



NZTFI Age Grade Eligibility Policy

Updated October 14th 2022 Effective Immediately

Policy Review

This policy may be reviewed by NZTFI when necessary at the end of the current season.

Background

As with many sports, tag football involves an element of risk to the physical wellbeing of participants. NZTFI is committed to making the game as safe as we practically can for participants, ensuring they continue to enjoy playing tag football and have a lifelong love of the game.

Players need to be supported with policies and processes to ensure their safety and the safety of their opponents without unnecessarily limiting their ability to play. In some provinces, particularly in small schools, small towns and rural areas with smaller populations, the depth of the player base may warrant players playing with older cohorts than their current age, where it is safe for them to do so.

This policy is developed with consideration of the New Zealand context, and takes into account Sport NZ guidelines to ensure player safety is the primary focus when considering players being approved to play outside their normal playing cohort. The policy recognizes the difference in physical, mental, and emotional maturation of players across age and stage.

Policy

This NZTFI policy outlines the criteria for participant eligibility within age grades at all NZTFI tournaments and events.

This incorporates Junior, Youth, Open, Senior and Masters Age Group Division.

This policy supersedes all previous Age Grade Eligibility Policies and is effective from 16th September 2022.



Juniors & Youth Age Grades

A player participating in a Junior or Youth Age Grade Team must be **under** the age, or younger by 31st December of the first year of the split - year season (i.e. for the 2020 - 21 season, the eligibility date will be 31st December 2020).

Masters Age Grades

A player participating in a Masters Age Grade Team must be **of the** age, or **over** the age, by 31st December of the second year of the split - year season (i.e. for the 2020 - 21 season, the eligibility date will be 31st December 2021). Eg. You can be 29 years old in 2020 and play at Nationals in March 2020 in the Over 30s grade and turn 30 in December 2020.

Policy Application

1. This policy is to be applied in all affiliated competitions, any NZTFI sanctioned event or tournament and any affiliated representative team.

Players attending a NZTFI tournament will be required to provide proof of their age through the production of a photo driver's licence, passport or birth certificate. This policy applies to all players up to the age of 18 years old on the 1st of January of the year in question.

The term 'age window' is defined as the year that caters for any particular playing cohort. This is typically defined by defining grades by age such as U11 years or U19 years. For the purposes of this policy, focus should remain on the age of the respective playing cohort rather than the grade description. To clarify, the absence of an age grade at a level within a competition structures does not mean that players can be automatically considered for the next available age grade.

Players may play within the following 'windows' by age and gender:

Males and Females Up to age 12 years old should play within the following age windows:

- Best Practice – Within same age window ie a 10 year old with other 10 year olds.
- Acceptable Practice – within two-year age window ie a 10 year old with 12 year olds.
- Exceptional Circumstance Case – within three year age window ie a 10 year old with 13 year olds. (this is not encouraged and will be reviewed by NZTFI for individual exceptional cases only).





Males and females between 13 and 18 years of age should play within the following age windows:

- Best Practice – Within same age window ie a 13 year old with other 13 year olds.
- Acceptable Practice – up to a two-year age window ie a 13 year old with 14 or 15 year olds.
- Exceptional Circumstance Case – within three-year age window ie 13 year old with 16 year olds. (this is not encouraged and will be reviewed by NZTFI for individual exceptional cases only).

19+ grades up to Open grade

Males and Females should play within the following age windows:

- Best Practice – Within same age window ie a 19 year old with other 19 year olds.
- Acceptable Practice – up to a two-year age window
- Exceptional Circumstance Case – within three year age window . (this is not encouraged and will be reviewed by NZTFI for individual exceptional cases only).

Open grades (minimum age 18+)

Males and Females should play within the following age windows:

- Best/Acceptable Practice – Within same age window ie a 18+ year old with other 18+ year old.
- Exceptional Circumstance Case - ie 17 year old. (this is not encouraged and will be reviewed by NZTFI for individual exceptional cases only).

Players wishing to play in age windows that qualify as Exceptional Circumstance Case for their respective age and gender are required to complete a NZTFI dispensation Assessment form before being cleared to play in the desired grade or competition.

NZTFI National Development Officer will review, assess, approve or decline Exceptional Circumstances Case Assessments in accordance with this policy and their duty of care to all players.

Request for Policy Dispensation

1. Any changes to the administration of this policy by any module, region, heritage nation affiliated to NZTFI must be requested, in writing, through the NZTFI Board.
2. This request must clearly outline the reasons for the submission and must be supported by the module, region, heritage nation associations.
3. Any decision to move away from this policy will be decided by the National Development Officer after consultation with the NZTFI board and Tournament Directors.
4. All outcomes of these decisions will be advised to the module, region, contingent in writing, through the NZTFI Board.

NZTFI Age Grade Eligibility Policy 2020 (amended September 16th 2022)

New Zealand Tag Football Incorporated, PO Box 19636 Avondale 1746 Auckland
New Zealand email: info@nztagfootball.co.nz Website: www.nztagfootball.co.nz



New Zealand Tag Football Inc



@nztfi



@nztfi

