

## AMATEUR FOOTBALL LEAGUE PLAYING RULES 2020

**Rule 1** The League competitions shall be under the control of the Executive Committee. The division and league cup competitions shall be open to all Clubs who have been duly admitted to membership of the League. League fees, (inclusive of €35 LFA/FAI Affiliation fee) are €400 per team. A Deposit of €200 per team is required, which should be paid on or before 8th February 2020. Balance to be paid **by 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020**. If fees are not paid, no fixtures will be made for the club. A copy of the Clubs current Public Liability Insurance cover must be provided to the League. If your club's Public Liability Insurance runs out of date during the current season it must be renewed immediately. The copy of the new certificate must be emailed to the Honorary Secretary or posted to his registered home address at Balroe, Ballynacargy, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath or a photocopy be given to the Honorary Registrar Gary O'Toole or the Assistant Registrar Jim Morley. The season commences weekend 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The information for the Secretaries book is taken from the details filled out on your application form. It is important to enter the name of the Insurance Company and the commencement date of cover otherwise the form will be returned. The new list of Honorary Secretaries will be available on the website [www.amateurfootballleague.com](http://www.amateurfootballleague.com) before the season commences. Any change must be communicated to the Honorary Secretary by E Mail or in writing and also to the Leinster Football Association, c/o National Sports Campus, Abbotstown, Dublin 15, the Divisional Manager and the Secretary of the FAI Junior Council. It is important for all clubs to have access to the web. With access to the web, changes in fixtures will be made and will appear on the website. Date & time of changes and the initials of the person making the change are at the top of the fixtures web page. The dates of Management meetings will be available on the website and published in The Herald. It is essential that every club has an email address to receive updates on the League requirements. Clubs join the Amateur Football League because they wish to play football. All the administration team asks is co-operation to help us provide it for you.

**Rule 2** Players must be registered firstly on FAInet and then a hard copy of registration form lodged in the league and registration fee paid. A bona-fide player of a club is one who has signed a properly completed registration form and paid the appropriate registration fee (€7), duly witnessed by the Club Secretary and lodged with the League Twenty Four (24) hours before kick-off. The League date stamp will be the official date of registration. A player is eligible for a League match if his Registration Form has been examined and considered to be properly completed and stamped by the League. In all competitions the player must be signed and registered at least 24 hours for his club before he takes part in a match. In the event of a player signing for different clubs, within or outside of the League, the date of League registration stamp shall decide as to which club the player belongs. League registration forms accepted only during the period from the date of the first management meeting after the AGM to the following 30<sup>th</sup> September. - It is the Clubs responsibility to ensure all players are registered with the League for the current season before playing in any match. Clubs will be subject to a fine and/or deduction of points for playing an unregistered player. It is important for the Club Secretary to retain all receipts. It is your record that a player is registered to play

**Rule 3** All players must hold a valid ID Card. The Amateur Football League will produce the ID cards. The club is responsible for ensuring all players provide the necessary documentation to enable an ID card to be produced. New cards will be issued for the new season. Players who had an ID card last season and are staying with the same club, will incur a fee of €2 for the new card. The card will be issued to the Club secretary upon receipt of a completed registration form for the player (including the €7 registration fee). For new players signed by a club the ID card will cost €5 (regardless of whether or not the player had an ID card with a previous club). The cost of the ID card is borne by the player

and the card remains the property of the Amateur Football League. If the player does not have a valid ID card he is ineligible to play in our League & cup competitions.**(No Card No Play)**

**Rule 4** A player must have reached their thirty fifth birthday to be eligible to play in league & cup games during the season and must be registered with the League and Club for at least 1 (one) working day.

**Rule 5** Clubs wilfully including players, who are ineligible, may be expelled from membership of the League. Clubs will be subject to a fine and/or deduction of points and fine to be paid within seven days or the club shall stand suspended. The Executive Committee may impose further sanctions.

**Rule 6** All matches, venues and times of kick off shall be the responsibility of the Divisional Managers on behalf of the Honorary Secretary and the Executive Committee.

**Rule 7** The Divisional Managers shall make fixtures for submission to the League Honorary Secretary and his assistant Hon. Secretary. The League shall keep a record of all matches played and compile League tables for publication.

**Rule 8** All games must be played on the days and times appointed. A club failing to comply with this rule, unless the Executive Committee is satisfied that the default occurred through unavoidable circumstances, shall be dealt with as the Executive Committee deems fit. The Club, which failed to appear, shall be liable for the full referee's and assistant referee's fees and expenses. A Club failing to pay the referee's fee and assistant referee's expenses within seven days of being notified in writing by the League shall stand suspended until such fees and expenses are paid.

**Rule 9** Teams playing on grounds which are deemed unplayable due to weather or ground conditions, must make arrangements as early as possible in the week to play on the opposing team's ground (if available). This shall be deemed to be the home fixture of the team hosting the match. Should the ground be still unplayable for the second fixture, the second match will have to be played as an away fixture. In the event of a team refusing to switch grounds, without sufficient justification, the Executive Committee will deal with the matter as they deem fit, having heard the views of all parties. Decision on change of venue must be made before 6pm on day before original fixture is due to take place.

**Rule 10** No Club shall have the power to break or postpone a League fixture without first receiving the consent of the Divisional Manager and/or Honorary Secretary. A Club making application for postponement of fixtures must do so on or before the Monday before the fixtures are published, i.e. a minimum of 14 days before the game is due to take place. Once fixtures are published no postponements will be allowed. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the forfeiture of match/s and the Executive Committee may impose a fine.

#### **RULE 11**

clubs will be granted 3 weeks off in a season +bank holidays. If clubs want fixtures on bank holiday weekends they can contact their divisional manager to arrange. If extenuating circumstances occur which require a club to seek cancellation of a fixture and same is granted by the Divisional Manager it is the responsibility of the club seeking the cancellation to contact the Referee and the opposition. Teams failing to turn up for a fixture, without sufficient justification, will incur an automatic €75 fine and the points may be awarded to the opposition.

**Rule 12** A Club wishing to change the venue or time of a home fixture must make application to the Divisional Manager at least three days before the date of the fixture and upon receiving consent must immediately notify their opponents and the referee(s) of the change in time and/or venue. The ground

on which the match takes place shall be regarded as the home ground of the club who shall be responsible for all the arrangements.

**Rule 13** Protests and claims must be received by the League at the registered home address of the Honorary Secretary of the League per An Post registered letter bearing postmark within 4 days of match, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays excluded, accompanied by a protest fee €75 (postal order, money order or bank draft) which shall be forfeited if the protest is not upheld, except the Committee in view of special circumstances decide otherwise. A duplicate copy of the protest or claim must be sent by registered post to the club secretary being protested against, bearing postmark within 4 days, as aforesaid after the match. If the protest/claim is upheld, the Committee may award the match to the protesting club and/or may impose a fine on the club protested against, and/or re-fix the match according to the circumstances of the case. A period of 4 days after the receipt of protest shall be afforded the club protested against to lodge a cross protest. Clubs making a frivolous protest/claim shall be dealt with, as the Committee deems fit. The Honorary Officers or Executive Committee shall deal with all protests or claims. The onus of proof rests with the protesting club who must provide independent witnesses to substantiate their claim, (if needs be). Any Club in membership of the League has the right in the first instance to appeal any decision of the Executive Committee to the Leinster Football Association and then to the Football Association of Ireland in accordance with the rules of the respective bodies. Appeal fee to the LFA is €200 (Bank Draft, Money Order, Postal Order), Appeal fee to the FAI is €500 (Bank Draft, Money Order, Postal Order)

**Rule 14** In the event of a match being unfinished owing to darkness, accident or any other cause, the Executive Committee shall have the power to investigate and allot the points according to the goals scored at the time of the abandonment, or re-fix the match.

**Rule 15** A Club may request Assistant Referees (If available) in a match on giving three days' notice to the League. The club so requesting must pay their fees and expenses.

**Rule 16** Should a club or team fail to complete its published fixtures, it shall have its complete record expunged.

**Rule 17** All clubs shall register two sets of Colours. Jerseys to be numbered from 1 upwards.

**Rule 18** In the event of two Clubs playing in the same colours, the Home club shall change colours. Goalkeepers must wear colours, which distinguish them from other players and the referee. In the event of two Clubs whose registered colours are the same, playing a test or other match on neutral ground, choice of colours shall rest with the team having the oldest claim on the colours in the League. Clubs changing colour must have a complete change. The Executive Committee may fine teams playing in odd gear.

**Rule 19** The Home team must provide correct equipment, i.e.; two FIFA approved footballs, in match condition, for every game. The ball is of a circumference of not more than 70cm/28inches and not less than 68cm/27 inches. The ball is not more than 450g/16 ounces in weight and not less than 410g/14 ounces at the start of the match. The ball is of a pressure equal to 0.6 - 1.1 atmosphere (600 - 1100 g/cm<sup>2</sup>) at sea level (8.5 lbs. /sq. in 15.6 lbs. /sq. in). They should have a proper first-aid kit and a competent person to administer first aid. Failure to do so may result in a fine from the Executive Committee.

**Rule 20** The Secretary or other responsible people of each contesting teams shall before the beginning of the match, fill in the match card in block letters showing the first name and surname of the players and substitutes participating in the match. The completed match card must be handed to the Referee at least 10 minutes before the game. In all matches the names of the substitutes must be on the match card prior to the start of the match. Substitutes not so named may not take part in the

match. Failing to complete the match card in accordance with this rule, the defaulting team may be fined by the Executive Committee. A club may nominate seven substitutes (7) to the referee before the match commences. They may use any (7) substitute players at any time during a match, on a roll-on roll-off basis, (i.e. Players substituted may re-enter the game at a later stage), Except to replace a player who has been dismissed from the game by the referee. The referee must be informed and permission given before the substitution(s) takes place

**Rule 21** Goal nets and corner flag posts (not less than 1.5m/5ft. high with a non-pointed top) must be used in all matches and should be supplied by the home club. Grounds must be marked in accordance with the Laws of Association Football with white lines not more than 12cm/5 inches wide. The corner area is a quarter circle with a radius of 1m/1yard from each corner flag post drawn inside the field of play. Failure to have ground properly marked in accordance with the Laws of Association Football shall leave the home team liable to a fine by the Executive Committee. The minimum length of a pitch is 90 m/100yards and the maximum is 120m/130 yards. The minimum width is 45m/50 yards and the maximum width is 90m/100 yards.

**Rule 22** Registration forms and fees lodged with the League must have the League date stamp as the official proof of registration. A player wilfully signing registration forms for more than one club, unless transferred in accordance with the Rules of Football, or a club knowingly inducing a player to sign a Registration Form for more than one Club shall be dealt with as the Executive Committee may deem fit.

**Rule 23** A player shall not play for more than one club during a season unless his transfer has been obtained from his previous club. A player must not be signed on a Registration Form until a transfer form, where necessary, has been signed by both clubs, both Leagues and the player concerned. The Transfer period for the Amateur Football League season shall be 1st June to 30th September inclusive. A player being transferred from his first club must have his registration cancelled by his club Secretary with the League he is leaving and pay the appropriate fee to the League he is leaving, (if necessary). The transfer fee for players is set by the FAI and is €30 per player

***FAI RULE 34. REGISTRATION/TRANSFER PERIODS FOR AMATEUR GAME***

- a) The registration period for the Amateur game, other than the SFAI, shall be 1st June to the 31st of March inclusive for the winter season and 1st of December to the 30th of September inclusive for the Summer Season.*
- b) The two transfer periods for the Amateur game shall be 1st June to 30th September inclusive and the 1st December to the 31st of January inclusive with the exception of (c) below. However, an Amateur Player may be signed on a Professional Contract for the Professional Game during the Professional Registration Periods.*
- c) The transfer period for all football under the jurisdiction of the SFAI up to and including the Under 16 grade shall be 1st August to 15th October inclusive in the current season. The registration period shall be as defined by the SFAI from time to time.*
- d) If a player's registration/contract expires naturally at the end of his current season (i.e. 31st May Winter Season/ 30th November Summer Season) a Transfer Form is not required for the player to register with another club in another League. Players registered with clubs whose fixtures extend beyond the above dates are committed to these clubs until those fixtures are completed.*
- e) If a club disbands during the Season the player registration' shall come under the direction of the League concerned. The players may be allowed, at the discretion of the League, to register with other clubs within that League. The deadline for such registrations shall be the 31st January for the Winter Season and the 30th September for the Summer Season.*

**Rule 24** A club in membership of the League, which withholds a player's transfer without having a valid claim against such player when a transfer has been applied for by the player or, on his behalf, by

a club, the club withholding the transfer can be reported to the Executive Committee. After investigating the matter, the Executive Committee may make an order for the transfer of the player. The order must be complied within three days of being notified to the withholding club. A club found guilty of unreasonably withholding a player's transfer would be dealt with, as the Executive Committee may deem fit.

**Rule 25** Registered players of a club, which has been removed from membership of the Amateur Football League or ceases to be members of the League for any reason, cannot be registered as a player for any other club without firstly receiving the sanction of the AFL Executive Committee.

**Rule 26** The Registrar of the League and the assistant Registrar shall keep a full record of all matches, players' registration forms, transfer, re-instatement or regrading forms. Clubs shall have access to these forms provided they nominate in writing in advance, the names on the registered forms they wish to examine. A search fee to cover three nominated forms will be charged at a rate of €25 and €15 for each subsequent form. The procedure for searches is the registered Club Honorary Secretary nominates the names of the players in writing to the Honorary Secretary or the Registrar or assistant registrar. We examine our files and if the names are registered or not we will confirm it verbally and in writing. There is an obligation on the League to take all reasonable measures to check that the post has been delivered to us and the postmark verified. All player registrations together with registration fees have to be stamped by the finance department before being handed over to the registrar

**Rule 27** The League shall appoint referees to the various matches under their control. Fixtures are published in the Herald each Monday with alterations appearing on the AFL Website ([www.amateurfootballleague.com](http://www.amateurfootballleague.com)), together with the referee's name and if applicable, the names of the assistant referees. It is the responsibility of both teams to confirm the fixture with each other and the home team contact the referee early in the week to allow for last minute changes. In the event of the appointed Referee not attending the match and the two clubs agreeing to one on the ground, such agreed referee shall be considered a League official for the time being and shall have full powers as if he had been the appointed referee.

**Rule 28** In the event of a player(s) or officials sent off by the referee before, during or after a match, they incur a minimum one match automatic suspension. Should his Club have more than one team he is suspended for the next game with the team for which he was sent off and cannot play for any other club team until that suspension has been served. A player sent off in a Amateur Cup game, should his Club have more than one team, he is suspended for the next game with the team in which he played his last competitive game and cannot play for any other club team until that suspension has been served. In LFA over 35 cup if a player is sent off he misses the next game in the competition, if they are knocked out of the competition he misses the next domestic game with the team he played his last competitive match. Clubs will be notified by post if player needs to appear before the Executive Committee, accompanied by the Honorary Secretary of the Club. If a player is advised to appear your Club disciplinary committee must make a decision on the sending off and advise the Executive in writing or verbally on the night of the hearing of their decision. The player remains suspended until this matter is dealt with. Suspensions shall commence on the date and for the period specified on the written notice. Fines imposed must be paid by the club and the official League receipt obtained before a player(s) can play again. Suspended players cannot play for any other club team during the period of suspension. Clubs or Players who fail to appear may be dealt with in their absence or alternatively the Executive may request their attendance before making any decision in the case. In such cases Player(s) remains suspended until they appear before the Executive. In the event that a club is fined the Club cannot take part in any matches until the fine has been paid. If a club plays a player before the fine is paid, their match may be awarded to the opposition and they may also be fined for playing

a suspended player. It is the Clubs responsibility to have the fines paid. 4 yellow cards will incur a one match suspension and a sanction,

**Rule 29** In the case of alleged assault of a referee or assistant referees shall stand suspended from the time the alleged offence was committed. They shall not play, train or take part in any football activity until the case is dealt with by Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI. In the case of alleged assault of the player(s) or official(s) shall stand suspended from the time the alleged offence was committed. They shall not play, train or take part in any football activity until the case is dealt with by the Executive Committee of the League and/or any subsequent appeal to football authorities i.e. the Leinster Football Association and then to the Football Association of Ireland.

**Rule 30** In all matches, with the exception of Cup finals, the Referee's and Assistant Referees fees and expenses must be borne equally by each club (unless Assistants are requested as per Rule 15). The Football Association of Ireland Referee's Committee shall fix referee's fees and expenses. A note of current fees is available on [www.amateurfootballleague.com](http://www.amateurfootballleague.com). On match day ensure you have your 50% share of the match fee in an envelope for the referee and assistant referees (if necessary) before the match.

**Rule 31** Any objection to playing area markings, goal-nets, goal posts, corner flag posts or size of the ground must be made to the referee before the game is started. The referee shall have the power to have such objection(s) corrected. The referee shall also have the power to decide on the fitness of the ground for play. In the event of a ground being unmarked for a match, the referee must report the club responsible for the non-marking of the ground and the club may be fined as the Executive Committee deems fit. The referee's decision on the day shall be final and shall not be the grounds for any protest or claim.

**Rule 32** If a member of the Executive Committee has any doubt as to the qualification of a player taking part in any match, he/she must make the complaint to the League Honorary Secretary. The Executive Committee shall call upon such a player, or the club for which he played, to prove he is qualified according to the Rules. Failing satisfactory proof, the Executive Committee may deduct points and/or impose a fine for the offending club. No points shall be awarded to the opposing club unless a registered protest has been lodged and upheld. The Executive retain the right to impose any other sanctions as they deem fit.

**Rule 33** In all league matches, three points shall be awarded for a win and one point for a drawn match. At the end of each divisional competition, the club scoring the highest number of points shall be declared the winners of that division and shall receive the Championship Cup and eighteen (18) medals. The club scoring the second highest number of points shall be deemed runners-up and shall receive eighteen (18) medals. In the event of a playoff match for winners or runners-up being necessary, where teams finish on equal points, it will be played out to a finish on the day. No extra time will be played and the Match will be decided by kicks from the penalty mark. Only players who were on the pitch at full time are eligible to take penalty kicks. (Should the goalkeeper be genuinely injured he can be replaced from the nominated substitutes with the permission of the Referee, provided they have not used their allowed substitutes). At the start of Penalty Kicks teams must have even numbers. For example at the end of the game (90 minutes) if one team has 11 players and the other team has 10, then the team with the 11 players must remove one player to even the numbers. Only the players left on the field of play are then eligible to take a penalty kick. In all divisions, a system of promotion and relegation shall apply wherever possible but no club shall have two teams in the same division except in special competition. Should the cup be damaged during the season, the League will have the damaged cup repaired (if possible) and the club will have to bear the cost of

repair or replacement. A club failing to return the winner's trophy when requested may be fined for each week overdue.

**Rule 34** In all Cup matches if it is a draw after 90 minutes, No extra time will be played and the Match will be decided by kicks from the penalty mark. Only players who were on the pitch at full time are eligible to take penalty kicks. (Should the goalkeeper be genuinely injured he can be replaced from the nominated substitutes with the permission of the Referee, provided they have not used their allowed substitutes). At the start of Penalty Kicks teams must have even numbers. For example at the end of the game (90 minutes) if one team has 11 players and the other team has 10, then the team with the 11 players must remove one player to even the numbers. Only the players left on the field of play are then eligible to take a penalty kick.

**Rule 35** All clubs have one team in the Amateur Cup. Players can only play in one other AFL cup competition other than the Mick Gaff Cup. A player can only play for one team/club in any AFL Cup competition

#### **Divisional Cups.**

Dates for cup fixtures will be published early in the season and clubs will be obliged to fulfil fixtures on that date. Failure to fulfil a cup tie fixture may face possible expulsion from that competition.

**The Matt O'Leary Cup** is for Saturday Premier Division, Division 1 North, Division 1 South.

**Jim Byrne Cup** is for Saturday Division 2 Nth and Division 2 south teams

**The Clifford Cup** is for Saturday Division 3 North and Div 3 South teams.

**The Grimes Cup** is for Sunday teams

**The Mick Gaff Cup:** For teams knocked out in the preliminary round and round 1 of the Amateur Cup.

If your Club is playing in the LFA Cup those fixtures take priority should there be a clash of ground sharing. Make sure your divisional manager is advised in advance.

**Rule 36** The Honorary Officers and Executive Committee shall have the power to decide on any matter not provided for in these Rules; however they must submit their decision to the next Annual General Meeting for possible insertion into the Playing Rules of the League.

**Rule 37** The League accepts no responsibility for the non-possession of rules by member clubs, nor can the non-possession be pleaded as ignorance of the rules of the League.