure for substitutions shall be in accordance with the IFAB Laws of the Game.
- 10.2 The maximum number of substitutions in all AFF Junior Competitions is 5 from 5 returning (rolling) unlimited substitutions. See Appendix A for any and all variations to this clause.

## 11 ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

11.1 Players must play within their correct age grade unless the appropriate dispensation has been approved by the Federation. Age grade is determined by the year of birth (e.g. U10 is for players who will attain their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday during the calendar year of the current season).

(a) Females playing in mixed gender competitions can play down one grade without dispensation.

11.2 A Player is eligible to play in these competitions provided that:

(a) The Player is duly registered in for their club and is marked CONFIRMED in COMET for the current season in accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players and NZF Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players

11.3 Each Club shall be solely responsible for fielding only eligible players.

11.4 Any Club found guilty of fielding an ineligible Player for whatever reason may be subject to the following penalties;

- (a) Fine  
(b) Loss of points where points were awarded

- (c) Where a club repeatedly infringes this regulation the Federation may increase the sanction to be pronounced as deemed appropriate for the infringement.
- 11.5 All international transfer clearances (ITC) must be processed and completed as per the NZF Regulation of Status and Transfer of Players.
- 11.8 Where a club has two or more teams playing in the same division, no player is eligible to move between these teams without prior approval from the Federation.
- 11.9 All junior competitions for girls are restricted to female players only.

### **Dispensations**

- 11.10 A club may apply for age dispensations for individual players who wish to play outside their age grade a maximum of one (1) grade up or down.
- 11.11 The maximum number of dispensations per team is limited to three (3), unless further dispensations are granted due to special circumstances as approved by AFF.
- 11.12 Generally, dispensations will only be approved for players to play above the correct grade in exceptional circumstances or for practical reasons, for example:
- (a) When there is a genuine need through insufficient numbers to form a team, or
  - (b) Higher level players with birthdays close to the cut-off date (e.g. January), or
- 11.13 Generally, dispensations will only be approved for players to play below the correct grade in exceptional circumstances or for practical reasons, for example:
- (a) When there is a genuine need through insufficient numbers to form a team, or
  - (b) Lower level players with birthdays close to the cut-off date (e.g. December), or
  - (c) Players small of stature, or
  - (d) Players with disabilities.
- 11.14 Applications for age dispensation must be on the relevant dispensation form accompanied by the reason for dispensation, signature of the parent or caregiver of the player and must be approved by the Federation before the player can take the field.
- 11.15 Where a girls' team wishes to play in a boys' Competition at any level, dispensation from the Federation is required before a team can take the field.

## **12 TEAM CATALOGUES**

- 12.1 Clubs must enter their team catalogues in COMET prior to the commencement of the competition.
- 12.2 A player may not be included in more than one Team Catalogue.
- 12.3 Teams must produce their Team Catalogues if requested by the opposition. Failure to produce the Team Catalogue on request may incur a fine to the team's Club. The Team Catalogue may be viewed electronically.

## **13 CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 13.1 No person is entitled to bring the NZF, AFF, the game or any related issue into disrepute. In particular, coaches and players are not entitled to communicate negative comments which results in such disrepute. Any person who breaches this clause will be liable to be sanctioned at the sole discretion of NZF or AFF, as appropriate.

**14 MISCELLANEOUS**

14.1 Matters not provided for in these Regulations and cases of force majeure shall be decided by AFF. All decisions shall be final.

**15 TROPHY, AWARDS & MEDALS**

15.1 Medals will not be presented to teams in any junior competitions.

**16 REFERENCES**

IFAB Laws of the Game

FIFA Disciplinary Code

NZF Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players

NZF Disciplinary Code

NZF Retreating Line

## 17 APPENDIX A – GAME FORMATS – U9 to U12 Age Groups

<b>Mini Football</b>											
	<b>Format</b>	<b>Subs (Rolling)</b>	<b>Game Length</b>	<b>Minimum Field Size</b>	<b>Maximum Field Size</b>	<b>Penalty Area</b>	<b>Ball</b>	<b>Offside</b>	<b>GK's</b>	<b>Minimum Goal Size</b>	<b>Maximum Goal Size</b>
<b>9th Grade Mixed</b>	7 v 7	3 from 3	2 x 25 = 50	45m x 30m	55m x 35m	8m x 16m	4	YES – RL	YES	3.8m x 1.9m	4m x 2m
<b>9th Grade Girls</b>	7 v 7	3 from 3	2 x 25 = 50	45m x 30m	55m x 35m	8m x 16m	4	YES – RL	YES	3.8m x 1.9m	4m x 2m
<b>10th Grade Mixed</b>	7 v 7	3 from 3	2 x 25 = 50	45m x 30m	55m x 35m	8m x 16m	4	YES – RL	YES	3.8m x 1.9m	4m x 2m
<b>10th Grade Girls</b>	7 v 7	3 from 3	2 x 25 = 50	45m x 30m	55m x 35m	8m x 16m	4	YES – RL	YES	3.8m x 1.9m	4m x 2m
<b>11th Grade Mixed</b>	9 v 9	4 from 4	2 x 27.5 = 55	64m x 45m	70m x 50m	10m x 24m	4	YES	YES	4m x 2m	5m x 2m
<b>11th Grade Girls</b>	9 v 9	4 from 4	2 x 27.5 = 55	64m x 45m	70m x 50m	10m x 24m	4	YES	YES	4m x 2m	5m x 2m
<b>12th Grade Mixed</b>	9 v 9	4 from 4	2 x 27.5 = 55	64m x 45m	70m x 50m	10m x 24m	4	YES	YES	4m x 2m	5m x 2m
<b>12th Grade Girls</b>	9 v 9	4 from 4	2 x 27.5 = 55	64m x 45m	70m x 50m	10m x 24m	4	YES	YES	4m x 2m	5m x 2m

## 18 APPENDIX B - RETREATING LINE

All divisions of Mini Football (U9 to U12) will play the Retreating Line rule in all fixtures.

### 1. Playing out from the back

When a team's goalkeeper has the ball in their hands, is taking a goal kick or any player taking a Free Kick, the opposition team must drop back behind the retreating line.

Only after the goalkeeper plays the ball out and a team-mate touches the ball, can the opposition players advance over the retreating line.

If the Goalkeeper plays the ball over the Retreating Line, the game continues as normal.

*The team mate receiving the ball from the Goalkeeper should be encouraged to take their first touch as quickly as possible.*

### 2. Infringement

If a defending player advances beyond the Retreating Line before the opponent has touched the ball (from Goalkeeper pass), or fails to drop behind the line, the referee will award an indirect free kick on the Retreating Line.

*The defending team should be encouraged by their coach to drop back behind the Retreating Line when the opposition Goalkeeper has the ball or at a free kick, and to wait for the opponent's first touch before starting to press.*

### 3. Offside

In 7v7 formats, the Retreating Line is used for offside, rather than the halfway line. This allows junior footballers to have the required space to play in when in possession, whilst also providing a basic introduction to the offside rule.

The attacking player is ONSIDE when receiving a pass from a team-mate in a position before the defending team's Retreating Line, even if he is beyond the last defenders. This is at the moment the ball is played by one of his team mates.

*Coaches are asked to assist forwards with picking up realistic starting positions related to the defender's position rather than just standing near to the Retreating Line, behind defenders. This will help their overall development.*

For 9v9 formats, the half way line becomes the offside line. This will help prepare players for the full sided game at youth ages.

### 4. Dimensions

Pitches are always marked with the retreating lines as 30% - 40% - 30% of all size pitches.

The Retreating Line can be marked ideally using spot markers across the pitch but can be implemented with pole or high cones on the sides of the pitch. For example, for a 55-metre long pitch, the Retreating Line would be placed 16.5 metres from goal line.

## 19 APPENDIX C – MINI FOOTBALL PLAYING RULES

### START AND RESTART OF PLAY

A game is started with a kick to a team mate from the middle of the halfway line. The opposition must be 5m away from the ball at this time. In order to score a goal from kick off it must touch someone else on the field before entering the goal. When a goal is scored, play is restarted at the halfway line with the side conceding the goal taking the kick off as per the start of play.

### SCORING GOALS

A goal is scored when the whole ball crosses the whole of the line.

### BALL CROSSING THE TOUCH LINE

Throw in. The ball should be thrown in to play from behind the touch line. The player should face the field of play with both feet either behind or on the touchline. Players must use both hands to deliver the ball from behind and over their head. The thrower may not touch the ball until it has touched another player and if this occurs an indirect free kick is awarded. A goal cannot be scored directly from a throw in.

### BALL CROSSING THE GOAL LINE

Last touched by defending team – A corner kick is awarded.

Last touched by attacking team – Goal kick from anywhere within the penalty area. Opponents retreat to the Retreating Line.

### GOALKEEPERS

The Goalkeeper is allowed to handle the ball anywhere in the penalty area. To restart play after a save or gathering the ball with their hands, the ball must be thrown or rolled from the hands or played from the ground with their feet, within 6 seconds. The Goalkeeper is not allowed to kick or drop kick the ball directly from their hands.

An indirect free kick is awarded if the goalkeeper touches the ball with their hands after it has been deliberately kicked to them by a team mate.

### FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

There are only indirect free kicks for fouls and misconducts with the exception of penalty kicks. Opponents must be at least 5 metres away from the ball when the indirect free kick is taken.

Free Kicks occur when a player:

- Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent
- Trips or attempts to trip an opponent
- Jumps at an opponent
- Charges an opponent
- Strikes or attempt to strike an opponent
- Pushes an opponent
- Tackles an opponent from behind to gain possession of the ball
- Making contact with the opponent before touching the ball
- Holds an opponent
- Spits at an opponent
- Handles the ball deliberately
- Plays in a dangerous manner
- Impedes the progress of a player

A deliberate handball or serious misconduct in the penalty area results in a penalty kick which is taken from 7m (U9 – U10 grade) or 8m (U11 – U12 grade) out with a Goalkeeper in position.