

Return to Play Guidance for Community Sport and Recreation Organisations

This guidance and template have been developed to assist State Sporting Associations (SSAs), National Sporting Organisations (NSO's) and peak sport and recreation bodies prepare a Return to Play plan. Return to Play plans can be adopted and implemented by leagues, associations and clubs.

The Return to Play plan is intended to assist organisations return safely to sport and recreation activities under the latest Stay at Home and [Restricted Activity Directions issued by the](#) Victorian Chief Health Officer and allows each organisation to consider their activities and the environment in which activities take place.

State Sporting Associations will be supported in preparing Return to Play plans consistent with the Stay at Home and Chief Health Officer's directions and this Community Sport and Recreation Guidance.

Sporting organisations will be responsible for developing and enforcing these Return to Play plans. Sport and Recreation Victoria can provide advice and support to organisations in the development of these, noting that those organisations are ultimately responsible for them.

Responses must:

- Align with the current Stay at Home and Restricted Activity Directions issued by the [Victorian Chief Health Officer](#)
- Provide complete responses and required supporting documentation
- Account for the current permitted level of sport or recreation activity in your plan, and identify how your plan will respond to changes in permitted levels of activity, whether that is community, competitive, non-competitive or recreation activities
- Ensure that activity resumption does not compromise the health of individuals or the community

In instances where you are unable to find your sport or recreation activity listed in the Resumption of Community Sport and Recreation activities list [[hyperlink](#)], you should refer to the Stay at Home and Restricted Activity Directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer. Note: recreation includes all outdoor recreation activities including outdoor education and adventure and the resumption of these activities will need to consider current Stay at Home and Restricted Activity Directions.

If you are an State Sporting Association, National Sporting Organisation or a peak sport and recreation body and have any additional questions about preparing your Return to Play plan you can email info@sport.vic.gov.au

All community sporting clubs, associations and leagues are encouraged to contact their SSAs or DHHS Infoline direct on 1800 675 398 for advice on compliance with the Restricted Activity Directions.

Important note: Return to Play plans should be updated in line with any updates to the Victorian Chief Health Officer Restricted Activity Directions.

From 13 May 2020, the Victorian Chief Health Officer has approved community sport and recreation activities can resume according to the following rules:

- Groups of up to 10 people outdoors (or people from the same household), plus a coach or the minimum number of support staff reasonably required to manage the activity

- Parents and guardians taking children to and from training activities are required to follow the Chief Health Officers’ Directions for public gatherings and maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres.
- If they remain with their children during participation in sport, will be considered part of the group up to 10 people, unless they are formally coaching or instructing the activity.
- No indoor activity – indoor physical recreation facilities must remain closed
- Maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres wherever reasonably possible
- All activity and training must be non-contact, and no competitions are to take place. Contact sports must be modified so that you can maintain 1.5m distance.
- No outside communal gym, playgrounds or skateparks can be used
- No outdoor or indoor swimming pools can be used
- No use of communal facilities, except for toilets
- If the activity is run by an operator of an indoor physical recreation facility (such as a gym, health club or fitness centre), a personal training facility (indoors or outdoors) or an arena or stadium, then the operator must keep a record of attendees including first name, phone number, date and time of attendance
- Shared equipment that touches the head of face or cannot be effectively cleaned should not be used i.e. soft materials, helmets or clothing
- Hand hygiene, frequent environmental cleaning & disinfection, use of own equipment where possible and minimise sharing of equipment

Return to Play Plan template

Organisation details

Provide organisation name, contact person, phone number, type of organisation, ABN, address.

Outline your Return to Play plan under the following headings:

- **Hygiene**

A pre-emptive low-cost intervention like enhanced hygiene measures of participants is key to reducing the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). Examples of personal hygiene measures that should be promoted include handwashing and covering mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve during coughing/sneezing. Advice on cleaning is available from the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) and the [Commonwealth Department of Health](#).

What infection control measures will you introduce to ensure all participants and spectators are maintaining personal hygiene?
How will personal hygiene and cleaning of facilities and equipment be maintained to minimise

transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)?

1.2 Have you increased regular cleaning schedules for common use areas? Yes/No

- **Physical contact activities**

Physical distancing decreases the risk of transmission by reducing incidence of contact with other persons through shaking hands, hugging or tackling. The Stay at Home Directions require that participants take reasonable steps to maintain 1.5m distance from all other people.

For activities that contain physical contact, or close interaction with other people, what protocols or modifications to activities can be implemented to ensure physical distancing is maintained?

- **Arrival and departure of participants, officials, parents or carers**

Physical distancing decreases the risk of transmission by reducing incidence of contact between people. [The Stay at Home Directions](#) currently limit gatherings of groups of people to reduce the risk of people spreading coronavirus (COVID-19). The control of facilities and management of areas where people might gather will reduce the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission.

What measures have you put in place for managing entry and exit points, separating assembly areas, adjustments to activity timings and maintaining physical distancing of people?

- **Spectators/gatherings**

[The Stay at Home Directions](#) currently limit gatherings to groups of 10 people to reduce the risk of people spreading coronavirus (COVID-19). Spectators, and other non-participants watching activities should not attend activities unless they have an essential role or they are parents and/or guardians. Public gathering limitations apply. Organisations should plan for activities without crowds to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

What protocols will be in place to restrict access to athletes and maintain recommended physical distancing?

- **Sharing equipment**

In combination with good hygiene practices, a similar pre-emptive measure is to promote behaviours such as not sharing drink bottles, towels, and limiting the shared use of equipment. Equipment that touches the head of face or cannot be effectively cleaned (for example, if made from soft materials or

clothing) should not be shared. Where sharing equipment cannot be avoided, equipment with smooth surfaces should be cleaned between sessions.

What modifications can be made to ensure there is no transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) through the sharing of equipment, contact with equipment and/or contact with any surfaces where participants may be at risk of infection?

**5.1 Do you have protocols in place for sports medicine staff who share medical equipment?
Yes/No**

- **Group/team activity**

[Restricted Activity Directions](#) and [Stay at Home Directions](#) currently limit gatherings to up to 10 people outdoors (plus a coach or the minimum number of support staff reasonably required to manage the activity) which impacts team or group activities.

For team activities, what protocols are in place to enable a staged return to activities of small groups (up to 10) in non-contact formats?

6.1 Are changes required to participant behaviour during sport activities in addition to no shaking hands and high fives? Yes/No

- **Indoor facilities (PLEASE NOTE THAT INDOOR ACTIVITY IS CURRENTLY PROHIBITED)**

The Restricted Activities Direction prohibits the use of indoor facilities such as club rooms, change rooms, and showers. Only toilets can remain open.

How will you ensure that indoor facilities, other than toilets, remains closed?

- **Travel**

To prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Stay at Home Direction restricts travel to participate in sport and recreation activities to day trips only.

How can your return to play plan ensure travel is minimised and participants stay in the local neighbourhoods and towns?

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- **High injury risk activity**

To reduce the strain on Victoria's health and emergency services, common sense should be used in avoiding activities that have a high risk of injury that may result in hospitalisation.

What measures are in place for high injury risk activities that may result in hospitalisation?

- **Protocols**

What protocols or processes are in place to ensure participants are free of coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms?
What protocols do you have in place for people who present to training with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever or respiratory symptoms such as cough, sore throat and shortness of breath)?
How will you coordinate and communicate and changes to the directions to your clubs, members and stakeholders?

- **Communication**

Communicating coronavirus (COVID-19) risk mitigation strategies to participants is vital. Setting and promoting expectations for required behaviours prior to recommencing activities will be crucial to ensuring activities are safe to return to and remain free of further restrictions. This includes communicating current restrictions, improved health literacy of participants and social distancing measures.

List the measures you will use to communicate and provide guidance to participants and clubs?

- **Do you have protocols to advise participants, officials and parents or carers to not attend if they are feeling unwell? Yes/No**

- **Do you have strategies to address non-compliance? Yes/No What are they?**