

## Postponement Instructions – updated Autumn 2020

The fundamental objective of these instructions is to maximise the use of available pitches, and completed fixtures at the earliest date, to avoid a backlog of fixtures, particularly in the restrictions imposed by COVID19.

To minimise the number of matches postponed due to pitch conditions and reduce the possibility of teams travelling to grounds only to find the pitch unplayable, the following procedure is to be followed. **Pro-activity** is the key to this procedure working successfully.

**Match confirmation minimum 3 days before.** When the match is confirmed, any doubts over whether the pitch will be playable should be raised with the opponent's secretary to see if a switch is available and will improve the chance of playing. If the switch is available the decision should be made and the league fixture secretary Malcolm Kershaw and referee notified, even if the teams have already played each other at that venue.

If a switch will not be possible, consult with Malcolm Kershaw to see if he can help with providing a ground.

The League had produced a list of ground owners, which will determine who has the authority to call a pitch off. (see doc on Landc website [www.landc.org.uk](http://www.landc.org.uk)), however at the moment it is a moving target, so it will not necessarily be 100% accurate. Please check. If the site provider has not called their pitch off, then it will be subject to a referee's inspection. All 3G pitches must be on the FA register.

<http://3g.thefa.me.uk/?countyfa=any>

All local authority websites will need to be checked on a Friday evening by the league, in addition to clubs getting the information themselves.

If the match is still due to be played on the original ground by the Saturday morning at 10AM, then clubs may not call a match off without a referee's or league representative pitch inspection. Ground issues are to be reported to the appointed referee and if not possible, Malcolm Kershaw, Brian Davies and Stephen Howard, who will if possible, find a referee to attend within the hour. If it is not possible to find a referee, the club representative should make the decision and take photos for evidence. If the game is to be postponed under these circumstances the decision of the club representative will be accepted.

**Clubs are not to stand players down until the inspection has taken place.**

The match referee on inspecting the pitch is ultimately the sole arbiter of whether a match will be played.

For reference the relevant League by laws in the Rules are below -

### Rule 20 (E) (i)

*By-Law : If the home team's ground is known to be unfit to play more than 4 hours before the kick off time, the fixture will be reversed if the away ground is available and the referee agrees. The fixtures secretary is to be informed of any changes. If it is within four hours of the kick off and the home club have not taken the opportunity to move to an alternative available ground then they will need to organise a referee to inspect their pitch before calling off a match. If extra expense is incurred by the clubs it will be re-imbursed by the league.*

### Rule 20 (E) (iii)

Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture or where a Competition Match has been postponed for any reason must, without delay, give notice to the (Fixtures) Secretary, the Competition Referees Appointments Secretary, the secretary of the opposing Club and the Match Officials.

*By-Law : The Management Committee shall require a written explanation within 48 hours for a failure to fulfil offence. The discipline committee has discretion to tailor the sanctions accordingly to each individual case, however the default sanctions are –*

*In each season, in every case the match will be awarded to the opposition and 3 points will be deducted. For the first failure to fulfil offence the fine will be £50, for the second the fine will be £75, and a warning to the club that the offending team may face expulsion from the League for a third offence. For a third offence the fine will be £100. The team will also be subject to expulsion from the League by the Management Committee.*

Cup Rule 3c.

Should a match be postponed, the fixture will be rescheduled on the original ground, at a 3G venue, or at the away club's ground at the sole discretion of the fixtures secretary. When the fixtures secretary arranges an alternate venue, it will be paid for by the competition