

Appendix 17 - RMFL Offence Classification

The following tables and definitions are utilised by the reporting Umpire to review incidents and the application of appropriate penalties. The use of classification systems such as these leads to greater consistency in the application of disciplinary penalties across the league.

Whilst these tools will be used to assist the process, it is also acknowledged that all incidents occur in a unique set of circumstances and as such, the RMFL committee may also elect to utilise their discretion in the application of these tools.

OVERVIEW

These guidelines are designed to be used by an umpire in assessing an alleged offence and appropriate sanctions for such an offence. It should be noted that a Tribunal may determine the appropriate sanction in its absolute discretion.

DEFINITIONS

Early Plea

Is a choice made by a reported player who has been offered an opportunity by the reporting umpire to plead guilty and accept a less severe sanction than potentially applied by the Tribunal.

Reporting Umpire

The umpire in charge of that particular game who is filing a report.

1. PROCESS

The following process should be followed in dealing with a reportable offence:

- 1) Umpire completes Umpire Report on Match Day
- 2) The Reporting Umpire is to advise the respective Team Manager of the report and early plea details.
- 3) Umpire report is lodged with the League, making note on the report that the offence committed by the player was in the range of an “early plea” being acceptable
- 4) Team Manager is to liaise with Player who may elect to receive an automatic suspension in lieu of appearing at the tribunal.
- 5) If the player wishes to accept the “early plea” immediately, the player signs off on the report to accept the early plea sanction.
- 6) If the player wants to deliberate on the early plea, the Club on behalf of the player must email the RMFL secretary by no later than 12pm on the day after the match and advise the league of their decision, either way. Failure to do so will incur a fine and the case will be referred to the tribunal.
- 7) In all cases, the RMFL Executive reserves the right to override an early plea offer by the reporting umpire if it deems the matter is worthy of a tribunal hearing.
- 8) If the player chooses to not to accept the “early plea”, the Tribunal Process is followed. The Player will receive the Tribunal penalty instead of the Early Guilty Plea penalty if found guilty.

1. **REPORTABLE OFFENCES**

Reportable Offences are set out below and can be graded in accordance with the Classification Table contained in the table on the following slide (Conduct | Impact | Contact).

Direct Tribunal Offences

- Intentional contact with an Umpire
- Striking an Umpire
- Spitting on or at an Umpire
- Spitting on another Person
- Attempting to strike an Umpire
- Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an Umpire
- Intentionally kicking another Person
- Intentionally kneeing another person
- Intentionally stomping on another person
- Intentionally head butting an opponent or making contact to an opponent using the head
- Intentionally eye gouging an opponent or making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the eye region of an opponent
- An official is reported for misconduct, umpire abuse or any inappropriate act.

Category 1 – Verbal Offences

Verbal offences

Verbal abuse in the River Murray Football League will not be tolerated. The management of verbal offences will be handled by the umpires through free kick, 50 metre penalties and the red/yellow card system throughout each match. Should an excessive verbal incident take place, the umpire can also file a report under the umpire's report process. Threatening or abusing an Umpire or Official can be escalated directly to the Tribunal.

Category 2 – Physical Contact Offences

For incidents involving physical contact between players or officials or attempts at prohibited contact, the following table may be used to classify offences.

Conduct	Impact	Contact	Base Sanction	Early Guilty Plea
Intentional	Severe	All	Tribunal	N/A
	High	High/Groin	Tribunal	N/A
		Body	3 matches	2 matches
	Medium	High/Groin	3 matches	2 matches
		Body	2 matches	1 match
	Low	High/Groin	2 matches	1 match
		Body	1 match	Reprimand
	Careless	Severe	All	Tribunal
High		High/Groin	3 matches	2 Matches
		Body	2 Matches	1 match
Medium		High/Groin	2 Matches	1 match
		Body	1 match	Reprimand
Low		High/Groin	1 match	Reprimand
		Body	Reprimand	Reprimand

Conduct (Intentional OR Careless)

Intentional conduct: A Player intentionally commits a Classifiable Offence if the Player engages in the conduct constituting the Reportable Offence with the intention of committing that offence.

For example, a strike will be regarded as Intentional where a Player delivers a blow to an opponent with the intention of striking them.

Careless conduct: A Player's conduct will be regarded as Careless where it constitutes a breach of the duty of care owed by the Player to all other Players. Each Player owes a duty of care to all other Players, Umpires and other persons (as applicable) not to engage in conduct which will constitute a Reportable Offence being committed against that other Player, Umpire or other person (as applicable). In order to constitute such a breach of that duty of care, the conduct must be such that a reasonable Player would not regard it as prudent in all the circumstances.

Further, a Player will be careless if they breach their duty to take reasonable care to avoid acts which can be reasonably foreseen to result in a Reportable Offence.

Determination of Impact (Low, Medium, High or Severe)

In determining the level of impact, regard will be had to several factors.

1. The extent of force and in particular, any injury sustained by the Player who was offended against.
2. Strong consideration will be given to the potential to cause injury.

For example

- Striking to the head:
- Low Impact: Very minimal force, no laceration and victim player continues to participate in match unaffected
- Medium Impact: Laceration or victim player dazed by contact
- High Impact: Victim player affected for an extended period of time (or takes no further part in match) and/or low-level concussion apparent or indicated post-match
- Severe Impact: Victim player immediately unconscious, serious injury incurred and takes no further part in match

Contact (High/Groin, Body)

High contact is not limited to contact to the head and includes contact above the shoulders. Contact to the Groin includes contact to the crease or hollow at the junction of the inner part of each thigh with the trunk together with the adjacent region and including the testicles.

Contact shall be classified as High or to the Groin where a Player's head or groin makes contact with another Player or object such as the fence or the ground as a result of the actions of the offending Player. By way of example, should a Player tackle another Player around the waist and as a result of the tackle, the tackled Player's head made forceful contact with the fence or the ground the contact in these circumstances would be classified as High, even though the tackle was to the body.

Category 3 – Direct to Tribunal Offences

At its absolute discretion, the RMFL committee reserves the right to refer any incident to a Tribunal Hearing.

TRIBUNAL RECORD/HISTORY

No Reduction for Good Record - Players will not receive a reduced base sanction for a good record.

Impact of Bad Record - A one match additional penalty will be added to the base sanction of a Reportable Offence for a bad record (bad record = 1 match suspension in 12 months or 2 match suspensions in 24 months).