



# **Age Dispensation Policy**

Last reviewed 23 March 2017.

***AFL NSW/ACT's policy is that age dispensations will only be granted in cases of disability, subject to the provisions of the relevant By-laws/Rules.***

***All dispensations require the prior approval of the appropriate League.***

## **WHAT IS A DISABILITY**

The definition of "disability" in the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological, and
- Learning disabilities, as well as
- Physical disfigurement, and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

## **TYPES OF DISABILITIES**

Types of disabilities include, but are not limited to:

### **PHYSICAL**

#### **Amputee**

Amputee refers to a person who has lost a limb, part of a limb or more than one limb. A limb may be lost through an accident, disease or by a congenital birth deformity.

#### **Cerebral Palsy**

Cerebral Palsy is a non-progressive disability caused by damage to a part of the brain that controls physical movement so that normal, smooth muscle movement does not or may not always occur.

It can vary from a mild to moderate form, hardly noticed at all, affecting one or two limbs, to severe forms affecting the whole body posture

#### **Wheelchair**

People use wheelchairs for many reasons. The more common users are those participants with;

- spinal injury – injury to the spinal chord
- spinal bifida – cause by a combination of genetic and environmental factors
- muscular dystrophy – disability that causes gradual wasting if muscle with weakness
- cerebral palsy
- double leg amputations

#### **Transplant**

A transplant occurs when a healthy human organ is used to replace a diseased or seriously affected organ in a recipient human being. Organise most often involved in transplant surgery are the heart, kidney, liver and lungs. Medical considerations and restrictions would dictate normal and sporting activity within certain limitations

## **Acquired Brain Injury**

Acquired brain injury (ABI) is brain damage caused by events after birth, rather than as part of a genetic or congenital disorder. ABI can result in cognitive, physical, emotional, or behavioural impairments that lead to permanent or temporary changes in functioning

## **Down Syndrome**

Down syndrome is a chromosomal condition caused by the presence of all or part of an extra 21st chromosome. Often Down syndrome is associated with a delay in cognitive ability and physical growth, and a particular set of facial characteristics.

## **Cystic Fibrosis**

Cystic fibrosis (also known as CF or mucoviscidosis) is an autosomal recessive genetic disorder affecting most critically the lungs, and also the pancreas, liver, and intestine.

# **NEUROLOGICAL**

## **Epilepsy**

Epilepsy is a common and diverse set of chronic neurological disorders characterized by seizures. Epileptic seizures result from abnormal, excessive or hypersynchronous neuronal activity in the brain.

## **Motor Neurone Disease**

Motor neurone diseases are a group of neurological disorders that selectively affect motor neurones, the cells that control voluntary muscle activity including speaking, walking, breathing, swallowing and general movement of the body. They are generally progressive in nature, and can cause progressive disability and death.

## **Autism**

Autism is a disorder of neural development characterized by impaired social interaction and communication, and by restricted and repetitive behaviour. Autism affects information processing in the brain by altering how nerve cells and their synapses connect and organize; how this occurs is not well understood. It is one of three recognized disorders in the autism spectrum (ASDs), the other two being Asperger syndrome, which lacks delays in cognitive development and language, and pervasive developmental disorder, not otherwise specified (commonly abbreviated as PDD-NOS), which is diagnosed when the full set of criteria for autism or Asperger syndrome are not met

# **INTELLECTUAL**

An intellectual disability is determined when the intellectual capacity of a person is affected and their ability to perform certain tasks with understanding impaired.

The level of disability can be mild, moderate, severe and profound.

## SENSORY

### Deaf/Hard of Hearing

The inability to hear can be partial or complete. Some degree of hearing loss is a common disability and can affect one in twenty adults.

There are different types of deafness;

Conduction Deafness	Prevents sound waves being transmitted to the inner ear
Congenital Deafness	Born deaf
Nerve Deafness	Affects the sections of the brain that are responsible for hearing. E.g. Damage to the cochlea, meningitis and head injuries

### Blind/Vision Impaired

Light involves both visual acuity and visual field. People with visual acuity in both eyes of less than 6/60 which cannot be improved by glasses are considered legally blind in Australia.

## OTHER

### Les Autres

The word "les autres" literally means "the others". It encompasses those participants who do not fit into other disability categories but can demonstrate a locomotive disability, either from birth or from an accident, whether it be degenerative or stable.

*Definitions sourced from "NSW Department of Sport and Recreation."*

### Physical Size and Development (Underweight)

A Player whose Body Mass Index for a Player of their age is under the 5<sup>th</sup> percentile (underweight) is considered, for the purposes of this Policy, to have a disability.

### Disabilities do not include:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Multiple Sclerosis