

There's No Room for Violence in Footy

Course Handout



What's it about?

This module has been created by Danny Green's Stop the Coward Punch Campaign and the Perth Football League to educate Perth Football League players on the consequence of violence whilst playing football. This module is compulsory to complete for Perth Football League:

- Colts-aged male players prior to them being registered to play
- All players who received greater than 2 weeks' suspension for a violent incident prior to them being eligible to return to play
- Any deregistered players applying to the PFL to be re-registered to play
- Any other PFL players or officials at the discretion of the Perth Football League.

Players must complete each course activity (look for the 'view the lesson activity' button at the bottom of each lesson). Multiple-choice questions will be locked for 24 hours after three incorrect attempts, meaning progress cannot be made on the course until the 24 hours have elapsed.

Once you have successfully completed this course, a certificate of completion will be sent to your email address. To be cleared for reselection, this certificate must be emailed directly to the PFL (via pfl@perthfootball.com.au). For players taking this course in a workshop setting, the names of participating players should also be emailed to the PFL via the same email address.

This course will teach you how to be in control of your anger and aggression on the footy field and off it. You'll explore the consequences of violent conduct, from reportable offences to criminal charges and life-destroying personal consequences for the perpetrator, victim and their families and friends. You'll also develop strategies for preventing violent outbursts.

You'll learn:

- PFL and AFL rules regarding violent conduct and reportable offences
- Criminal laws relating to violence, including Coward Punch laws
- Statistics about Coward Punches
- The consequences of violence, including short and long-term medical conditions

- How to manage your anger and frustration
- How to de-escalate others to prevent violent incidents

PFL rules about violent conduct

Protecting the safety of our players is critically important to the Perth Football League. For that reason, there are rules in place to deter violent incidences from occurring.

By registering to play football in the Perth Football League, you must agree to the competition's Terms and Conditions and are subject to the PFL's rules regarding reporting and disciplining players.

When you play in a sanctioned PFL match, you can be ordered off the ground and/or placed on report by an Umpire for a dangerous, violent, or abusive act. If this occurs, you may be issued a prescribed penalty by the umpires after the match or asked to attend a tribunal hearing for instances where you don't accept the prescribed penalty or for serious instances.

Perth Football League penalties to players can include a fine up to \$500, suspension and expulsion from the League. Penalties on clubs can include a \$1,000 fine, loss of premiership points, and/or expulsion from the League.

Perth Football League's Deregistration Policy. Deregistration means you are unable to play in a Perth Football League competition, and this penalty can extend to all Football competitions in Australia.

If a Perth Football League registered player:-

1. Receives 5 weeks suspension or more for one incident,
2. Is suspended three times in one season, or
3. Has accumulated a combined total of 12 weeks suspension over their playing career

Then they will be deregistered and unable to play in the Perth Football League.

It is important to remember, that just because you are on the football field, violent incidences, such as striking, can still be penalised under the laws of Western Australia. In the worst-case scenario, you could be arrested by the police or even go to jail for an on-field incident.

The old saying “*what happens on the football field stays on the football field*” is incorrect. There are many instances of people who have committed a violent act on the football field, and the consequences have been much more severe than missing a few games of football.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF A VIOLENT ACT ON THE FIELD

1. Severely injure someone
2. Reported, suspended, monetary fine
3. Miss important games such as finals/let your teammates down and lose games due to not being available to play
4. The issue becomes a criminal matter, and you are liable to legal costs, fines or jail time
5. Put unnecessary stress on volunteers at the club who need to support a tribunal hearing
6. Damage Club reputation and Club receives sanctions due to poor behaviour
7. The incident is videoed and makes the media
8. Damage your reputation (and your family's), impacting your personal life
9. Create 'bad blood' with rival teams that becomes 'toxic'
10. People become unsatisfied and leave football due to ongoing violent behaviour

AFL rules about violent conduct

- [2021 Laws of Australian Football](#) (clauses 22 and 23)

Managing aggressive and violent behaviours

- Understand your [triggers and warning signs](#)
- Fill out the anger thermometer and share it with your coach or psychologist
- [De-escalate others](#):
 - o validate them
 - o help them figure out other options
 - o respect their free will
- Make sure you report or get help if/when needed
- Access the [STOP the Coward Punch campaign](#) to educate yourself and your mates

Additional Resources

- [Why is Anger Getting the Better of Me](https://youtu.be/XBpoLZH4woc) (https://youtu.be/XBpoLZH4woc)
- [How To Always Be in Control of Your Anger - Jocko Willink](https://youtu.be/F22ZvJR2mss) (https://youtu.be/F22ZvJR2mss)
- [Anger Management: Warning Signs + Anger Thermometer](https://youtu.be/odgz9gCqsOY) (https://youtu.be/odgz9gCqsOY)
- [How to de-escalate someone](https://youtu.be/4qsfBCatgX8) (https://youtu.be/4qsfBCatgX8)

- Mensline (anonymous telephone counselling for men): <https://mensline.org.au/>, 1300 78 99 78
- Beyond Blue (anxiety, depression and suicide support service): <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
- White Ribbon Australia (preventing violence against women): <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/>
- 1800RESPECT (domestic, family and sexual violence support service): <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>
- No To Violence (support for perpetrators of domestic violence): <https://ntv.org.au/>
- List of state and territory support services for perpetrators of violence: https://www.saferresource.org.au/perpetrator_interventions