

North Shore Football Netball Club Statement

17 June 2026

The North Shore Football Netball Club wishes to address an incident that occurred following our senior football match against Leopold on Saturday, 13 June 2026.

Following a comprehensive internal review, the Club determined that the actions of a member of our senior coaching staff in approaching match officials after the game constituted a breach of the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct.

North Shore Football Netball Club regards any form of abuse, intimidation, or disrespect towards umpires, officials, volunteers, players, coaches, spectators, or members of the wider football and netball community as completely unacceptable.

Our Club has a long-standing commitment to fostering a positive, respectful and inclusive environment both on and off the field. The conduct displayed on this occasion fell well short of the standards we expect, and the Code of Conduct we follow, from anyone representing North Shore Football Netball Club.

As a result, the Club has taken immediate disciplinary action that reflects our responsibility to uphold the values of our Club, our obligations under AFL policies and codes of conduct, and our commitment to maintaining the integrity of our sport.

Respect for officials is fundamental to the continued success, growth and sustainability of community sport.

Importantly, this incident has provided an opportunity for reflection and education across our football program. North Shore Football Netball Club is committed to ensuring that the standards expected of our representatives are clearly understood and consistently demonstrated.

As part of our response, the Club has:

- Conducted a comprehensive internal review of the incident and the circumstances surrounding it;
- Met with senior football leadership to reinforce the standards of behaviour expected from all coaches, players and officials representing the Club;
- Commenced a process of education and re-engagement with senior football coaching staff, focusing on respect for umpires, emotional control in high-pressure situations, and positive sideline conduct;
- Reaffirmed the Club's commitment to the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct and the broader values of respect, sportsmanship and accountability; and
- Established ongoing measures to ensure coaches and team officials are supported in managing competitive and emotional environments in a manner consistent with Club and AFL Victoria expectations.

Club President Maryian Szponar said the Club was committed to addressing the matter openly and responsibly.

"While this incident does not reflect the values of our Club, it is our responsibility to address it decisively. We have taken immediate action, completed a thorough review, and are working closely with our coaching group to ensure the standards expected at North Shore are clearly understood and upheld. Respect for umpires and officials is non-negotiable, and we remain committed to fostering a positive environment for everyone involved in our game."

North Shore Football Netball Club acknowledges the impact incidents of this nature can have on umpires, participants, supporters, volunteers, sponsors and the broader football community. We extend our sincere apologies to the umpires involved and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our game.

We are committed to creating an environment where education, reflection and continuous improvement are prioritised. Our focus is on ensuring incidents of this nature do not occur again and that everyone associated with North Shore Football Netball Club understands the responsibility that comes with representing our Club.

Respect, integrity, accountability and sportsmanship remain at the heart of our culture, and we will continue to take proactive steps to uphold these values both on and off the field.

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