



QUEENSLAND RUGBY LEAGUE

CODE OF CONDUCT DEMERIT POINT PROGRAM

EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS BY
PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK TO
TACKLE BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES



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The Queensland Rugby League recognises the positive involvement that all attendees must have at community Rugby League matches. This program provides the framework to positively influence the environment in which our game takes place

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Ben Ikin', written in a cursive style.

Ben Ikin
Queensland Rugby League Chief Executive Officer



WHAT IS THIS PROGRAM?



A fully aligned statewide program that empowers volunteers to proactively tackle behaviour issues and create a positive environment at Community Rugby League games.



A program that actively reinforces the positive standards we uphold and celebrates the powerful influence Rugby League patrons have in creating a respectful and enjoyable match-day environment through consistent and impactful messaging.



A zero-tolerance, evidence-based program to support volunteers and help prevent issues.



Supplying key resources and utilising the National Code of Conduct to address repeated poor behaviour via a demerit system.



WHY DO WE NEED IT?



We need this program to prevent poor behaviour and violence before it escalates and continue to allow our game to be promoted as a safe, positive and inclusive sport.



We need this program to provide a consistent and structured approach to managing behaviours in the community rugby league environment.



Anyone attending matches needs to be aware that if they behave poorly the team on the field may have their game abandoned, lose competition points or be removed from the competition.



We need this program to provide a consistent and coordinated approach to sentencing. Consistent sentencing will alleviate frustration and with greater awareness promote positive behaviour.



We need this program to support our volunteers by providing valuable resources they can utilise to tackle behaviour issues and create a positive environment at their clubs.



In a similar program with awareness campaigns the total number of offences charged by the judiciary dropped 41.7 per cent; and among those, the number of charges for offensive language towards a match official, dropped by 42.4 percent. We need this program to support referees.

NATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT - SUMMARY OF OFFENCES

NOTE – Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/ carers of players, coaches, officials and spectators.

No person(s) attending a match, function, or Club related event or activity shall:

- A** Use offensive or obscene language to any participant.
- B** Enter the Field of Play or the Playing Area during the course of a match without the prior approval of the Ground Manager appointed by the home Club and/or League.
- C** Excessively dispute the decision of a Referee or Touch Judge either during or after a match.
- D** Assault, or act with aggression, to any person/s.
- E** Behave in a way contrary to the Code of Conduct and/or the spirit of the game.
- F** Behave in a way which disturbs the enjoyment of a match, function, activity or event by any person/s, or brings discredit to any Club, League or the game.
- G** Act in such a way as to exhibit racial intolerance, by language or other conduct, to any person/s.
- H** Refuse to accept the reasonable direction of the Ground Manager, official of the team/ Club which that person is supporting, or official of the home Club and/or League.
- I** No person/s may make comment or take actions that bring discredit to any person, Club or league through any social media outlet.

Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents/carers of players, coaches, officials and spectators.

Breaches of the Rugby League Code of Conduct may result in penalties, including but not limited to:

- › Suspension of a match and/or
- › Termination of a match (including potential forfeiture of competition points) and/or
- › Monetary fines and/or
- › Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis and/or
- › Suspension of a Club, League or Association on a temporary or permanent basis

These penalties are in addition to any penalty which may be imposed by the relevant governing League bodies.

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?



Enforcement of the existing National Code of Conduct

All initiatives are currently available under the National Code of Conduct.



Tougher penalties for anti-social behaviours

Standard penalty schedule to ensure consistency across the state.



Demerit Points for repeat offences

Additional points allocated to repeat offenders to hold them accountable for their actions.



Participant, Parent, volunteer engagement

Ability for individuals to buy-in and show their intention to support the campaigns.



Awareness campaigns

Topical campaigns to provide awareness and keep the subject front of mind.



Field signage with QR-code links

Visual reminder for participants, spectators, clubs and teams, with links to relevant topics or campaigns.



Play Well Triple P

A program that promotes positive parental involvement and decrease negative parent behavior in junior rugby league.



Ambassador messaging

High profile players and administrators to reinforce our messaging.



Cognito form reporting

Reporting functionality ensures anti-social behavior can be easily reported.



CODE OF CONDUCT - BREACHES

This guide references multiple levels of potential consequences and each carry the corresponding Code of Conduct demerit points application if found guilty:

Proven Breach	Demerit points	Guide
Low charge	1	Abusive
Medium charge	5	Threatening
High charge	10	Physical

	Offence	Rec. on-field action	Rec. min penalty	Rec. 2nd offence penalty	Recommended Team / club penalty (tracked by QRL)
1	Striking (to make deliberate, forceful contact with someone)	Send off	Normal MRC & Judicial Process applies	Normal MRC & Judicial Process applies	** Safety Pause if multiple person/players are involved**
2	Persons entering/leaving the playing area during an incident or melee	Send off	4 weeks	12 months	Loss of competition points that is equal to a win (2 or 3 points) and the match may be deemed a forfeit. Teams involved may be placed on a "Safety Pause" until investigations are completed.
3	Discriminatory Language - On Field	Send off	4 weeks	8 weeks	MRC may refer directly through to COC Tribunal for a hearing. Examples include any participant (match official, player, team staff) that has used language to demean, insult or belittle individuals based on their race, sexuality, religion or ethnicity.
4	Discriminatory Language - Spectators	Game suspended; removal	6 weeks	12 months	Loss of Competition Points and potential for Team to be placed under a "safety pause" until investigations are completed.
5	Spectator Field Intrusion	Game Suspended or Abandoned	6 weeks	12 months	The match may be classed as a forfeit by the offending team. Loss of competition points that is equal to a win (2 or 3). Potential for team to be placed under a "safety pause" until investigations are completed.
6	PHYSICAL Referee/Match Official Abuse (Including Green Socks)	Game Abandoned/ Send Off	12 months		Loss of competition points that is equal to a win (2 or 3). Potential for Team to be placed under a "safety pause" until investigations are completed.
7	VERBAL Referee/Match Official Abuse	Send Off/Removed from Grounds	4 weeks	8 weeks	MRC have delegated authority to impose suspensions exceeding those described in the QRL penalty schedule (under Match Official Abuse - Grade 4/5). Team and Club may be placed under a "Safety Pause" until investigations are completed.
	VERBAL Referee/Match Official Abuse - Green Socks		6-8 weeks	Harsher penalties for repeat offenders	
8	Social Media Breaches	Concerning Act Notice/ Referral	Education + 2 Weeks (low incidents)	6-8 Weeks (repeat offence)	Tribunal referral for discriminatory or threatening language (Medium/High Incidents)
9	Suspended Persons/Player - Breach of Sanction	N/A	Fine up to \$1000	An additional 12 months suspension imposed	Teams may be ineligible for finals; team may be placed under a "safety pause" until investigations are completed.
10	Assault - Spectators	Game abandoned	12 months		Spectators involved in physical altercations - teams will be placed under a "safety pause" until they are identified and the investigations have been completed.
11	Racial Vilification	N/A	Tribunal Hearing	Education Modules	A team or club may be placed on a "safety pause" until investigations are completed. . A COC tribunal will be supported by Regional Manager and State Integrity Manager.

CODE OF CONDUCT DEMERIT POINT PROGRAM - FULL DETAILS

CODE OF CONDUCT DEMERIT POINT PROGRAM

APPLICATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Code of Conduct Demerit Point Program applies to all Queensland Rugby League community competitions from Under 13 to Open age groups. A zero-tolerance approach to abuse, violence and conduct that brings the Game into disrepute applies across all QRL-sanctioned competitions. A tolerance approach to abuse, violence and conduct that brings the Game into disrepute applies across all QRL-sanctioned competitions.

Leagues may elect to apply elements of this program from Under 6 to Under 12 competitions, subject to local competition rules and bylaws. laws.

Where a breach of the Code of Conduct is **proven**, individual, team and/or club demerit points may be applied in accordance with this Program and the QRL Code of Conduct Reference Guide.

1. Striking (On-Field)

Any player who deliberately strikes another person during a match will be dealt with under the Match Review Committee (MRC) and Judiciary process.

- All striking offences are subject to the applicable NRL / QRL Match Review and Judiciary framework.
- Where a striking charge is proven, Code of Conduct demerit points apply in accordance with the offence classification.
- Where multiple players are involved, the match may be subject to a Safety Pause pending investigation.

2. Participants Entering the Playing Area During an Incident or Melee

Any participant (including a player, team official or other associated person) who enters the playing area during an incident or melee without authorisation will be immediately removed from the field.

Where the breach is proven:

The individual will be subject to the minimum suspension periods outlined in the Code of Conduct Reference Guide.

- The offending team may be penalised competition points equal to a win.
- The match may be deemed a forfeit.
- The team or club may be placed on a Safety Pause until investigations are completed.

3. Participants Leaving the Playing Area to Engage in an Altercation

Any participant who leaves the playing area or team bench to become involved in an altercation or melee occurring outside the playing area will be sent from the field.

Where the breach is proven:

- Minimum suspension periods apply in accordance with the Code of Conduct Reference Guide
- Team competition points may be deducted
- The match may be abandoned or forfeited
- A Safety Pause may be imposed

4. Spectator Field Intrusion

Any spectator who enters the field of play or playing area without permission, or with intent to engage in an incident, commits a serious Code of Conduct breach.

Where proven:

- The spectator will be banned for a minimum period as outlined in the Reference Guide
- The match may be abandoned or deemed a forfeit
- The offending team or club may lose competition points
- A Safety Pause may be imposed until the individual is identified and investigations are completed

Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their spectators.

5. Abandoned Matches

A referee may abandon a match where player, official or spectator safety is compromised.

Where a match is abandoned due to on-field fighting:

- If one team is responsible, the opposition may be awarded the match on forfeit
- If both teams are responsible, no competition points will be awarded
- Individuals may be referred to the Judiciary or Code of Conduct Tribunal

6. Referee / Match Official Abuse – Physical

Any player, official or spectator who physically touches a referee or match official in an aggressive or inappropriate manner will be referred directly to the Code of Conduct Tribunal.

Where proven:

- Significant suspension periods apply as outlined in the Reference Guide
- Team competition points may be deducted
- The team or club may be placed on a Safety Pause

7. Referee / Match Official Abuse – Verbal

Verbal abuse of a referee or match official by a player, team official or spectator constitutes a serious breach of the Code of Conduct.

Depending on severity:

- Matters may be dealt with via the Judiciary or referred directly to the Code of Conduct Tribunal
- Repeat offences attract increased penalties
- Teams and clubs may be placed on a Safety Pause

8. Discriminatory Language

The use of language that demeans, insults or vilifies a person based on race, sexuality, religion, ethnicity or other protected attributes is strictly prohibited.

Discriminatory language breaches:

- May result in immediate send-off or match suspension
- May be referred directly to the Code of Conduct Tribunal
- May result in education modules, suspension and/or additional sanctions
- May trigger a Safety Pause

9. Social Media Breaches

Any social media activity that brings the Game, participants, officials or the QRL into disrepute constitutes a Code of Conduct breach.

Depending on severity:

- Matters may be dealt with via education, suspension or Tribunal referral
- Discriminatory or threatening content will be escalated

10. Breach of Suspension

Clubs are responsible for ensuring suspended persons do not act contrary to the terms of their suspension.

Where a suspended person breaches their sanction:

- Financial penalties may apply
- Teams may be rendered ineligible for finals
- Further suspension periods may be imposed



**IF IT'S NOT
POSITIVE
IT'S
POINTLESS**





**YOU'RE
ENTERING
A POSITIVE
ENVIRONMENT!**

**BE RESPECTFUL
BE INCLUSIVE
BE POSITIVE**



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