



NETBALL

UMPIRE HANDBOOK

2026

Introduction

Umpiring is an integral part of our game. Umpires provide the opportunity for everyone to play the game in a safe, fair and enjoyable environment. Everyone has a role in ensuring that we create a culture within the MCDFNL where our umpires are a respected part of our netball community.

The role of the MCDFNL Umpire Convenor is to provide leadership in umpiring and support the umpires and clubs in the competition. In addition, the Convenor is a resource to the clubs to assist them in their endeavours to develop their umpires. The Convenor can support the clubs in the development of umpires and provide information to umpires on the pathways that are available to them.

This handbook includes a number of guidelines for Clubs to follow, some of which are linked to MCDFNL Netball ByLaws. Clubs that do not actively engage with and follow the ByLaws and these guidelines may face sanctions from the MCDFNL. **Clubs must be familiar with the MCDFNL ByLaw 77 related to netball umpiring.**

Dress Code & Equipment for Umpires

A neatly presented umpire looks professional and in control of the game. The MCDFNL has a range of umpire apparel that can be purchased from our online store. It is not compulsory to wear the MCDFNL uniform; however, it is compulsory for umpires to be dressed appropriately.

Appropriate uniform must be white/cream or black in colour and may include:

- Shorts
- Skirt or dress
- Polo, tee-shirt or long-sleeve shirt
- Skins, leggings or tracksuit pants (3/4 length or full length only)
- Jumper or vest
- Wet weather jacket

Any umpire that officiates a C, B or A grade match **MUST** wear a shirt with the WorkSafe branding.

The following items are **NOT** permitted:

- Club uniform (dresses, shorts polos, jackets or jumpers)
- Short bike shorts or cropped shorts (e.g. booty shorts)
- Logos or colour blocks/patterns on tights or leggings



MCDFNL UMPIRES RANGE:



MCFNL Women's Umpire Polo Shirt
\$ 42.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Short
\$ 31.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Skort
\$ 40.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Jacket
\$ 75.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Vest
\$ 55.00 AUD



MCFNL Men's Umpire Polo Shirt
\$ 42.00 AUD



MCFNL Men's Umpire Short
\$ 31.00 AUD



MCFNL Men's Umpire Jacket
\$ 75.00 AUD



MCFNL Men's Umpire Vest
\$ 55.00 AUD



MCFNL Men's Umpire Black Short
\$ 31.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Black Short
\$ 31.00 AUD



MCFNL Women's Umpire Black Skort
\$ 40.00 AUD

Umpires that fail to comply with ByLaw 77.2 (uniform) will incur the following penalties

1. Written Warning
2. Fine \$50
3. Fine \$100

Each umpire is responsible for bringing their own equipment to the game. At a minimum, they will need a whistle, a rule book, and a hairband to keep track of the centre pass.

Rule books can be downloaded as an App (INF Rules) or from the Netball Australia Website for free.

The MCDFNL recommends ACME Thunderer whistles. They are loud, crisp and clear and also last for a long time, so well worth the investment

LINK: <https://www.shop.s-trend.com.au/collections/maryborough-castlemaine-football-netball-league>

Umpire Development

Clubs are responsible for providing umpires who are of a suitable standard for the teams they enter into the competition. The MCDNFL can support the clubs in the development of umpires and provide information to umpires on the pathways that are available to them.

The badging program is a resource available to Clubs to assist in developing their umpires.

Umpire Mentor Guidelines

The MCDNFL encourages Clubs to take a pro-active approach to umpire development by providing support to learning umpires through assistance from senior umpire mentors. The role of mentors makes it a safer and more enjoyable experience for anyone learning to umpire netball.

There are a few key points that umpire mentors across the League need to be aware of in relation to the level of support and assistance they can provide. *It is *recommended*, but not a requirement, that an umpire mentor holds a National Umpire Badge to mentor learning umpires. Training opportunities are available through the MCDNFL and the Netball Learning website.

Umpire Mentors should:

- Be easily identifiable (e.g. wearing something white such as a jumper or coat).
- Introduce themselves to the other umpire prior to the game as a mentor
- Ideally, not have to follow the mentee umpire officiating the game along the side/goal line but can position close to the court so they can communicate if required
- Ensure that mentee umpires wear a training bib (where possible)
- Not carry a whistle – your learning umpires should be skilled enough and capable of umpiring the game without any assistance
- Not interrupt, interfere or over-rule decisions made (or missed) by the controlling umpires during the game.
- Speak with the mentee during the breaks and provide them with feedback, advice, and encouragement
- Be mindful of the skill level of the other umpire and not provide unwanted or unsolicited advice
- Be suitably confident and capable to mentor a learning umpire (e.g. regularly umpiring senior grades – a badge is not essential, but recommended)

The MCDNFL advises Clubs that while our junior competition (11 & Under and 13 & Under) provides a good opportunity for learning umpires to develop their skills, it is important to ensure that learning umpires are confident enough to control the game without assistance.

If learning umpires are not confident enough to blow the whistle, control centre passes and have basic knowledge of the rules – it is advised that they continue to practise with a mentor on training nights.

Mentee umpires wearing training bibs are not to be approached by club officials, coaches or spectators, and mentors should support umpires if there is an approach to learning umpires (please see guidelines for the use of training bibs). It is also recommended that ALL umpires complete the Rules of Netball Theory Exam and the Foundation Umpire Course (both accessible via Netball Learning).



Netball Victoria - Do's and Don'ts of being a Good Mentor on Court:

DO:

Be encouraging

Be present for the whole game

Give constructive feedback

Stand at different points of the court at different stages of the game to assist with positioning

DONT:

Run behind the umpire the whole time

Take your whistle onto the court

Tell the learning umpire what calls to make

Make decisions for them

Overload them with too much information

Expect perfection

Guidelines for the use of Umpire Training Bibs

As part of the MCDFNL's umpire development program, we are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and enjoyable experience for all umpires – from beginners to experienced umpires. The MCDFNL supports and encourages all clubs to use UMPIRE TRAINING BIBS for all learning and trainee umpires.

The purpose of the training bib is to:

- Make trainee umpires easily identifiable and recognisable to players, coaches, officials and spectators.
- Create awareness around the trainee umpires skill level, knowledge and an understanding of the rules and application of the rules.
- Provide trainee umpires with a level of protection from negative commentary, feedback or unsolicited advice and help them feel safe in their role as a learning umpire.
- Ensure that the trainee umpire is supported by a suitable umpire mentor*.
- Ensure that club officials, coaches or delegates do not approach trainee umpires. The mentor should make themselves available to talk with club officials etc., if required.



The bib is not compulsory for learning umpires to wear. If they choose to wear the bib, they will be accompanied by a senior umpire mentor at each game. Clubs must ensure that a mentor is court-side with any learning umpire wearing a bib and not left to umpire on their own. Please refer to the **Netball Umpire Mentors Guidelines** for further information regarding the role of mentors.

CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

Clubs play an important role in ensuring that these guidelines are followed by:

- Providing trainee umpires with the option to wear the training bib for as long as they choose (training bibs are available to purchase from www.thenetballshop.com.au)
- Providing a suitable umpire mentor each week to support the trainee
- Ensuring club officials, umpires, coaches, parents, and spectators are respectful (i.e. in accordance with Codes of Conduct) towards all trainee umpires and refrain from using inappropriate, negative or disrespectful language anywhere around the netball court area
- Reprimanding and, if necessary, removing anyone acting outside these guidelines and the Club/MCDFNL/Netball Victoria Codes of Conduct.

TRAINEE UMPIRE RESPONSIBILITIES

While the training bib is a tool to help trainee umpires feel more confident and safe while they are learning to umpire, they should be committed and prepared to develop their knowledge, understanding and practical application of the rules by:

- Completing the Rules of Netball Theory Exam
- Completing Foundations of Netball Course
- Attending other training events (as run by Netball Victoria in partnership with the MCDFNL and other Leagues/Associations)
- Actively seek feedback and advice from both Club and League Mentors regularly.

The Green Band program

Netball Victoria is introducing the 'Green Band' program to better support umpires under the age of 18.

The aim of this initiative is to create a safer, more supportive environment, with players, coaches and spectators able to identify and have more empathy and respect for the upcoming umpires learning their craft.

Child Safe Standard 3 clearly states that children and young people should be empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

All clubs will be provided with a supply of green wristbands that can be given to umpires under the age of 18. Clubs are reminded to support implementation of this program by monitoring coach, player and spectator behaviour.

In the MCDFNL, training bibs and green bands can be implemented separately or in-conjunction. Clubs wishing to still use the training bibs are encouraged to do so for beginner or very new learning umpires.



MCDFNL Endorsed Testers Panel

The MCDNFL has a small panel of senior umpires who can assist in mentoring, assessing, and badge testing. The Endorsed Testers Panel are available to provide one-on-one feedback or assessment, as required. Please note mentors are typically associated with a club, so they may only be available to assist when they don't have club commitments.

Testing panels will be arranged by the MCDNFL Umpire Co-ordinators. Panels will be allocated according to the Netball Victoria required badge levels. Club umpire mentors that are also on the NV endorsed tester list will not be allowed to test on their own umpire testing candidates.

Umpire Badging Pathway

The MCDNFL is committed to developing umpires and supporting them to achieve National Badges. There is a process to follow regarding badging, and Clubs are urged to assist the Mentor Panel by ensuring potential badge candidates are as prepared as possible.

National C Badge Process

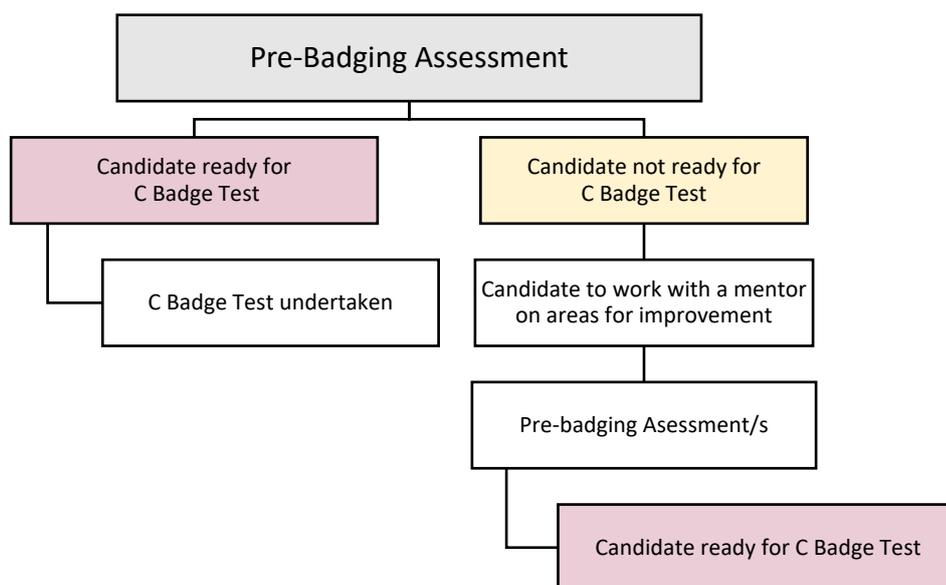
The National C Badge can be awarded within the MCDNFL. A Badge assessment can be undertaken by a testing panel with a National A or B Badge and a National C Badge Endorsed Tester. The MCDNFL tests C badge candidates on 17&Under, C Grade matches or B Grade matches.

Clubs that have a candidate they would like to be considered for a National C Badge:

1. Must ensure a candidate has a mentor within the Club that can assist with their development
2. Has completed the Rules of Netball Theory Exam and the Foundations of Umpiring Course
3. Can confidently umpire an 17&Under, C Grade or B Grade game
4. Undertakes a 'pre-badging assessment' with a *current endorsed Netball Victoria tester* to determine whether a candidate is ready for formal badge assessment
5. Follow through with any feedback from the assessor/assessing panel
6. Make themselves available for a badge assessment with \$30 to pay for the badge if they are successful.



Badging Assessment Process – C Badge



National B Badge Process

A National B Badge test can only be undertaken within the MCDFNL on an A-Grade match with a testing panel including a National A Badge and a National B Badge-endorsed tester. Candidates wishing to be considered for a National B badge need to be regularly umpiring A Grade matches and undertake higher-level coaching and mentoring as often as possible (including travelling outside the League for pre-assessments by National A & B endorsed testers and mentors). National B Badge candidates cannot have regular mentors on their testing panel.

Speak with MCDFNL Umpire Coordinator about pathways for development for the National B Badge.

B Badge candidates must complete the Rules In Action workshop, run by Netball Victoria as a pre-requisite course.

Learn more about the Umpires Code of Behaviour or the National Umpire Development Framework.

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Umpire Match Officiation

Under MCDNFL Netball ByLaw 77.6:

Umpires are not to umpire more than two (2) games in one day. 11&U, 13&U do not count as part of the two games. However, an umpire cannot officiate more than two consecutive games.

Despite 11&U and 13&U not being included in the ByLaw, it is **NOT RECOMMENDED** that umpires officiate four games in one day as the mental and physical load may be too much.

Examples explained:

UMPIRES CAN UMPIRE MATCHES	UMPIRES CANNOT UMPIRE MATCHES
11&U, 13&U and 17&U (as there is a break between games)	11&U, 13&U and 15&U (as there is no break between games)
11&U and/or 13&U, 17&U and/or C or B or A	13&U, 15&U and 17&U
13&U and/or 17U, and/C or B or A	17&U, C and B or 15&U, 17&U and C
Umpire – Umpire – Play Umpire C, Umpire B, Play A Umpire 17&U, Umpire C, Play B or A	Umpire – play – Umpire consecutively Umpire C, Play B, Umpire A Umpire 17&U, play C, Umpire

