



Ground Marshall Handbook

Ground Marshall – Roles & Responsibilities

Ground Marshall's plays a significant role in the quality management of junior football on match day. The Ground Marshall role is required to be filled by **both** teams at all SANFL Juniors matches and will be the first point of contact for their respective club should there be any disputes, indiscretion or breaches within the Codes of Conduct that arise on match day.

An appointed Ground Marshall must be 18 years of age or older and is identifiable to all parents and spectators by their red vest.

The role of the Ground Marshall

- Inspect the playing arena and ensure that all equipment for conducting the game is available before the match (e.g., stretcher, goal post padding, siren).
- Ensure that the Exclusion Zone is adequately set up.
- Ground Marshalls are to remain **outside** the playing arena patrolling crowd behaviour and apply any best practice approaches to prevent any Code of Conduct breaches.
- The Ground Marshall is the first point of contact for any objections, protests or complaints from officials and parents from their club regarding breaches in the Codes of Conduct.
- The Ground Marshall is required to attend to the umpires prior to and after the game and ensure that the umpires have an escort on and off the ground.
- The Ground Marshall is required to ensure that teams remain on the ground during breaks (unless directed otherwise by the field umpires) and that no parents/spectators approach the team huddle.
- The Ground Marshall is required to report any breaches (oval set-up, Codes of Conduct) via the Match Day Incident Report Form.

It is important to note that the Ground Marshall duties/responsibilities are to assist/contribute to the quality management of SANFL Juniors Competitions. Therefore, Ground Marshalls should reflect positive aspects of the Code of Conduct and conduct themselves in a firm and polite manner and not be overly officious when speaking to people regarding breaches of the Code of Conduct.



GROUND MARSHALL FUNCTION

- Ensure all equipment (including a stretcher) for conducting the game is available before the match.
- Ensure the Exclusion Zone is set- up and clearly identifiable to parents/spectators.
- Receive any formally submitted objections, protests or complaints from officials and spectators within your Club.
- Ensure that players remain on the ground during breaks (unless specified otherwise by umpires) and that no parents/spectators approach the team huddle at breaks.
- Attend to the umpires and ensure that they are escorted on and off the ground.



GROUND MARSHALL

Be aware of

- In the event of a possible serious injury (e.g. neck), dissuade any football official from moving the injured player and to wait for an ambulance.
- In the event of dangerous weather (e.g. lightning or hail) or other life-threatening events, terminate the game.
- Keep a check on the behaviour of all officials and spectators and issue warnings for any misconduct or behaviour that is contrary to the spirit of the game.
- Provide an electronic report to SANFL Juniors of any substantiated misconduct by spectators or club officials within twenty-four (24) hours of the game completion.
- In the event of a postponed game, inform the SANFL Juniors in writing of the specific reasons for abandonment of any games.

Exclusion Zones

Applies to Premiership Grades (U12 – U18 Competitions)

As per SANFL Juniors Rules & Regulations 7.5.1.2 (Ground Set Up), each home or host Club shall be responsible for setting up a clearly identified exclusion zone, which is no less than five (5) metres either side of the interchange area in Under 11's and above. This must be marked in paint or, where this is not possible, collapsible cones.

The purpose of the exclusion zone is to allow for a controlled environment where coaches and players can focus on the game, whilst limiting any distractions or unnecessary noise. As part of their role, Ground Marshalls are required to ensure that the exclusion zone is set up and clearly identifiable to parents and spectators. Should this not be the case, and no exclusion zone is present, Ground Marshalls are required to notify the SANFL via the Ground Marshall Incident Form and provide evidence where possible.

The following people are permitted to be within the exclusion zone.

- 1 x Coach
- 2 x Assistant Coaches
- 1 x Team Manager
- 1 x Runner
- 1 x First Aid Officer
- Interchange Players

The Ground Marshall is not to be apart of the exclusion zone and should be stationed outside of the fence with the parents and spectators. Should the Ground Marshall be required to enter the exclusion zone to address behaviour concerns from within the area, this should be done in a swift manner with the Ground Marshall vacating the area once the message has been passed on.

Should there be any other official or parent present within the exclusion zone throughout the match, it is the responsibility of the Ground Marshall to ask that member to vacate the area.

Resolving Conflict

As part of the role, Ground Marshalls may be required to deal with tense situations which require strategies to change the environment.

The following steps have been outlined as a guide to assist the Ground Marshall in having conflict resolution interactions by Play by the Rules. Further information can be found at (<https://www.playbytherules.net.au>).

STOP

- Assess the risk and situation as I approach.
- Decide whether to send for assistance.
- Stay open-minded, intending to defuse the situation
- Remain calm
- Don't argue, accuse, or tell to 'calm down'



LOOK

- Are they intoxicated?
- Have I ever reacted like that?
- When I was that age.... How did I behave?
- If I was brought up in that culture/environment, would I act the same?
- Are their expectation of the umpire, coach, players, or club too high?
- Am I the focus of their anger?
- Has the person just displayed aggression towards an individual or a group?
- Is it likely that the person will physically or mentally harm you or others?
- Do you think that this situation is more appropriate for the Police?



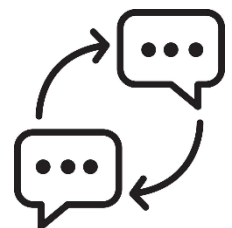
LISTEN

- Receive other people's comments without interruption
- Show empathy and use statements carefully
- Validate and clarify
- Recognise your own prejudices
- Be quiet



RESPOND

- Remain calm and keep your language short and simple
- Use non-threatening body language and tone of voice
- Very rarely is using the word: 'NO' going to get you very far with the public
- It is better to say: "I need" or we need rather than "you must" or "have to"
- Learn to feel comfortable with phrases such as:
 - a. "I can help you better if...."
 - b. "I need you to help me by slowing down just a little..."
 - c. I really don't think your comments..."



Resolving Conflict - Summary

- **Listen** to what the problem is for them.
- **Say** what the problem is for you.
- **Focus** on the problem.
- **Look** for answers so everyone gets what they need.

Who is responsible for dealing with an Incident?

Reporting of Inappropriate Behaviour

Responsibility of EVERYONE

Behaviour that is in breach of the SANFL Juniors Code of Conduct(s) should be reported to the Ground Marshall. Any person who is unsure who the Ground Marshall is should report to the Team Manager for guidance.

Approaching the Offender

Responsibility of the Ground Marshall/Committee Member of that Club

In the first instance, the Ground Marshall of the representing club should approach the offender, this prevents the situation escalating.

Should the complaint be made about an opponent's spectator, official or player, the Ground Marshall should report the complaint to the opposing clubs Ground Marshall.

Suspending Play

Responsibility of the Umpire

As per SANFL Juniors Rules & Regulations (8.31 – Blue Cards), Umpires will issue a Blue Card should they feel that the match day environment is unacceptable. Should two (2) Blue Cards be awarded then the match will be suspended.

Removing People from the Field of Play or Venue

Responsibility of the Ground Marshall

The Umpire should communicate directly and immediately with the Ground Marshall or Team Manager (to relay to the Ground Marshall) to remove a person from the ground. As attendance is not controlled, the Ground Marshall can request that the offender leaves the ground.

Who is responsible for dealing with an Incident?

Involving the Police

Responsibility of the Ground Marshall/Committee Member

If the Ground Marshall feels that the behaviour of another constitutes a criminal act the police should be notified immediately.

Taking Disciplinary Action

Responsibility of Club Committee/SANFL

The Ground Marshall Incident Report Form will be reviewed by the SANFL, with an action (either from SANFL or delegated to Club level) being directed and communicated by the SANFL Juniors department.