



VFL & QAFL

Free Agency and Player Interchange Agreement

February 2022

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2022 VFL & QAFL Free Agency and Player Interchange Agreement

The following rules have been established for the management of VFL/East Coast Competition players competing in the QAFL competition on a local interchange agreement.

These rules should be read in conjunction with the AFL Queensland Community Football Competition Rules and Procedures and in the event of conflict or ambiguity, these rules shall prevail.

1. Introduction

- (a) VFL / East Coast Competition:
 - (i) The newly formed VFL / East Coast Competition ("VFL") has been established to allow a second tier AFL competition to be played across the eastern seaboard of Australia, including AFL aligned and standalone clubs.
 - (ii) Queensland Representation:
 - (A) AFL Clubs: Brisbane Lions & Gold Coast Suns
 - (B) Standalone VFL Clubs: Southport Sharks
 - (iii) List Size:
 - (A) AFL Clubs (30 Players):
 - (I) Primary List (open age): 12 Players
 - (II) Development List (22 years of age and under): 18 Players
 - (B) Standalone Clubs (40 players):
 - (I) Primary List (open age): 28 Players
 - (II) Development List (22 years of age and under): 12 Players
 - (iv) Team Selection:
 - (A) Both AFL and Standalone VFL clubs will be required to play 22 players per match, including a minimum of six (6) Development List players for each game.
 - (v) Season Information - *(subject to change)*
 - (A) Round 1: 26th March 2022
 - (B) Season: 22 Rounds, 18 Matches & 4 Byes
 - (C) Finals: Top 8, with a Grand Final on 17/18 September 2022.
- (b) QAFL Competition:
 - (i) The QAFL competition will retain a Salary Cap and Points system, and all teams and players participating in this competition are subject to these Policies.
 - (ii) Teams:
 - (A) Gold Coast Region: Palm Beach Currumbin Lions, Broadbeach Cats, Surfers Paradise Demons, Labrador Tigers.
 - (B) Redlands Shire: Redland-Victoria Point Sharks.

- (C) Brisbane Region: Aspley Hornets, Mt Gravatt Vultures, Sherwood Magpies, Morningside Panthers, Wilston Grange Gorillas.
- (D) Sunshine Coast Region: Maroochydore Roos, Noosa Tigers.
- (iii) Season Information:
 - (A) Round 1: April 2nd, 2022.
 - (B) Season: 18 games and 3 byes per club to be played over 21 rounds.
 - (C) Finals: Top 6 teams over 4 weeks.
 - (D) Grand Final: Saturday September 17th, 2022.

2. Free Agency Process

The following section relates to Standalone VFL Club (Southport) Primary Listed Players only. AFL Clubs (Brisbane Lions and Gold Coast Suns) Primary Listed Players will not require a QAFL Alignment:

- (a) VFL Primary Listed players:
 - (i) All VFL Primary Listed Players will require an alignment with a QAFL club for the 2022 QAFL season.
 - (A) All VFL Primary Listed Players will be available for recruitment by any QAFL club as a 'free agent' and will not be bound by any pre-existing alignments that may have occurred under pre-existing NEAFL/QAFL Interchange Agreements or home club arrangements.
 - (B) All VFL Primary Listed players are to enter into a formal Standard Player Declaration (contract establishing the "Alignment") with a QAFL club for the 2022 QAFL season.
 - (C) All Standard Player Declarations ("Contract") must be submitted to the AFLQ State Leagues Competition Manager within seven (7) days following the first QAFL game a VFL Primary Listed player plays.

The following section relates to both AFL Club and Standalone VFL Club Development Listed Players:

- (b) VFL Development Listed players:
 - (i) All VFL Development Listed Players will require an alignment either with a QAFL club for the 2022 QAFL season, or a formalised alignment with their former Junior/Youth Club in the QFA competitions:
 - (A) If a VFL Development Listed player aligns with a QAFL Club, that player must enter into a formal Standard Player Declaration (contract establishing the "Alignment") with a QAFL club for the 2022 QAFL season.
 - (B) All Standard Player Declarations ("Contract") must be submitted to the AFLQ State Leagues Competition Manager within seven (7) days following the first QAFL game a VFL Development Listed Player plays.
 - (C) If a VFL Development Listed player wishes to align with a QFA Community Club, the following criteria must be met:
 - (I) The VFL Development Listed player must have played forty (40) or more Junior/Youth games for their former Junior/Youth Club to be classified as a Junior Home Player.

- (II) The VFL Development Listed player cannot have played five (5) or more Senior Grade games in a Category 4 or higher competition in the previous three (3) seasons.
- (III) The Junior/Youth Home Club that the VFL Development Listed player aligns with must have an aligned Senior Club competing in either the QFA Division 1, QFA Division 2 North or QFA Division 2 South Competitions.
- (IV) Where there is a documented pre-existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed prior to the 2022 QFA season that formalises an alignment between a Junior/Youth Club with a separate Senior Club, such alignment will be recognised for the purposes of the player being a Senior Home Club player if the player meets the criteria set out in 20(C)(I).
- (V) If a VFL Development Listed player aligns with a QFA Club, that player must enter into a formal Standard Player Declaration (contract establishing the “Alignment”) with a QFA club for the 2022 QFA season.
- (VI) All Standard Player Declarations (“Contract”) must be submitted to the AFLQ State Leagues Competition Manager within seven (7) days following the first QFA game a VFL Development Listed Player plays.

3. Player Payments

- (a) VFL Listed Players can be contracted to and paid by a QAFL/QFA Club for the 2022 season, but any payments made by a QAFL/QFA club to a VFL Listed Player will be declarable under the QAFL/QFA Salary Cap and be subject to the AFL Queensland Total Player Payments Policy.
- (b) QAFL/QFA clubs are not obligated to pay VFL Listed Players.
- (c) VFL clubs will not be required to pay match payments for VFL Listed Players that are relegated to the QAFL/QFA competitions.

4. Player Movement

- (a) VFL Listed Players that are not selected to play in any given home and away round with their VFL club will be available for selection by their aligned QAFL/QFA club in either the Senior or Reserve grade side.
 - (i) VFL Listed Players (Primary or Development) are not permitted to play QAFL or QFA Colts.
- (b) Any VFL Listed Player that plays in a QAFL/QFA Senior club game will be allocated 1 point under the AFL Queensland Player Points Policy.
- (c) All VFL Listed Players will have a Season Permit request entered into between the VFL club and their aligned QAFL/QFA club for the duration of the QAFL/QFA seasons.
- (d) VFL Listed Player cap per QAFL/QFA match:
 - (i) VFL Primary List (Southport Players only):
 - (A) A maximum of four (4) VFL Primary Listed players can be listed on an official QAFL Senior grade team sheet.
 - (B) A maximum of four (4) VFL Primary Listed players can be listed on an official QAFL Reserve grade team sheet.

- (ii) VFL Development List (applicable Southport, Brisbane Lions and Gold Coast Suns players):
 - (A) There will be no restrictions to the number of VFL Development Listed players that can be listed on an official QAFL or QFA Senior grade team sheet.
 - (B) There will be no restrictions to the number of VFL Development Listed players that can be listed on an official QAFL Reserve grade team sheet.
- (e) A VFL Listed Player contracted to a QAFL/QFA club can request a release from that QAFL/QFA club at any time prior to 30 June. A new agreement must be reached by 30 June for the player to be permitted to play for a different QAFL/QFA club in the same season.
 - (i) No points penalties will apply to this player if they change QAFL/QFA clubs mid-season.
- (f) VFL Club Bye:
 - (i) When a VFL club has a competition bye, a maximum of four (4) players from the VFL squad of forty (40) Listed Players (Primary and Development) who played in the game immediately prior to the bye will be eligible to play for their aligned QAFL/QFA club in the bye week, provided restrictions in rule 4(d)(i) are not exceeded by the QAFL/QFA clubs.

5. AFL Queensland Finals Eligibility

- (a) VFL Listed Players must meet the AFL Queensland finals eligibility requirement to play in QAFL or QFA finals games for their aligned club:
 - (i) A VFL Listed Player must play a minimum of four (4) QAFL/QFA home and away games to be eligible for their aligned club's finals campaign if their VFL club has not progressed into finals.
 - (A) EXCEPTION: When a VFL club is competing in a home and away or finals round on the same weekend as an aligned QAFL/QFA club finals match, a VFL Listed Player will be eligible to play for their aligned QAFL/QFA club's finals match irrespective of qualification, provided restrictions in rule 4(d)(i) are not exceeded.
 - (ii) Where a Standalone VFL Club (Southport) Listed Player is not selected by their VFL club and plays for an AFL club on the same weekend, this game will count towards finals eligibility for their aligned QAFL/QFA club in the Senior grade (not Reserves).
 - (iii) Where a VFL Listed Player plays in either the National U19 Championships and/or in U19 Academy games that fall on the same weekend as a scheduled QAFL/QFA fixture, these games will count towards the finals eligibility for a VFL Listed Player's aligned QAFL/QFA club (Seniors only).
- (b) At the completion of a VFL club's last regular season or finals game, only VFL Listed Players that have played four (4) or more games for their aligned QAFL/QFA club will be permitted to play in the QAFL/QFA for the remainder of the season. All other players will be prohibited from playing for their aligned QAFL/QFA club or in any other AFL Queensland governed competition.

6. Contracts

- (a) Where there is any inconsistency between a VFL Listed Player's signed contract and any contract entered into between the player and the aligned QAFL/QFA club, the provisions of the VFL contract will prevail.

7. Suspension of Players

- (a) A VFL Listed Player that is suspended in the VFL competition, cannot compete in the QAFL/QFA competition until the suspension has been served in the VFL competition where the suspension was imposed.
- (b) A QAFL/QFA club cannot internally suspend an aligned VFL Listed Player without the approval of the VFL club, the Head of Talent Pathways and State League Competitions, and the Community Football Manager (QLD).
- (c) Any player who is suspended in the VFL competition will be ineligible to win the QAFL/QFA competition Best & Fairest in the season in which they serve the suspension.