



1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 This document outlines NRL WA policy on dispensation for a player to participate in an Age Group of competition of a younger age than their nominal age group (i.e., play in competition below their own age), as determined by the NRL WA Competitions.
- 1.2 This policy is applicable to all registered junior players under NRL WA and to any club (including affiliate clubs) affiliated to NRL WA.

2. Dispensation

- 2.1 Dispensation shall only be provided to play in the age group immediately below the nominal age group for that player.
- 2.2 Dispensation shall only be provided for the competition season that approval has been made. Dispensation shall be required to be applied at the commencement of each competition season regardless of approved dispensation in previous seasons/years
- 2.3 If a player is approved for Age Dispensation, the player can only play in that age group and not in their nominal age group as well. If a player is found to have done this both matches will be deemed a forfeit. This players dispensation will also be revoked immediately.
- 2.4 Dispensation under this Policy shall **only** be provided to a player on the following basis;
 - a) The player has a legitimate physical and/or intellectual disability; and
 - b) The physical and/or intellectual disability has impacted on their physical and/or intellectual development relative to players of their own age; and
 - c) Sufficient medical documentation supporting the player’s application is provided.

OR

- d) Under the National 18 Month Registration Policy - <https://www.playrugbyleague.com/framework/18-month-registration-window/>

OR

- e) For tackle/contact competitions only, player’s weight and height can be taken into account on a case by case basis.



2.5 Dispensation shall **NOT** be granted for the following;

- A player is physically smaller than the other players in their age group (unless qualifies under 2.6 [e] above)
- A player is new to the game
- A player wants to play with friends in a lower age group
- The club does not have a team or the league does not offer a competition for the nominal age group of that player
- A female player does not want to play league tag/girls tackle and wants to play mod football

2.6 Dispensations may be withdrawn by NRL WA based on a review of a player's capabilities having significant impact on the age group they have received Age Dispensation for.

2.7 Any match where a player that plays at an age group below their nominal age group without having prior approval under the NRL WA Age Dispensation Policy will be automatically determined a Forfeit by that player's team.

3. Application Process for Age Dispensation

3.1 The application for Age Dispensation must be submitted by 5pm Wednesday before the next scheduled match otherwise they will not be processed for that immediate weekend under any circumstances.

3.2 The Age Dispensation Policy is to be initially administered by the club. However, final approval regarding the application of this policy will be provided by NRL WA

3.3 A parent/guardian makes a request to the players club seeking Age Dispensation for their child to play in a grade below their nominal age group.

3.4 The parent/guardian then completes the following forms which are available online at <https://nrlwa.com.au/documents/>

- NRL WA Dispensation Form
- NRL WA Parental Approval Form

3.5 The parent/guardian then submits the form through their club. If the club denies the request for Age Dispensation the club shall advise the parent/guardian. NRL WA will support the club on its decision and update MySideline as appropriate. If the club supports the request for age dispensation they will lodge the application with NRL WA.



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- 3.6 If the application does not meet the requirements of this Policy, NRL WA will advise the club of the decision and reason(s) as to why.
- 3.7 If the application does meet the requirements of this Policy, NRL WA will then review the submission and request any supporting documentation such as statement/verification of medical condition and recommendation from a doctor (or equivalent based on the nature of physical/intellectual condition).
- 3.8 If after receiving any supporting documentation as may be required, and the application meets all relevant criteria for support, NRL WA will then forward to the club to make a decision to either deny or support the player's application for Age Dispensation based on the requirements of this Policy. NRL WA may also request that the player be sighted at training or other appropriate means to assess the application prior to approval.

4. Appeal

- 4.1 The Club and/or Parent/Guardian may appeal any decision made about dispensation within 3 working days, and in this case the application is to be made directly to the NRL WA Operations Manager.
- 4.2 A player is **NOT** permitted to play in the age group below their own nominal age group until the decision of the NRL WA is completed.
- 4.3 Any opposition club may appeal a player's Age Dispensation to the NRL WA Operations Manager, providing appropriate evidence as to why, which if deemed satisfactory will be reviewed. A player can remain playing in the age group they have Age Dispensation for until the review is completed.

5. Approvals

- 5.1 If an application under this policy is approved for Age Dispensation, NRL WA will advise the club in writing of approval and update MySideline as required.