

Central Football Federation
Competition Regulations
Junior/Youth 13th – 18th Grade
General Provisions



Section 1: General

1. All Central Football Federation (CFF) Junior/Youth Competitions shall be conducted under the current FIFA regulations except as otherwise specified in these General Provisions and/or specific competition regulations as applied to particular grades.
2. The control and management of all CFF Junior/Youth Competitions is vested in the relevant Operations/Competitions Manager, under the supervision of the Chief Executive, by the CFF Board.
3. Where the Operations/Competitions Manager or the Federation is required to grant approval for procedures under these regulations, the terms 'Operations/Competitions Manager' and 'Federation' shall include those people or groups appointed by the Operations/Competitions Manager, the CEO or the Federation Board from time to time to oversee these procedures.
4. The Federation reserves the right to amend or replace these General Provisions and/or specific competition regulations as applied to particular grades from time to time. Any such amendment or replacement shall be notified by email or in writing to all Federation clubs. The non-receipt by a club of notice of any such amendment or replacement will not invalidate the change. Prior to the start of each season the Federation shall furnish to each member club one copy of the regulations for the forthcoming season. Within any season it is the club's responsibility to update these regulations with any amendments. No change to these regulations shall be implemented without a minimum notice period to clubs of 28 days.
5. Final decision on interpretation of these General Provisions and/or specific competition regulations as applied to particular grades shall rest with the Federation. Any decision by the Operations/Competitions Manager in relation to these regulations can be appealed to the Federation Board in accordance with Section 6 of these regulations.
6. Fines for breaches of these General Provisions and/or specific competition regulations as applied to particular grades may be prescribed by the Federation in a Schedule of Fees, such fines to be notified to Federation Clubs prior to the start of each season.
7. Each Club desiring to compete in Federation Junior/Youth Competitions shall, on or before a date advised by the Operations/Competitions Manager, confirm in writing their acceptance of an invitation to compete in such competition in the division(s) advised.
 - a) The final composition of such divisions shall be at the discretion of the Operations/Competitions Manager
 - b) The Operations/Competitions Manager shall have the power to accept further entries during the season if, in their opinion, it is expedient to do so.
 - c) The Federation shall have the power to increase or reduce the number of divisions and to form or discontinue sections in any division as and when the need arises.

Section 2: Player Eligibility

1. Anyone playing in a Federation Junior/Youth Competition must be registered with the participating Club and the Federation. It is the Club's responsibility to ensure the player is properly registered with the Federation prior to taking the field in any match.

2. Clubs must provide team lists to the Federation on the approved Federation Mastercard on the Thursday prior to the commencement of competition. The Mastercard shall include for each player the full name, date of birth and where applicable the Club and division played in during the previous season. Specific competition regulations for each grade or group of grades may include provision for fines for late submission of team Mastercards as noted in the Schedule of Fees published from time to time by the Federation.

3. Clubs wishing to add a player to a team after the Mastercard has been supplied must complete a new Mastercard form and supply it to the Federation prior to the start time of the first competition match the player is to play in for the Club.

4. Unless dispensation has been sought and granted by the Federation, players shall normally play in their Junior/Youth age-grade competition as determined by the age they turn during the calendar year.

The following will apply:

13th (Open) Grade – Players turning 12 or 13 during the playing year.

15th Grade - Players turning 14 or 15 during the playing year.

17th Grade - Players turning 16 or 17 during the playing year.

18th Grade - Players turning 18 during the playing year.

5. Where players are taking part in age-determined grades, it is the Club's responsibility to sight a copy of proof of age of the player, such document to be a birth certificate, Passport or other internationally recognised legal document. The Club is required to produce proof of age if requested by the Federation.

6. A Club may play (i.e. they take the field) a maximum of three players in any Federation Youth Competition (15th Grade and above) match from a lower division team or grade provided that:

a) No player is playing more than two years above their certified age (unless granted dispensation by the Federation)

b) Such players are correctly registered on their regular team's Mastercard.

7. Any team playing an unregistered or ineligible player shall be penalised as decided from time to time by the Federation and indicated in specific competition regulations as applied to particular grades, and the Club shall incur any Ineligible/Unregistered Player fine as set down in the Schedule of Fees.

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. Applications for movement must be made in writing to the Federation no less than three working days before the match in which the transferring player wishes to play. Permission to move will only be granted once per player.

9. All youth competitions for girls are restricted to female players only. However, youth competitions for boys may include female players. *Individual* female players wishing to play in youth competitions for boys may do so without need for any specific dispensation from the Federation, but clubs and coaches should have regard to player welfare and safety, and to the development implications for the player. Female players requiring dispensation to

play down an age grade will be included in maximum permitted numbers noted elsewhere in Regulations. Where a girl's *team* wishes to play in a youth competition for boys, prior written dispensation must be obtained from the Federation. All players in a squad must be identified by name on the dispensation, and such dispensation shall be restricted to those named.

Section 3: Dispensations

1. In special circumstances a Club may apply for age dispensations. Applications for age dispensation, accompanied by proof of reason, must be approved by the Federation before the player can take the field.
2. All school teams playing in CFF Junior/Youth Competitions (not High School specific) are covered by these dispensations.
3. A maximum of two players per squad (three players in girls-only competitions) may be dispensated to play down from a higher age grade, and those players must be no more than one age grade older than the grade in which they are dispensated to play.
4. Any application for a player to play more than two years *above* their age grade must be accompanied by a signed release and authorisation from the parent or caregiver of the player.
5. In special circumstances a Club may request, and the Federation may grant, dispensations outside those allowed for in regulation 3.1.

Section 4: Transfers

1. No player can play in a Federation Junior/Youth Competition for any Club/school except that for which he/she is registered as a member, but he/she may transfer to another Club. All applications for transfer between Clubs within the Federation must be on the approved form and submitted to the secretary or transfers officer of the Club for which the player last played, or be undertaken club to club electronically on the Federation (Goalnet) database transfer system. Approval of transfers may not be arbitrarily withheld by the player's previous Club. Where a player is transferring to or from a Club in a different Federation, the transfer request must come through the Federation office for clearance.
2. Where the player currently playing in a Federation Youth Competition intends to play senior football, the Federation must authorise all transfers regardless of age.
3. The Club to which an application for transfer is made shall forward such application, either approved or disapproved, to either the Federation or the new Club, in accordance with Regulation 4.1, within seven days of its receipt by the old Club. Default in doing so will allow the Federation, at its discretion, to approve the transfer.
4. A request to the Federation to approve a transfer not returned in accordance with Regulation 4.3 above must be accompanied by a copy of the transfer and proof of sending the original.
5. The amount charged for transfers conducted through the Federation shall be set by the Federation.

6. A Club may decline a transfer request if the player has not fulfilled any obligation he or she has to the current Club (where such obligation has been agreed in writing between the player and the Club) and where such obligation(s) are not older than the last year in which the player played for the Club.

7. Any player currently serving a term of suspension imposed by the Federation can be transferred but the approval of transfer must clearly show the player is under suspension and the period of suspension remaining.

8. No player may be transferred after July 1st in any year, excepting with the written authorisation of the Federation or where otherwise provided for in New Zealand Football's transfer provisions.

9. Where any discrepancy arises between these regulations and those of New Zealand Football, the New Zealand Football regulations shall apply. No player may be transferred in breach of any FIFA or New Zealand Football regulations.

Section 5: Grading

1. The grading of a player acquired during the season shall be cancelled at the end of the season and recorded again at the beginning of the new season on the Mastercard, subject to the power of the Federation to amend such grading.
2. Any player may play at any time in a grade for which he/she is eligible by reason of age, irrespective of how many games he/she may have played at a higher grade, provided he/she is not *registered* in a higher grade (by means of appearing on a team Mastercard at that higher grade). A player may return to a lower grade if they have played in the lower grade within the previous 15 days. Effectively, playing a third consecutive week in a higher grade deems that player to have moved to that grade, and the team Mastercard for the both grades should be resubmitted to the Federation showing the move. The player is then ineligible for the lower grade and may not play in the lower grade for the remainder of the season. Specific competition regulations for each grade or group of grades may include provision for fines for playing ineligible players as noted in the Schedule of Fees published from time to time by the Federation.
3. Where a grade is divided into two or more divisions, the division two shall be deemed to be a lower division than division one, and division three shall be lower than division two, and so on. A player may play at any time in a higher division but he/she shall not return to play in a lower division without the approval of the Federation or if they have played in that lower division within the previous two weeks.
4. Applications for grading or regrading of players must be in writing to the Federation, signed by the Club Secretary and giving reasons for such application.

Section 6: Specific Competition Regulations

1. The Federation may set specific competition regulations governing aspects of play and procedure for each Grade as it sees necessary, and shall publish such regulations under separate headings.

Section 7: Discipline and Misconduct

1. Teams, players, officials and spectators shall at all times behave in a manner that shall not damage the image of the game. Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their spectators, players and coaching staff, and are required to ensure their representatives abide by the FIFA Code of Conduct and uphold the spirit of Fair Play while participating in Federation Junior/Youth Competition.

2. No charge will be made for misconducts below 17th Grade. This waiving of fines does not apply in cases of exceptional misconduct where the Federation or the Judicial Committee may impose whatever penalties it may feel are appropriate. Suspensions associated with misconducts will be applied to age grade players.

3. Players sent off for incidents other than violent conduct or spitting shall be suspended for one playing day. Suspensions for violent conduct or spitting shall be for a minimum of two playing days. Players receiving 3 cautions in Federation Junior/Youth Competition within a season are automatically suspended for one playing day, to be served for the team in which they received the most cautions. Once the suspension has been served the caution count for that player shall be reset to zero. All processes and suspensions within the Federation are designed to be consistent with those contained in New Zealand Football Regulation 7.

4. In instances of exceptional misconduct or where the Federation deems it necessary it shall convene a Judicial Committee to hold a Judicial Hearing to rule on an incident. The Federation may require an individual(s) to appear before the Hearing, in which case the individual(s) may be accompanied by another official of their Club to give evidence or make a plea on their behalf. If the requested person fails to attend the Judicial Hearing the Judicial Committee may make a decision in their absence. The Judicial Committee shall have the power to impose whatever penalties it may feel appropriate depending on the circumstances. The decision of the Judicial Committee will be communicated to the Club in writing.

5. Any decision of the Judicial Committee may be appealed to the Federation Board by the person(s) or Club(s) involved. Such appeal must be received at the Federation office in writing within 14 days of the date of the letter containing the decision, and be accompanied by the Administration Fee as set by the Federation from time to time and shown on the Schedule of Fees. The Board may appoint an Appeals Committee to deal with the appeal. The Board may convene a second hearing or may choose at their absolute discretion to deal with the Appeal on the papers. The Board or the Appeals Committee may impose penalties as set out in CFF and NZF Rules, and any decision will be communicated to the person(s) and/or Club(s) in writing. The Board may further at its sole discretion refund the Appeal Fee in the event of a successful appeal.

6. Players may further appeal the decision to New Zealand Football under Federation Rule 30 and New Zealand Football Rule 33, and New Zealand Football Regulation 8.

Section 8: Protests, Disputes and Appeals

1. Any Club playing in Federation Junior/Youth Competition may bring a dispute or protest to the Federation through the Operations/Competitions Manager.
2. A protest shall be made by the Club Secretary or another authorised officer of the Club, within 72 hours of the alleged breach, or earlier if stipulated by the rules of the specific competition. The protest must be in writing to the Operations/Competitions Manager, setting out the full details of the incident or protest and must be accompanied by the prescribed Incident Report Form.
3. On receipt of the protest, the Operations/Competitions Manager will make the necessary enquiries into the matters placed before them, including any referee and/or officials from opposing teams. They will advise the decision in writing to the party or parties concerned, within 7 days of the protest receipt.
4. Any decision of the Operations/Competitions Manager may be appealed to the Federation Board by any of the parties involved. Such appeal must be received at the Federation office in writing within 14 days of the date of the letter containing the decision, and be accompanied by the Administration Fee as set by the Federation from time to time and shown on the Schedule of Fees. The Board may appoint an Appeals Committee to deal with the appeal. The Board may convene a hearing or may choose at their absolute discretion to deal with the Appeal on the papers. Any decision of the Board or the Appeals Committee will be communicated to the parties involved in writing. The Board may further at its sole discretion refund the Appeal Fee in the event of a successful appeal.
5. A club may further appeal the decision to New Zealand Football under Federation Rule 31 and New Zealand Football Rule 34.

Section 9: Competitions

1. The Federation shall determine times, dates and grounds for any fixture in Federation Junior/Youth Competition and shall have the right at all times to amend, postpone or cancel any fixture.
2. Clubs may request changes to scheduled fixtures (ground and kick-off times) for internal operational reasons, but must do so in writing to the CFF Operations/Competitions Manager no later than 10 days prior to the scheduled game, to allow other affected parties and stakeholders to receive adequate notice of the changes. After that cut-off only non-material changes (e.g. from one pitch to another on the same reserve at the same kick off time) will be considered.
3. In exceptional circumstances postponements may be proposed by Clubs through the Club Secretary. Such proposed postponements must be received by the Federation no less than 24 hours before the scheduled time of kick-off, and will be accepted or rejected at the sole discretion of the Operations/Competitions Manager. However, a request for postponement will normally be approved if:
 - a. There is prior agreement of the opposition and an acceptable new time and date for the fixture has been agreed with the Operations/Competitions Manager;
 - b. The team has three or more players selected to play in conflicting New Zealand Football or Federation approved teams or tournaments.

4. In the event of a late cancellation by the Operations/Competitions Manager on the day of a fixture, but where two teams arrive at the ground unaware of the cancellation and the game is played, the Operations/Competitions Manager shall at his absolute discretion determine whether the result of the game shall be included in the competition, or whether the game shall be recorded as postponed, abandoned or cancelled. The Operations/Competitions Manager shall later determine whether the game shall be replayed or shall remain cancelled, in which case the result shall not be part of the determination of the overall competition.

5. When inclement weather or any other reason has meant competitions cannot be concluded within the required time-frame the Federation may close any competition and declare final placings based on, at its sole discretion, the standings at the end of the first completed round, standings at the close of the competition, or as a result of a play-off between two or more teams.

6. The Federation may at its absolute discretion supply medals and/or trophies to championship winning sides in Federation Junior/Youth Competition. Any perpetual trophies shall remain the property of the Federation at all times. Trophy winners are responsible for the maintenance, repair and/or replacement, of any perpetual trophies awarded to them. CFF is responsible for the cost of any engraving they have authorized.

7. Shirt/short numbering is not mandatory, and is not mandatory across *all* shirts/shorts being worn in any match by either team, unless there is a Specific Competition Regulation applying to a particular division, grade or competition. However, when *any* shirts or shorts in use in any match by a team are numbered, there shall be no duplication of any number within a team. Shorts, if numbered, must carry the *same* number as the shirt number worn by an individual player.