AFL Queensland Junior and Youth Transfer Capping Rules

Overview

The McDonald's SEQ Juniors competition has experienced significant growth over recent years, increasing by approximately 88 per cent since 2020 and welcoming more than 8,000 additional participants into community football.

This growth is a positive outcome for the game and reflects the hard work undertaken by clubs, volunteers and communities across South East Queensland.

As participation has grown, player movement has become a consistent item of feedback amongst junior and youth clubs throughout South East Queensland.

AFL Queensland is committed to the sustainable growth of junior football across the state, and excessive player movement between clubs, and the impact this may be having on competition balance, club sustainability and the long-term health of community football has been the subject of lengthy review.

As a result of this review, and following consultation with clubs across the McDonald's SEQ Juniors competition, AFL Queensland is implementing new Transfer Capping rules effective from November 1, 2026.

This communication is intended to provide parents, guardians and junior participants with an understanding of the background to the changes, the changes themselves and what it means for your participation and pathways into the future.

A detailed outlined of the new Transfer Capping rules can be found at the end of this document.

Why Introduce Transfer Caps?

The intent of the transfer cap is not to prevent participants from changing clubs, nor to remove accountability from clubs for providing a positive football experience.

Instead, the transfer capping is designed to:

- Encourage participation growth through recruitment of new players to Australian rules football.
- Support the long-term sustainability of small and medium-sized clubs.

- Reduce the concentration of players within a small number of clubs.
- Assist clubs to retain viable teams and playing groups.
- Support a healthy and competitive community football environment across South East Queensland.

AFL Queensland's Transfer Cap Framework

The 2027 transfer cap framework will include the following provisions:

- Age Group Transfer Caps
    - Within a football year, a club must not receive from other South East Queensland clubs:
    - More than four (4) transferred players into any age group; and
    - More than two (2) transferred players from the same source club within an age group;
- Club-to-Club Transfer Caps
    - A maximum of six (6) inbound girls transfers may occur from any one (1) club within South East Queensland across all age groups within a football year.
    - A maximum of six (6) inbound boys transfers may occur from any one (1) club within South East Queensland across all age groups within a football year.

Note: These caps operate independently of one another and are applied separately by gender.

- Returning Player Clause
    - A player may transfer to a club outside of the above transfer caps where:
        - The player has previously participated in and completed a minimum of forty (40) matches of junior football with the destination club.
- For the purpose of this rule, any player approved under the Returning Player Clause will not count towards any applicable age group transfer cap or club-to-club transfer cap.

Frequently Asked Questions

When does the framework commence?

These rules will apply from the commencement of the November Transfer period at 12:01am (AEST) on 1 November in accordance with the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

Does this mean players cannot transfer clubs?

No.

Players will continue to have the ability to transfer clubs in accordance with existing transfer regulations. The framework only places limits on the number of incoming transferred players a club can receive in certain circumstances.

My child previously played at a club, and we are wanting to return. Do these rules apply to them?

The Returning Player Clause allows a player to return to a club where they have a significant football history without impacting transfer cap calculations.

If a player has played at least forty (40) junior matches for a club and later wishes to return to that club, the transfer may be approved outside the transfer cap framework.

Do Returning Players count towards transfer limits?

No. Approved Returning Players do not count towards:

- The four-player age group cap.
- The two-player club-to-club age group limit.
- The six-player club-to-club transfer limit.

My son wishes to play in the TPIL Lawyers QAFL Colts competition. Will these rules impact their ability to play in this competition?

No, TPIL Lawyers QAFL clubs are able to play on a Season Permit any number of age eligible players who are primary registered to a junior club.

By staying primary registered at your current junior club that is not aligned to a QAFL club, when ageing out of youth football, you will be able to transfer to a QAFL club's senior database as a one (1) point player, increasing the flexibility in your aspirations for senior selection.

For example, a player who is registered to, and plays Under 17s at Ormeau is able to play on a Season Permit in Labrador's QAFL Colts program.

My daughter aspires to play in the Bond University QAFLW. Do I need to transfer them to a junior club which is aligned to a QAFLW club?

No, Bond University QAFLW clubs are able to permit a player who is age eligible for senior football into their QAFLW program.

By staying primary registered at your current junior club that is not aligned to a QAFLW club, when ageing out of youth football, you will be able to transfer to a QAFLW club's senior database as a one (1) point player, increasing the flexibility in your aspirations for senior selection.

Do I need to be at a specific club to be selected for the Gold Coast SUNS or Brisbane Lions Academy?

No, the Gold Coast SUNS and Brisbane Lions Academy programs have numerous layers of Talent Identification and operate as a pathway to develop our talented footballers. All players across Queensland are able to be invited into an Academy program, no matter which club they belong to.

Both the Gold Coast SUNS and Brisbane Lions Academies are nation leading development programs, who have the resources and capabilities of developing aspirational athletes into elite footballers irrespective of the club they play at.

I'm curious about my child's pathway to senior football, how does moving junior clubs impact their Player Points?

Player Points System's apply to a number of senior competitions throughout South East Queensland where each player is assigned a point value, and teams have a maximum points cap they can use in ach match. They are primarily sustainability and competitive balance mechanisms to support healthy and competitive competition environments. Players may be valued from 1 point to 7 points. The lower a player's point value, the greater flexibility a club has to select that player.

Any player who transfers from a junior club, to a senior club where the senior clubs are not in competition would become a 1-point player, the lowest possible value.

This is to incentivise players seeing out their youth pathway at their original club, as opposed to feeling the pressure to transfer into the aligned junior club.

I want my child to swap clubs. What do I do?

We suggest you speak with your current club to discuss any concerns or problems, to resolve these without the need to transfer clubs. If you do need to transfer, we suggest reaching out to your nearest club to discuss their availability before committing to a move.

The club we want to move to can't accept our transfer. What do we do?

There are over 72 Licensed clubs across the McDonald's South East Queensland junior competition, so there is never a club too far away that will provide a great playing experience. If you're able, we do encourage wherever possible for you to stay at your existing club.

My current club doesn't offer my age group. What do I do?

If a player's club only offers junior teams (U8-U11) due to facility constraints or other limitations, and the player remains at that club until completing the club's junior pathway before transferring to another club to continue their youth football journey, that transfer will be exempt from the transfer cap.

However, if the player transfers to another club before reaching the highest age group offered by their existing club, the transfer will be included in the club's transfer cap calculations.

My child hasn't played in a couple of years? Where can we transfer to?

Participants who have not played in more than 24 months are exempt from the Transfer Capping rules.

We have moved? Am I still able to move clubs?

We understand families and participants may move regions for many reasons. A club may be able to apply for a player who wishes to come to their club due to them moving.

Additionally, these rules only apply to transfers between clubs within the McDonalds SEQJ competition. If you have moved from regional Queensland or interstate, these caps do not apply.

Have a question that hasn't been answered? Please feel free to reach out via AFLQLD.JuniorCommunityFootball@afl.com.au