



St James Netball Club

FILL-IN POLICY

At times fill-in players will be required due to illness, injury or absence.

The aim is for all teams to be able to take to the court, with this policy designed to achieve an outcome that balances fairness for all teams and players, protection of the wellbeing of players, and alignment with Melbourne East Netball Association (MENA) policies, while being manageable for SJNC coaches and Team Managers (TMs) in the given circumstances.

1.SCOPE

The St. James Netball Club Fill-In Policy applies to all competitive games played for St. James Netball Club. This policy is also suggested as a useful guide for non-competitive games played for the Club.

2.WHEN CAN A FILL-IN BE USED?

- Use of fill-ins should ideally be limited to those situations where a team has less than 7 players available.
- Where specific circumstances warrant fill-ins that take a team beyond 7 players (e.g., qualifying for finals, injury concerns etc.), please refer to section 5 regarding court time.

3.WHO CAN BE USED AS A FILL IN?

- SJNC strongly encourages the use of registered SJNC players when sourcing fill-ins.
 - Players from other Associations are only to be utilised when all reasonable steps have been taken to source a St. James Netball Club fill-in. The Committee must be advised prior to play.
- All fill-ins must either be financial members of St. James Netball Club or purchase a single game pass as per MENA policy. Team Managers must ensure that all players have NV Membership (insurance) prior to play.
- Fill-in players are to be sourced from a team registered in a lower section of the same age group or the age group below.
 - MENA By Laws (5.1.4) prohibit players from playing more than one group above their age. If warranted by specific circumstances, both the St. James Netball Club Committee and MENA Convenor/Committee must be informed and give approval.
- Fill-in players are to be sourced from a team playing at an earlier time slot. Where unavoidable, the coaches of both teams and the player must agree that this is acceptable.
- *It is very important to be aware that once a player takes to the court for a fifth game with a given team, they officially become registered to that team (and no longer belong to their original team for the remainder of that season, including finals).*

Specific rules apply for Open age teams:

- Open team fill-ins must 15 years of age prior to 31st December of the year playing as per MENA By-Laws 5.1.6.
- A fill in player may be sourced from lower section Open teams playing at a different time.

4.PROCESS FOR ORGANISING A FILL-IN PLAYER

It is acknowledged that the amount of notice provided to Coaches/Team Managers may influence ability to follow the optimal process for sourcing a fill-in.

a) PLANNED ABSENCE (notice of 24 hours or more)

Where there is advance notice provided to the Coach and/or TM (24 hours or more):

- The primary Coach is to approach the coach of the team from which a fill-in is being sourced.
- Consideration is to be given to capability, position, commitment, attitude, fairness, and the importance of the result of the game (e.g., possibility of making finals).
- Consent to fill-in must be obtained from the player and a parent/guardian if the fill-in is under the age of 18.
- Coaches are to make the final decision.
- Any fill-in players details must be recorded on the scoresheet, as per MENA Club Competition rules.
- Where a team requires a fill-in for an extended period, coaches of both teams should seek an outcome that balances the need for consistency within both teams, and fairness/sharing of the opportunity.

b) UNPLANNED/EMERGENCY ABSENCE (less than 24 hours' notice)

Where a fill-in is required at short notice (less than 24 hours), coaches/TMs will make all reasonable efforts to follow the standard process (outlined in 4(a)). It is acknowledged that this will not always be possible where time is limited.

If a Coach is unavailable given the short notice period, Team Managers may act in their place.

In all instances, obtaining consent from the player and parent/guardian (if player aged under 18), recording of the fill-ins details on the scoresheet ensuring the fill-in is insured are mandatory.

5. COURT TIME

- Where, for specific circumstances, a fill-in player is required to fill a team beyond 7 players, preference for court time will be given to the players registered to the team.
- St. James Netball Club encourages a minimum of one quarter of game time for any fill-in player.
- Any limit on court time must be communicated to and agreed on by the fill-in player and parent/guardian (where player is aged under 18) prior to the game.

6. QUALIFYING A FILL-IN PLAYER

In circumstances where a team would like to/needs to qualify a fill-in player for finals, the following procedure must be adhered to:

- The request must be made in writing (via email) to the St. James Netball Club Committee in advance of the player qualifying (i.e. in advance of their fifth game for that team).
- Both the fill-in player and parent/guardian (if player is aged under 18) must consent to the proposed move.
- Any intention to limit playing time during qualifying matches and finals must be communicated and agreed to by the Committee, player, and parent/guardian (if player aged under 18).
- The St. James Netball Club Committee will make the final decision regarding approval of the move and advise the coaches of both teams accordingly.
 - In general, the Committee will not approve a request if the fill-in player's own team will be playing in finals.
 - If a decision is required before the Committee is next able to meet, then the St. James Netball Club President and Vice President shall make and communicate the decision.