



To all national football associations,  
and confederations

**Circular no. 20**

# **Temporary amendment to Law 3 – continuation**

Zurich, 15 July 2020  
SEC/2020-C357/bru

Dear Sir or Madam,

On 8 May, in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on football competitions worldwide, The IFAB approved FIFA's proposal to introduce a temporary amendment to **Law 3 – The Players**. As per Circular no. 19 (see enclosed), competitions – at that stage, specifically those scheduled to be completed in 2020 – were given the option of allowing teams to use a maximum of five substitutes in matches.

The main reason for the temporary amendment was the impact on player welfare of competitions being played in a condensed period and in different weather conditions.

The IFAB Board of Directors agreed to review whether to extend the option into 2021. That review, which included stakeholder feedback and an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on competition calendars, has shown that the initial reasons for the temporary amendment remain valid and the impact on player welfare is likely to continue into 2021 due to various factors, including:

- Some competitions that resumed in 2020 may have a shorter-than-usual recovery/preparation period before the start of their next season.
- For many competitions, the 2020/21 season will involve matches being played in a condensed period due to a delayed start and the inability to end later than usual because of major international tournaments.

Consequently, The IFAB Board of Directors has extended the optional temporary amendment to **Law 3 – The Players** for **competitions scheduled to be completed by 31 July 2021** and for **international competitions scheduled to take place in July/August 2021**.

There are no changes to the details of the temporary amendment, but The IFAB would like to remind all concerned that making substitutions at half-time does not count as using one of the three opportunities.

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