



Title: Zone Defence Rule for U/8, U/10, U/12 and U/14

Owner: Junior Competition Administrator

Authorised: Manager

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**Purpose:**

Waverley Basketball Association is committed to providing junior clubs with the best possible domestic basketball competition. This document outlines the definition of zone defence and rules surrounding whether a team is permitted to play zone defence or not.

This document aims to reduce the complaints of teams illegally playing zone defence.

**Who is Zone Defence policy for:**

The zone defence rule is for junior club head coaches, coaches, and those club members involved in managing teams.

**Application of the Zone Defence Rule:**

No team is permitted to play zone defence in U8 - U14 competitions. Junior Coaches are not allowed to instruct their team to play zone and must play "Man to Man" defence using correct "Man to Man" defensive principles.

When the [Mercy Rule](#) is in play, teams must still play "Man to Man" defense within the 3-point line of their defensive end.

The only exception is when a team has no substitutions for the entire game; in the second half, the team without any substitutions can adopt any defence they choose whilst the opposition must remain playing the "Man to Man" defence.

**How it works:**

At no stage are coaches permitted to instruct their team to play zone, and they must play "Man to Man" defence using correct "Man to Man" defensive principles.

If a coach hasn't instructed their team to play a zone, but their team is playing a zone outside of their instructions, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure their team plays "Man to Man" defence. There will be no excuses for failing to play "Man to Man" as the coach has the power to remove offending players from the court if they are not playing the correct "Man to Man" defence.

The team manager, a team representative nominated by the coach or a club representative will seek out the venue supervisor to indicate that a team is potentially playing zone defence.

The venue/referee supervisor will determine violations of the "No Zone Rule" by investigating one or more below points.

- One or more players were not in an acceptable "Man to Man" defensive position in relation to the player they are guarding and the player with the ball.
- A cutter moved all the way through the key and was not defended using acceptable 'Man to Man' defensive techniques.
- Following a trapping or help and recover situation, the team made no attempt to re-establish correct 'Man to Man' defensive positioning.
- The team zone pressed and did not assume 'Man to Man' defensive positioning once the ball had been advanced into the offensive half court

### **Penalties to applied:**

Penalties to be applied at the discretion of the venue supervisor:

First Offence	Coach to receive a formal warning from the venue supervisor.	Application: Immediately
Second Offence	The team will incur a penalty of two (2) shots and possession to the opposing team at the half court.	Application: Immediately Supervisor ensures the referee stops and applies the penalty, and the Supervisor advises the coach on the reason for the stoppage of play
Third offence	The team will incur a penalty of two (2) shots and possession to the opposing team at the half court, and the coach receives a 'bench' technical foul recorded against their name	Application: Immediately Supervisor gets the referee to stop and apply the penalty
Fourth offence	The team will incur a penalty of two (2) shots and possession to the opposing team at the half court, and the coach receives a second bench technical foul recorded. Supervisor to log the team name for Junior Competitions Administrator to follow with the club to assist the coach in understanding the rule	Application: Immediately Supervisor gets the referee to stop and apply the penalty
Fifth Offence	The team will incur a penalty of two (2) shots and possession to the opposing team at the half court. The coach receives a third bench technical foul and is to be removed from the game, and the venue supervisor logs a game report. The Junior Competitions Administrator will follow up with the club to assist the coach on game day.	Application: Immediately Supervisor gets the referee to stop and apply the penalty, and the Supervisor advises the coach on the reason behind the stoppage and escorts the coach from the stadium
Further breaches	Future breaches will result in the coach reported and receiving:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three-game suspension for the first offence</li> <li>• Six-game suspension for the second offence</li> <li>• Season suspension for a third offence</li> </ul>	
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Note: Any 'bench' technical fouls administered as a result of this 'No Zone Policy' will be applied in line with the following FIBA rules, which govern technical fouls on a coach or bench personnel;

*A head coach shall be disqualified for the remainder of the game (game disqualification) when:*

- *He is charged with two technical fouls ('C') as a result of their personal unsportsmanlike behaviour.*
- *He is charged with three technical fouls, either all of them ('B') or one of them ('C'), due to the unsportsmanlike behaviour of other persons permitted to sit on the team bench.*

## Video Review Process and Result Reversal (Finals Only)

In finals matches only, WBA provides a formal Video Review Process to support the enforcement of the Zone Defence Rule, where serious breaches may have occurred that were not adequately addressed during the game.

### Eligibility and Scope

- **Video reviews are only available for finals matches.**
- Requests must be based on alleged **repeated and deliberate breaches** of the "No Zone Defence" policy.

### Review Request Requirements

A club may submit a request for video review only if the following conditions are met:

- The request is submitted in writing by the club delegate to the Junior Competition Administrator within **48 hours** of the match conclusion.
- The request includes **clear, timestamped video evidence** showing specific incidents where zone defence was employed.
- The complaint **must demonstrate that the venue supervisor was approached during the match**, in accordance with the normal procedure outlined in this policy.

**Important:** Any review request that **does not first involve the venue supervisor during the game** will be **automatically rejected**. This process is not a replacement for in-game supervision and must only be used where proper in-game procedures were followed but insufficient action was taken.

### Review Process

- The **Junior Domestic Competition Manager**, in conjunction with relevant **WBA staff**, will assess the submitted footage.
- The decision will be based on whether there is **clear and repeated evidence** of zone defence in breach of the policy, as defined under the "How it works" section of this document.

## Outcomes

- If the coach is found guilty of instructing or permitting a zone defence:
  - **The result of the game may be overturned and recorded as a 20–0 forfeit loss** against the offending team.
  - The coach will also be considered to have committed a **Fifth Offence**, triggering the corresponding penalties.
- If the review is **inconclusive or the complaint is not upheld**, the original game result will stand and no penalties will apply.

## Fair Use Clause

- Clubs submitting **frivolous or unsupported claims** may face sanctions and may lose the ability to lodge future reviews.
- This process exists to support, not override, **on-site decisions by venue supervisors and referees**.

## What is a Zone Defense?

A Zone Defense is different from a Man-to-Man Defense in that instead of guarding a player, each defender is responsible for guarding an area of the court - or zone, and any offensive player that comes into that area.

Zone defenders move their position on the court (within their designated area) in relation to where the ball moves.

Zone Defenses can adopt a variety of player alignments, such as but not limited to the following;



The shaded zones in the diagrams above indicate the area each defender is designated to guard, as opposed to defending an individual player.

## Man-to-Man Defensive Principles:

The simplest definition of man-to-man defence is that every player guards the person they are assigned. When the basketball moves, every defensive player should move and adjust their position on the court according to the ball.

## **Man-to-Man Defense Positions**

In a Man-to-Man Defence, you can be in three positions on the court: on-ball defence, denial defence, and help defence.

### **1. On-Ball Defense**

The on-ball defender is responsible for guarding the basketball, and their role is to contain the ball handler and influence them towards the sideline and baseline.

### **2. Denial Defense**

Players in denial defence are one pass away from the basketball and in a denial stance to prevent any pass to their player.

The distance a denial player should be from their man will depend on their opponent's distance from the basketball. A good rule to follow is: close enough to close the distance and recover to guard your opponent if they are passed the ball.

### **3. Help Defense**

Help defence is any defender two or more passes away from the ball and the last line of your Man-to-Man Defense.

They must see the ball to know when to help, see their opponent in case their player moves, and recover and change defensive positions. The position of help defence depends on where the ball is on the court and where their opponent is on the court.

## **Disputes:**

Club delegate(s) is the primary interface to WBA for these rules. Any questions on its application or any other kind of feedback must be in writing via the approved club delegate(s). WBA reserves the right to dismiss any issues or questions not raised via the club delegate channel.

All correspondence to WBA on these rules from a club delegate(s) and its application must be in writing, clearly outlining the problem, question or clarification required.

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In respect of any dispute, the decision of WBA, shall be final.

## **Zone Defence Rule Updates**

The Zone Defence Rule may change from time to time and is available on WBA's website

## **Privacy Policy Complaints and Enquiries**

If you have any queries or complaints about our Privacy Policy, please contact:

[juniors@waverleybasketball.com](mailto:juniors@waverleybasketball.com)

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