



MANAWATU RUGBY LEAGUE

RULES AND REGULATIONS 2016

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Appendices (<http://www.sportsground.co.nz/mrl/39138/>)

- A1 NZRL Team Contractual Registration Form
- A2 NZRL Team Card
- A3 NZRL Match Sheet
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- A5 NZRL Send-Off / Incident Report Form
- A6 MRL Appeal Form

NZRL Policies (<http://www.sportsground.co.nz/mrl/39138/>)

- P1 NZRL Code of Behaviour
- P2 NZRL Safe Play Code
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RULES & REGULATIONS BINDING

These Rules and Regulations will have effect for the duration of the 2016 Manawatu Rugby League Club Competition unless amended or replaced by the Manawatu Rugby League.

1. THE COMPETITION

1.1 Competition Administration

The competition will be solely managed by Manawatu Rugby Football League (MRL), from the MRL Office at 50 Queen Street, Palmerston North.

1.1.1 Conditions of Entry

Your club is required to educate your members (e.g. players, team management and Spectators) understand and agree to adhere to the Conditions of Entry, Travel Requirements, Codes of Conduct: Responsibilities, Competition Policies and any policy MRL are to align with through Mid Central Zone (MCZ)and New Zealand Rugby league(NZRL)

Registration fees **2016 FEES:**

U11s: FREE

Junior Clubs : \$700

Senior and Junior Clubs: \$2800

Senior Only (20s & Prens): \$2200

(including GST) must be paid to Manawatu Rugby League no later 1st of April, 2016.

1.2 Grades

MRL will be responsible for administering the following grades:

Schoolboy Grades:

- Under 17s
- Under 15s
- Under 13s
- Under 11s

Senior Grades:

- Premiers
- U20s

1.3 Age Grades

a) The following age grade guidelines will be in place for Senior and Schoolboy grades:

- **Premier & Reserves:** to play Senior grades in 2016 you must be born in 1998 or earlier
- **Under 20 Years** (as at the 1st January 2016)
Can turn 20 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 19 on the 31/12/2015
- **Under 17 Years** (as at the 1st January 2016)
Can turn 17 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 16 on the 31/12/2015
- **Under 15 Years** (as at the 1st January 2016)
Can turn 15 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 14 on the 31/12/2015
- **Under 13 Years** (as at the 1st January 2016)
Can turn 13 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 12 on the 31/12/2015
- **Under 11 Years** (as at the 1st January 2016)
Can turn 11 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 10 on the 31/12/2015

b) In age-restricted grades (U17 and below), players cannot take the field in a grade more than two years above their age under any circumstances (e.g. Players aged 14 years cannot compete in the U17 grade). Therefore, a player must have turned 15 year of ages to play in the U17 grade.

c) DISPENATION

JUNIORS DISPENSATION		
Grade	Weight	Ages
Under 17	80kg	Under 18 Years (as at the 1 st January 2015) - Can turn 18 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 13 on the 31/12/2015
Under 15	70kg	Under 16 Years (as at the 1 st January 2015) - Can turn 16 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 13 on the 31/12/2015
Under 13	60kg	Under 14 Years (as at the 1 st January 2015) - Can turn 14 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 13 on the 31/12/2015
Under 11	47kgs	Under 12 Years (as at the 1 st January 2015) - Can turn 12 on 1/1/2016, but needs to be 13 on the 31/12/2015

1.4 Kick-off times

- a) Kick-off times will be sent to club delegates or put on our website at least 5 days prior to match.
- b) Any requests for change to kick-off times are to be submitted the Competition Manager, no later than Monday 5pm prior to that weekend. The Competition Manager must approve the change and will notify all affected clubs.
- c) Any team that arrives late to a venue and subsequently delays the game by 15 minutes or longer (without communicating the delay to the opposing team) after the set kick-off time will be deemed to have defaulted that game.
- d) Should any team contact their opposition team to inform them of their delay in getting to the venue, they have a maximum of 30 minutes to start the game. Therefore, if the game does not start within 30 minutes of the schedule kick-off time, the game will be called off and deemed a default in favour of the team who was ready to start.

1.5 Playing times

The playing time for each grade shall be as follows:

- a) All Senior Grades: 40 minutes each way with 5-minute halftime break
- b) (U/17): 35 minutes each way with 5-minute halftime break
- c) (U/15): 30 minutes each way with 5-minute halftime break
- d) (U/13): 25 minutes each way with 5-minute half time break
- e) (U/11): 20 minutes each way with 3-minute halftime break

1.6 Extra Time/Finals

- a) No extra time will be played during round robin competitions.
- b) Teams who called heads or tails at start of the game shall toss the coin to decide who kicks off the extra time first period of 5 minutes
- c) Quick change of halves at the end of first period of 5 minutes. The team who received will now kick off the second period.
- d) If the game is still tied at the end of second period of 5 minutes, GOLDEN POINT will apply. Procedure a. will apply with the team who tossed the coin at the start of the game will toss the coin to decide who kicks off the extra time third period of 5 minutes.

- e) If no point(s) have been scored during the first period of GOLDEN POINT, quick change of halves at the end of period of 5 minutes . The team who received the ball of the first period will now kick off the second period of GOLDEN POINT.
- f) During anytime of GOLDEN POINT, the team who scores first will be declared the winner and the game will end.
- g) Should the match still be drawn after the maximum minutes have elapsed, the winner shall be the team that scored the first points in normal time.

1.5 Competition Points

- Two (2) points are awarded for a win
- one (1) point for a draw
- Zero (0) for a default or loss

1.5.1 Should a bye be necessary in any grade competition, 2 points will be awarded to the bye team and a 20 nil score line for calculation of percentages. **Equal Points**

In the event of two or more teams having equal competition points at the conclusion of the round robin competition, their finishing order will be determined by the following sequence:

- i. The team with the best points differential
- ii. The team with the best points percentage differential - $PF/PA \times 100$
- iii. The team who won the most recent round robin game during the season
- iv. Coin toss

1.6 Player Eligibility for Finals

To qualify for the semi-finals and finals a player must have played three (3) of the last five (5) competition games for that grade that they intend to play for in the final series.

Dispensation may be granted for, but not limited to the following:

- i. Byes or defaults
- ii. Injuries (with medical certificate for proof)
- iii. Work commitments (written letter from employer is need)

Dispensations must be applied for in writing to the MRL Board of Control as soon as you have been made aware or no later than the Monday prior to the first final series match. Applications for dispensation should be sent to 50 Queen Street PO Box 797 Palmerston North.

Points of clarification

This covers all competition grades under the control of the Manawatu Rugby League

- 2. A player may play up a grade from which he is eligible with restriction, which must not be more than 2 years above his current age.
- 3. A player who has not played any games in the preceding five(5) weeks is eligible to play for any team in which they qualify.
- 4. If a player who has played one game in the U15s team and not played for 2 of the previous 3 weeks prior to the playoffs for the U17s team, they will be ineligible to play in any upper grade team as the majority of football in those 3 weeks has been in the U17s team. The player is eligible for the U15s team only.

5. If a player plays for their normal age grade team and then plays for a higher age grade on the same day or same weekend, they have for purposes of eligibility definition played for the higher grade team.
6. If a player is listed on the team card and does not take the field, they have for definition of this clause deemed to have taken the field.
7. If a player has played two games in one team and two games in another team (i.e. 2 games (U13s), two games (U15s)) they will have for the purposes of eligibility definition have played the majority of their football in the higher grade team. The player is ineligible for a lower grade team.
8. Byes/Defaults/Washouts: Any player registered and played at least once for that team for purposes of eligibility definition have deemed to have played that round.

1.7 Defaults

- a) Any club unable to field a team in a competition match must notify the Competition Manager and the opposing club by 12:00pm the day prior to the game. If not notified in time, the club will incur an additional late fee on top of their default fee.
- b) Circumstances outside
- c) The total default fee (default fee + late fee) must be paid to Manawatu Rugby League by the Wednesday following the defaulted game. The additional 'late fee' amount will then be passed on to the club that was defaulted against.
- d) The following amounts will be charged to clubs for defaults during the competition (inclusive of GST):
 - U13s, U15s, U17s \$50.00 (\$100 extra if not notified in time)
 - Seniors \$100.00 (\$200 extra if not notified in time)
- e) Shall a team default a competition game during the season, the non-offending team will be awarded the competition points and a 20-nil result for calculation of percentages.

1.7.1 Repeated Defaults

- a) Any grade where a team defaults two (2) consecutive matches or three (3) matches across the course of the season may be removed immediately from that competition grade.

1.7.2 Voluntary Withdrawal

- a) Any team voluntarily removed (pulls out of) any competition grade will be fined a 'Withdrawal Penalty Fee' as per the following (inclusive of GST):
 - Schoolboys grades 13s,15s,17s \$100.00
 - Senior grades 20s, premiers \$200.00
- b) Before the team can be re-instated the following year, the club must ensure that all fees owing by the club have been paid in full.

2. **MATCH RULES**

International Rules apply to all grades in the competition. The NZRL Safe Play Code will be adhered to in conjunction with these rules for the Under 15 grade.

2.1. **Team Numbers**

- a) The game shall be played by two teams each consisting of not more than a maximum of seventeen (17) players for each game
- b) A maximum of thirteen (13) players from each team being on the field at any one time.

2.1.1. **Minimum Players**

A team must have a minimum of ten (10) players to commence a game, should that number through injuries fall below nine (9) then the Referee must abandon the game.

2.2. **Mouth guards**

- a) It is compulsory for all players to wear a protective mouthguard.
 - **No Mouthguard, No Game** policy is to be firmly enforced.
- b) Players are not permitted to share mouth guards.
- c) Referees and/or touch judges will check that all players (including reserves) have a mouthguard prior to the start of the game.
- d) During the course of a match any player found not to have a mouthguard in the mouth and not having a mouthguard in their possession, (due to having it dislodged as a result of a tackle) will be made to leave the field.
- e) On obtaining a replacement mouthguard, the player may re-enter the field of play after reporting to a touch judge.
- f) In the event of the player being unable to obtain a replacement mouthguard they may take no further part in the game but may be substituted, with that substitute counting as an interchange.
- g) During the course of a match, any player found not to have a mouthguard in their mouth, but to have one in their possession (in their sock or pocket etc.) will be penalised and/or sin binned for the appropriate sin-bin period according to their grade.

2.1.1. **Mouthguard Exemption**

- a) The player in question must provide a medical certificate from a dentist clearly stating why a mouthguard cannot be worn by the player.
- b) The player must submit the dentist medical certificate with a portrait photo to the Competition Manager prior to taking the field.
- c) The Competition Manager reserves the right to make the final decision on issuing a mouthguard exemption.

2.3. **Player Interchange**

- a) Each team are entitled to twelve (12) interchanges per game only.
- b) The player must report to the Match Manager before replacement is made. If for any reason a Match Manager is unavailable, the interchange must be confirmed and run past the opposition's Team Manager before the replacement takes the field.
- c) All interchanges are to be represented by the exchanging of and interchange card for the player replaced.
- d) No replacement can be made until the replaced player leaves the field of play.

- e) The interchange of players may take place at any time during the game, except at a scrum, unless the Referee has blown time out for an injury. The period deemed a scrum is from the moment the Referee blows their whistle to the time the ball clears the scrum.
- f) During general play, all interchanges are to take place on the Match Managers side of the field, except in the case of an injured player, or following a try being scored, a team may drop a player off behind the dead ball area.

2.4. Reserve Bench

- a) A maximum ten (10) personnel are permitted in the reserve bench area:
 - Coach
 - Assistant Coach
 - Team Manager
 - Three (3) Trainers
 - Four (4) reserve players
- b) All bench personnel, with the exception of the trainers and players (when warming up), are to remain seated.
- c) All the above personnel apart from the trainers involved in the rehydration of the players, and reserve players who are warming up, are to remain in the reserve bench area.
- d) Trainers are not permitted to wander up and down the side line, or to adopt a position behind his team's defensive line either on the field, in-goal, or behind the dead ball line. Once rehydration is completed, trainers are to return to the reserve bench area.
- e) All trainers are required to wear Hi-visibility vest or shirt to assist with identification of the Trainer role. Trainers with no hi vis are not allowed on the paddock.
- f) A policy of zero tolerance is to be adopted for inappropriate behaviour from personnel within the reserve bench area any such behaviour is to be reported to the Match Judicial Panel.

2.5. Sin-Bin

- a) The following sin-bin times will apply for their corresponding grades. Sin-bin time is elapsed match time managed by the Match Manager. If no Match Manager is appointed, then the player is to retire by behind the opposition team's dead ball line until the penalty time is finished. Time is then monitored by the referee.
 - 13s & 15 Years: 5 minutes
 - 17 Years: 7 minutes
 - Seniors, U20s: 10 minutes
- b) Sin-binned players are to go to the designated area and may be rehydrated by a team trainer. The timing of the sin bin is to commence once the player has crossed the side line.

2.6. Blood Bin

- a) A blood bin player who leaves the field for treatment and who is not replaced may return to the field, without an interchange taking place.
- b) The Referee shall direct the bleeding player to leave the field for attention on the side line for treatment. If the player is replaced whilst receiving attention that replacement will count as one (1) of the twelve (12) interchanges.

2.7. Foul Play

In the event of a player being forced to leave the field as a result of foul play and the offending player being dismissed from the field, sin binned or penalised by the match Referee a free interchange shall be allowed. If the fouled player returns to the field, this shall count as an interchange.

2.8. Dismissed Players

Dismissed players are to leave the playing area immediately and change out of their team strip. Dismissed players are not permitted to return to the reserve bench area.

3. REGISTRATIONS

3.1 Player Registration

- a) All players must be registered on LeagueNet by their nominated club affiliated to either the Manawatu Rugby League before they can take the field.
- b) If a player has not been registered by another club in Australia or New Zealand within the last 24 months, they have rights to free transfer, without restriction. The player will resume under their original LeagueNet identification number.
- c) If a player has been registered by another club in Australia or New Zealand within the last 24 months, then the club must submit a transfer request via LeagueNet from the player's former club.

3.2. Player Transfers

- a) Any player transferring clubs cannot take the field for their new club until the player's transfer has been cleared in full on LeagueNet. It is each Team Coach & Manager's responsibility to ensure they are fielding only compliant players.
- b) A Club has the right to decline a transfer should a player owe the Club money or is yet to return any uniform or equipment that belongs to the Club the player is departing.

3.2.1. Transfers Deadlines

- a) For the purposes of this competition only, no player can move from one club to another club within their own district after the 19 May(senior), 12 May (Juniors).
- b) No player may move inter-district from one club to another club anywhere in New Zealand after 31 July of each year and play in the current season.

3.3. Registration Process

- a. Club to register players
 - i. Players fill out NZRL Player Registration Form, sign Maintenance Forms.
 - ii. Clubs to take copy of I.D – Birth Certificate, Passport, Photographic Drivers Licence or School Identification Card (KMAR /MACD etc.)
 - iii. Clubs to send a photo copy of I.D
- b. MRL Process
 - i. MRL to register players to Manawatu Rugby League database and NZRL league net.
 - ii. MRL will issue each player with their Club Registration number that this player will have for his/her time at that club for example; Fielding , FF001, Dannevirke Tigers, DT001, Kia Ora KO001.
 - iii. NZRL Player Registration forms will be sent out to Clubs on the 30/3/2014 or can be downloaded from the following link:

http://www.nzrl.co.nz/media/4124/nzrl_player_registration_form_-_final_includes_school.pdf

3.4. Team Cards

- a) All teams are required to complete an official NZRL Team Card prior to the commencement of each game **{refer Appendix A3}**.
- b) Team cards must be legible and filled out correctly, stating the player's full name as they are registered on LeagueNet (i.e. no 'nick names' or initials to be used).
- c) Team cards must be signed by all players prior to taking the field.
- d) Team cards are to be handed to the Match Manager no later than 15 minutes prior to kick-off.
- e) Team cards must be signed and handed to the Match Referee post game.
- f) Referees are responsible of handing the Team Cards into MRL Office by either scanning or posting
- g) Any team that passes their team card on to another team is still responsible if the team card fails to reach the Competition Manager.
- h) Any team found to be falsifying the appearance of a player in any game will be subject to serious misconduct and the highest of penalty.

4. TEAM OFFICIALS

All teams are required to have a minimum of one (1) coach, and one (1) manager per team grade. Additional team staff is at the discretion of each team.

4.1. Team Coaches

All coaches must have achieved the following minimum accreditation, or be partaking in the relevant course in 2015:

- Senior Coach: NZRL Beginner Senior Coach Accreditation
- Schoolboys Coach: NZRL Beginner Youth Coach Accreditation

4.2. Team Trainer Protocols

- a) A maximum of three (3) trainers are permitted per team, per game.
- b) A maximum of two (2) trainers may take the field at any one time.
- c) Trainers must be wearing an orange or yellow coloured top.
- d) Trainers may take the field to hydrate players while their team is in possession of the ball.
- e) Trainers may take the field to provide medical assessment and support to players, taking care not to interfere with the run of play.
- f) When trainers are not rehydrating players, they are to return to the reserve bench area and are not permitted to wander up and down the touch line.
- g) Under no circumstance are trainers to remain standing in or behind the in-goal area during the run of play.
- h) Communication equipment is not permitted on the playing field.
- i) Trainers are not permitted to hang around behind their team in the run of play.
- j) Trainers are not permitted to enter the field of play in the event of an on-field skirmish/altercation. They are to remain on the sideline until the altercation has finished.

5. **MATCH OFFICIALS**

5.1. **Referees**

- a) Referees will be appointed by the Manawatu Rugby League Referees Association in conjunction with MRL.
- b) The Referee is the sole judge during all games, their decision is final. The referee will be the sole judge of time for the game except for sin-bin incidences. If no Match Manager is present for the game, then the referee will be responsible for monitoring sin-bin time.

5.1.1. **Absence of Referee**

- a) If for any reason the appointed Referee not be present at the stated kick-off time, teams must agree to a replacement Referee. If teams agree on a replacement, the match will be recognised by the UCZ. There are no 'friendly' games.
- b) Should teams not agree to the replacement, the coaches (or appointee) shall each Referee half of the match with the halves to be decided by the toss of a coin.
- c) If still no agreement and the match is not played in competition rounds, no replay will occur and competition points will result in a default for both teams.
- d) Should the appointed Referee subsequently arrive, the appointed Referee must take control of the match as soon as practically possible.

5.2. **Touch Judge**

Touch Judges will be appointed wherever possible. Where no Touch Judge is appointed, each team is required to supply one (1).

5.3 **Match Managers**

- a) The hosting club is responsible for providing a Match Manager for all competition grades during round robin matches.
- b) MRL will appoint Match Managers for all final series matches.
- c) The Match Manager must sit at half-way between the two team's reserve benches and are responsible for managing team inter-change and sidelines, including team benches.
- d) Match Managers may report any non-complying team officials or players to the Competition Manager via the Match Sheet.
- e) Match Managers are required to text through final score to the District Manager, Sanjay Patel (027 229 0171) immediately after each match.
- f) Match Managers are to email all Match Sheet **{refer Appendix A4}** and any additional reports to the Competition Manager, (admin@manawaturugbyleague.co.nz) no later than 7:00pm the day after game-day to ensure that results can be published online and sent to media partners.

6. OUT-OF-ORDER PLAYERS & PROTESTS

6.1. Out-of-Order Players

- a) Out-of-order fines apply for the following circumstances:
 - i. Player is found not to be registered on LeagueNet with their nominated club.
 - ii. Player is found to have an incomplete transfer or clearance for the club that they have taken the field for.
 - iii. Player is listed on the team card under an incorrect name.
 - iv. Player is listed/takes the field in the incorrect age grade (i.e. either too young or too old for that age grade).
 - v. Player is ineligible for finals series
 - vi. Player is in breach of the Grade Change Policy
- b) Any player that is found to be out-of-order, the club shall be fined \$20.00 for each out-of-order player.
- c) Competition points won in any game in which an out-of-order player participated for the winning side will be forfeited and awarded to the non-offending team. The offending team will be deemed to have lost that match.
- d) Non-offending teams will be awarded two (2) points and will keep their score-line (Points For) while the offending team will be given zero (0) game and competition points.
- e) Should both teams be found to field out-of-order players, both teams will be deemed to have lost and will not be awarded any competition points and subsequently a 0-0 score-line.

6.2 Protests / Disputes

- a) Teams may protest against their opposition if they believe a player(s) from the opposition for any reason are ineligible to compete in the grade or team in which they played.
- b) All protests must be submitted on the official MRL Dispute Form **{Appendix A5}** to the Competition Manager within 24 hours of the game finishing and shall be accompanied by a lodgement fee of \$50.00 per protest. The fee shall be forfeited if the protest is not upheld.
- c) If the protest is upheld, 50% of the fee will be paid back to the club protesting and 50% will be held for administration costs.
- d) Competition points for any match that a protest has been upheld will comply with Rule 6.1 (b, c, d).

7. MISCONDUCT

MRL shall adjudicate on all disputes for all competition grades under its jurisdiction, and be responsible for policing the rules under which the competitions are played.

7.1. Power to Dismiss for Misconduct

- a) Only appointed Referees and Match Managers have the power to dismiss a player or team official from the field of play for misconduct.
- b) In exceptional circumstances, an District League official may be required to remove a spectator, player or team official from the game and/or venue for misconduct, in which case they have the power to dismiss as necessary.

7.2. Misconduct by Players and Team Officials

- a) A Referee who has been appointed must report to the Match Manager any instance of misconduct or foul play during the progress of that match which led to

the dismissal of a player(s) from the field of play or the dismissal of a team official(s) from the playing area.

- b) A Referee who has ordered a player or players from the field of play, or a referee or touch judge who intends to report a player(s) or team official(s) for misconduct, must complete the NZRL Send-Off Form **{refer Appendix A6}** outlining the nature of the charge to the Competition Manager by 10:00am Monday following the game.
- c) Misconduct by any player or team official must be reported to the Competition Manager irrespective of whether such misconduct occurred before, during or after such match, and whether it led to the player(s) being ordered from the field of play or not or the team official(s) being ordered from the playing area or not.
- d) The Match Manager will deal with all matters reported to him/her or in circumstances he/she deems appropriate to refer any matter to the Competition Manager. The Match Manager will advise the team manager(s) of any such referral, immediately following the conclusion of the match.
- e) Having received the report from the Referee or Match Manager, the Competition Manager may after due enquiry refer the matter to the Judicial Committee. The Committee will determine whether the player(s) or team official(s) concerned should be called on to appear before the Judicial Committee to show why the accused should not be disqualified, suspended, fined or otherwise dealt with.
- f) Any player or team official who has been dismissed from the field of play during a match in the competition, or is reported by a Referee or Touch Judge pursuant to these rules will be suspended from playing in or participating respectively in the competition or in any game of Rugby League played under the jurisdiction of NZRL, a Zone or District League or any other game subject to the rules of the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF) until the report has been determined by the Judicial Committee.
- g) In the event of a match being abandoned due to misconduct of players or team officials or spectators, the Referee shall forward a full report to the Competition Manager within 48 hours of that match. The captain, coach and manager of both teams together with the match Referee are required to attend the next meeting of the Judicial Committee following the abandoned game.

7.3. Allegations by Opposing Team

- a) Where a player makes an allegation of misconduct against a player in the opposing team during the course of a match, the Referee will call on the captains of both teams involved and a Touch Judge to witness the allegation.
- b) The referee will refer this to the Match Manager who will advise the Team Manager of the allegation against the player and that the referee will file a report with the Competition Manager regarding the allegation who will in turn refer it to the Judicial Committee.
- c) The referee will refer any such report to the Judicial Committee who may require the player against whom the allegation was made to appear before that committee to show cause as to why the person in question should not be disqualified, suspended, fined or otherwise dealt with.

8. JUDICIAL PROCESS

8.1. Judicial Hearing

- a) Judicial hearings for both on-field and off-field misconduct will be held at the MRL Office, Sport Manawatu, 50 Queen Street, Palmerston North on the Wednesday evening following the game.
- b) If for any reason the Judicial Committee are unable to convene a hearing the week following the incident, an alternate date will be set. The Competition Manager will notify all parties of the change in date.
- c) Any offence that requires mandatory attendance or the alleged offender decides to challenge the accusation(s) and/or protest is permitted to bring a support person to the hearing.
- d) The hearing must be conducted by the Judicial Committee in a manner which gives all parties the opportunity to present all relevant arguments and to answer any arguments raised by the other parties concerned.
- e) Any person required to attend a Judicial Committee meeting to answer any allegation against him/her shall be read the written report received, and be given the opportunity to reply to the allegation.
- f) In any proceedings before the Judicial Committee, the appellant, party bringing the dispute or party bringing disciplinary proceedings as appropriate, bears the onus of proof.
- g) In the case of Schoolboys players, the Committee must allow an advocate to speak, in place of or in addition to the player, if requested by the player. If a player requests the opportunity to present further evidence, they may request an adjournment. If the case is adjourned, the player will stand down from all play until the player reappears. At the conclusion of a Judicial Committee hearing on any allegation, a player shall be allowed an advocate to speak on his/her character/record.
- h) The Judicial Committee may disqualify, suspend, fine or otherwise deal with persons in its absolute discretion after conducting a hearing as set out in these rules, provided that it adheres to any maximum limit of penalty otherwise imposed in the rules.
- i) The Judicial Committee will deliver a written decision, if appropriate preceded by an oral decision, and that decision will be final and binding on all parties.
- j) Failure to attend any meeting or being unable to be contacted by either telephone or any other mode of communication will render the person suspended from all Rugby League activities until such time as they appear at a meeting of the Judicial Committee. The Judicial Committee shall have the power to waive a suspension pending an appearance, if it believes it to be warranted.

8.2. Early Guilty Plea Option

- a) The player or team official that has been called to hearing by the Competition Manager may elect for an early guilty plea. An early plea is seen favourably and will the possible penalty will be reduced by half as per the table below.

Offence	Mandatory Penalty (suspension)	Early Guilty Plea
Tripping	2 Weeks	1 Week
Kicking	6 Weeks	3 Weeks
Striking	6 Weeks	3 Weeks
Head High Tackle	4 Weeks	2 Weeks
Dangerous Tackle	2 Weeks	1 Week
Dangerous Throw	6 Weeks	3 Weeks
Dropping Knees	4 Weeks	2 Weeks
Offensive Language	2 Weeks	1 Week
Spitting	4 Weeks	2 Weeks
Biting	8 Weeks	4 Weeks
Referee / Match Official Abuse	8 Weeks	4 Weeks
Entering Field of Play	8 Weeks	4 Weeks
Called-off Game	Mandatory Judicial Attendance	
Bringing game into disrepute charge	Mandatory Judicial Attendance	
Citings (Inclusive of any misconduct not seen by Match Officials)	Mandatory Judicial Attendance	
Second offence or more in a playing season	Mandatory Judicial Attendance	
Side-line Eviction	Mandatory Judicial Attendance	

- b) Should any accused person(s) choose to contest the allegation, they will be required to attend the Judicial Hearing. Any evidence (video footage, sound recordings, photos) are to be made available to both parties (accuser and offender) if being used as evidence. Any witnesses may be accepted at the discretion of the Judicial Committee.
- c) The Judicial Committee have the ability to impose higher penalties should the incident warrant it.

8. APPEALS

Any member of the Manawatu Rugby League who has been suspended or disqualified by the Senior or Junior Committees shall have a right of appeal to the Board of Directors. Any appeal must be lodged within 48 hours of the decision being reached and received in writing by the suspended person. A fee of \$100.00 must accompany any appeal and shall be forfeited if unsuccessful

Judicial Appeals

Any person found guilty by the Judicial Committee of an offence shall have the right of appeal to the Board of Directors designated Appeals Committee. Any such appeal must be lodged with the MRL General Manager within 48 hours of the penalty being imposed. A fee of \$100.00 must accompany any appeal and shall be forfeited if unsuccessful. Any appeal lodged must state the reasons for the appeal.