



SANFL & COMMUNITY FOOTBALL **RETURN TO PLAY** *COVID-Ready Response*

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INTRODUCTION

SANFL is committed to supporting our Clubs and Leagues navigate the challenges presented by COVID, and we will work closely with SA Health and other authorities on developing resources and information to help you to continue to run football safely for the community.

This document is designed to support Leagues and Clubs manage their football and venue operations, as well as provide insight into management of positive cases at your club or venue.

TIPS FOR COVIDSAFE PRE-SEASON

With heightened risk of COVID in the community, SANFL and SA Health recommend the following protocols are implemented, in conjunction with existing protocols:

- Run training sessions and team meetings outdoors
- Limit the time coming together in enclosed/inside areas to less than 15 minutes
- Wear masks when indoors (including in changerooms and coaches boxes), as well as where physical distancing is not possible
- Modify training to reduce touching (limit tackling/bumping drills), including no unnecessary touching such as handshaking, high-fives etc
- Consider small group training sessions and limit crossover between players and officials for higher risk sessions (ie: indoor sessions, gym, touching drills)
- Ensure players and officials are not unwell and encourage testing where appropriate
- Ensure anyone attending training and matchday meet entry assessment requirements (refer to [Entry Assessment resource](#) on Return to Play website)
- Keep up good hygiene practices, including washing of hands, cleaning equipment and no shared drink bottles

Not only will implementing the above help protect the community, but it may also limit the number of persons needing to enter isolation should there be a positive case at your club/venue.

Please note some these are not mandated directions, simply advice for mitigating risk of COVID exposure and transmission.

A summary of some of the current enforceable directions are detailed overleaf. These are also included in your government issued COVIDSafe Plan.

COVID IMPACTED COMPETITION MANAGEMENT GUIDE

SANFL has developed a COVID Impacted Competition Management Guide to support community leagues and competitions navigate through the challenges that COVID may present in the management of fixturing and re-scheduling.

It aims to remove ambiguity around decision making, reduce the stress and anxiety on administrators/volunteers and clearly outline a way forward in a simple, concise, and easy to understand format.

SANFL has provided to Leagues and suggested that they adopt the recommendations within, or develop their own set of agreed guidelines and communicate to clubs prior to the season commencing.

A copy of the guide is available on the SANFL Return to Play website.



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CURRENT ENFORCEABLE DIRECTIONS

Density restrictions

- 100% - no density restrictions for grandstands
- 75% - 3 persons per 4sqm for outdoor activities (ie: match day, spectator events, beer gardens)
- 75% - 3 persons per 4sqm for seated indoor activities (ie: licenced venue)
- 50% - 1 person per 2sqm for indoor football areas (ie: changerooms, coaches boxes etc)
- 50% - 1 person per 2sqm for indoor hospitality/licenced venue indoor activities with standing consumption
- 25% - 1 person per 4sqm for indoor fitness activities (ie: gyms, yoga etc)

Mask restrictions

- Masks must be worn inside shared public venues, unless persons are eating or drinking (ie: inside licenced venue/sporting club)
- Masks must be worn while inside changerooms, gyms and other indoor sporting venues, unless person undertaking exercise
- Masks must be worn by medical staff (ie: trainers, physios, doctors etc) during athlete treatment
- Masks continue to be strongly recommended by SA Health in all settings where persons cannot physically distance

Food and beverage restrictions

- Food and drink (including alcohol) may be consumed while standing indoors at 50% capacity
- Food and drink (including alcohol) may be consumed while standing outdoors at 75% capacity

Singing

- Singing is permitted but when a person is singing indoors, they must wear a mask (it is strongly recommended team songs occur outside)

As well as continued compliance with other COVIDSafe restrictions (QR Code check-in, COVID Marshals, 1.5m physical distancing etc)

Other directions/restrictions impacting other activities and gatherings can be found here - <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/restrictions-and-responsibilities/activities-and-gatherings/current-activity-restrictions>

EXPOSURE SITES & CLOSE CONTACTS

Exposure sites may only be listed or contacted by SA Health if:

- the venue is a high-risk setting (ie: aged care, prison, clinical setting) and/or
- a specific group of people considered vulnerable to COVID-19 at the site and/or
- there has been confirmed transmission at the site

SA Health identified exposure sites are detailed here -

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/infectious+diseases/covid-19/testing+and+tracing/contact+tracing/contact+tracing>

However it is likely your venue may be notified by a member of your local community, such as a player, official or patron that they've tested positive to COVID and that they have visited your venue.

It's important to note that just because someone who has tested positive to COVID visited your venue doesn't make your venue an exposure site and/or that all persons present at that time will be close contacts and required to isolate.



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COVID Positive Case & Close Contact Definition

COVID-19 cases are considered infectious two days before their symptoms started or if they didn't have any noticeable symptoms, they are considered infectious two days before they had their positive COVID-19 test taken. The infectious period ends 10 days after their first positive test.

If a person has been at your venue during this time, you may be considered a close contact site or have some people who were at the venue who may be close contacts of this person if the following applies:

- the person had close personal interaction with others over a period of 15 minutes or more and
- masks were not worn and
- it was in an indoor setting

Only close contacts are required to isolate and test. Casual contacts should monitor for symptoms and only get tested if symptoms develop. There are also requirements for Classroom Contacts. Please refer to the [Close Contacts Fact Sheet](#).

Process

Simplified requirements for contact tracing are now in place to support the ongoing response to COVID-19 and manage the more transmissible Omicron outbreak in the SA community.

In the event your venue is notified (either by SA Health or an individual) that a COVID positive person has been at your venue, you should undertake the following:

- Establish whether their visit falls within the infectious period
- Determine if there are any close contacts of this individual (ie: your staff/volunteers/players/officials etc)
- Notify any persons that you have assessed as being close contacts and advise them to seek testing and isolate as per the SA Health guidelines (if you have been notified by SA Health that you are an exposure location, SA Health may facilitate the process for close contacts)
- Notify casual contacts or the general public of the COVID exposure, noting that casual contacts only need to monitor for symptoms
- Undertake cleaning of the premises (routine cleaning processes are adequate, provided appropriate cleaning and sanitisation products are used)
- Your venue is not required to close or cancel activities unless:
 - you are advised to by SA Health or
 - there is insufficient staff/volunteers available to keep run the venue or deliver activities

Examples

Examples of close contacts in a football club environment may include:

- Coaching staff sitting in the coaches' box together without masks on during a game
- Player getting strapped or receiving treatment in the medical room by a trainer for more than 15 mins, and the player wasn't wearing a mask (note: as per directions all medical staff must wear masks while administering treatment)
- Entire team singing the club song inside the changerooms post-game
- Players not wearing masks while getting changed or seated within 1.5m of each other in the changeroom over a period of more than 15 minutes
- Guests seated at a table together at an indoor club function

Outdoor activity does not trigger a close contact definition, however any person who has spent time with a COVID positive person outdoors should monitor for symptoms.



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MASKS

Face masks are an additional physical barrier to help stop the spread of COVID-19, in particular the highly infectious Delta strain.

Masks are mandatory for patrons while inside the licenced venue/sporting club (unless eating or drinking).

It is also a mandatory requirement for medical support staff (trainers, physios, doctors etc) to wear a mask while administering treatment to an athlete.

Masks are also mandatory while attending indoor sporting facilities and gyms (however do not need to be worn during exercise).

SANFL recommends masks are worn inside changerooms and other indoor football environments, such as coaches boxes in order to limit the number of persons needing to enter isolation should there be a positive case at your club/venue.

SA Health have outlined some other circumstances where it might not be possible to wear a mask as follows:

- Persons aged 12 and under do not have to wear masks.
- Where a person may have a physical or mental health illness or condition, or disability, which makes wearing a face covering unsuitable
- For a person communicating with those who are deaf or hard of hearing and visibility of the mouth is essential for communication
- For a person who wears hearing aids of a style that makes wearing masks difficult and where an alternative style of mask (with ties rather than ear loops) is not available
- Where the nature of the work or education means that clear enunciation (ie speech) or visibility of their mouth is essential. This includes teachers, lecturers, broadcasters or call centre staff
- When a person is consuming food, drink or medicine
- In circumstances where removal of the mask is lawfully required for identification purposes

Ultimately, SA Health's mask messaging is simple - **if you can wear a mask, please wear a mask.**

More information on masks, including exceptions and advice on how to wear a mask can be found here - <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/conditions/infectious+diseases/covid-19/about+covid-19/protecting+yourself+and+others+from+covid-19/face+masks/face+masks>



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COVID SAFE PLAN

The State Government has introduced a COVID Safe Plan to assist businesses (including sporting organisations) with compliance with COVID Safe protocols.

All football clubs must have a current and up to date COVID Safe Plan to undertake training, match days and operation of their licenced venues.

Failure to complete and have plans available at your premises, or non-compliance with current directions, may result in fines.

Clubs will automatically receive an email from SA Health outlining any changes to restrictions that impact a venue's COVIDSafe Plan.

You WILL need to complete a revised/new COVID-Safe Plan for your club if you:

- **plan to offer more rooms or spaces to patrons**
- **plan to extend or alter the floorspace of any existing rooms or spaces**

For more information, and to complete your club's plan visit <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery/create-a-covid-safe-plan>

COVID SAFE CHECK IN

The South Australian Government is introducing COVIDSafe Check-In, to enhance contact tracing efforts.

Check-in is required for all indoor public activities. This includes all football activities at the club including training, match days and the operation of the licenced venue.

Businesses (including football clubs) with an existing COVIDSafe plan will receive a new COVIDSafe plan via email that includes a QR code to print off and display in a prominent locations. Any new COVID-Safe plans created online will generate a QR code to print off and display.

SANFL recommends the QR code is displayed at entry points to indoor areas, service points and in changerooms and in bathrooms, as well as any other areas where high traffic is expected. Templates for promoting and displaying the QR codes are available for download from the SANFL Return to Play website.

When people arrive at your venue, they can check in by scanning the QR code using their mobile phone.

Data will be collected and stored securely in one place for 28 days, only released to SA Health for official contact tracing purposes.

Clubs can keep a manual log of patrons that don't have the required technology to use the QR code system. Please note that you are required to maintain the privacy of information collected in the manual contact tracing logs. We recommend the following:

- Form must be completed by a staff member and manual contact tracing sheets not left unattended
- Contact tracing sheets must be securely stored when not in use and/or when the form is full
- Contact tracing forms must be destroyed after 28 days
- Information provided on forms is purely for contact tracing efforts – cannot be used for any other purpose (ie: marketing)

For more information on the COVIDSafe Check In System visit <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/business-and-work/covid-safe-check-in>.



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COVID MARSHALS

COVID Marshals are required across various public activities/operations, including sporting clubs, gyms and licenced venues.

COVID Marshal Criteria

To be a COVID Marshal an individual must:

- Be 18 years of age or more;
- Complete the required training and keep records of the training to provide to an authorised officer on request (State Government to provide training);
- Take reasonable steps to visually identify as a COVID Marshal (ie: high-vis vest, hat etc)

Beyond the mandatory requirements it is recommended that people nominated as COVID Marshals have:

- good customer service, people and communication skills
- a good understanding of the club's COVID-Safe Plan and Return to Play protocols
- the ability to easily switch between and oversee different tasks and (physical) areas

How many Marshals are required at a football club?

The following should be taken into account when coordinating the number and appointment:

- A COVID Marshal must be on site anytime training and matches are occurring, as well as on any occasion food and beverage is being served at the venue, this would include mid-week meals and match days;
- You can have more than one prescribed COVID Marshal (SANFL recommends at least one marshals is assigned to both the licenced venue and match day/spectator management);
- If less than 200 people in attendance, the role can be assumed by someone undertaking other duties (ie: ground manager, coach/trainer or bar manager etc);
- If more than 200 people are expected to be present at an operation a COVID Marshal who is supervising must have no other duties. (ie: must be a designated match day role or roles);
- At multi-sport venues, we recommend each sport nominates a COVID Marshal OR approach the asset owner to manage
- As a guide, you may be required to have 1 COVID Marshal per 200 patrons (particularly for events operated under a COVID Management Plan)

Compliance

In order to be compliant clubs must undertake the following:

- 1. Appoint and train COVID Marshals**
- 2. Ensure COVID Marshals are clearly identifiable**
- 3. Ensure records are available if required**

1) Appoint & Train

The training covers the following:

- Understanding the role
- Understanding the virus and how it spreads
- Infection control strategies
- Recognising symptoms
- What to do if you, or someone else develops symptoms
- Importance of physical distancing and managing density
- Cleaning tips
- Additional tools and resources.



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Users must demonstrate understanding of the material by undertaking a brief multiple-choice test at the end.

Please note that the content included is similar to the Government issued Infection Control Training, as well as many of the materials provided on the SANFL Return to Play website. This course simply reinforces the learnings and practices already implemented during the Return to Play process.

The State Government's online COVID Marshal training is available [HERE](#).

2) *Visibility of COVID Marshal*

While you are free to choose the solution that best fits your club, the garments or items your COVID Marshals wears must stand out immediately and must be recognisable as indicating a COVID Marshal – not just for you, but also for a patron who has never been to your premises before.

We recommend a high-vis vest with a sticker, badge or lanyard that says COVID MARSHAL.

3) *Records*

A copy of your COVIDSafe Plan, as well as any training records of COVID Marshals must be available upon request from a member of SAPOL or SA Health.

We recommend the COVID Marshal carries a copy of the club's COVIDSafe plan, as well as a copy of their certificate of completion. This can be hard copy or electronic on a phone/tablet etc.

For more information on COVID Marshals, please visit https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery/covid-marshals?fbclid=IwAR1wSKTsiOhjtZMgBcMLpdKKAe2ACAhfWaR3ADah8BsrD_0Sng9VoB_PLj8

COVID MANAGEMENT PLAN

A COVID Management Plan, approved by SA Health, will be required for:

- Any activity of more than 1,000 people

A COVID Management Plan is a unique and comprehensive plan that must be specific to your venue or activity.

The plan sets out how a high-risk activity will be managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 between patrons/attendees and staff.

For more information, and to complete your Management Plan visit <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery/create-a-covid-management-plan>.

Material to support club's complete their Management Plan is available at sanfl.com.au/returntoplay



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TRAINING & MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS

Key Principles to Return to Play

- Density requirements, and/or maintaining 1.5m apart where possible must be observed where possible
- QR Code Check In System in place for indoor areas
- “Get In/Get Out” should be observed where possible
- Thorough cleaning and sanitisation must occur before and after each training/match day including spot cleaning of changerooms in between user groups, and cleaning of equipment
- Hygiene and testing protocols previously implemented will still apply

Training

- Full training activities to continue, including contact activities (tackling, bumping etc)
 - Physical contact restricted to the above or similar training activities, with official, players and umpires to maintain 1.5m distance between each other at all times unless in match simulation
 - Limit the coming together in tight huddles during training

Gyms

- Access to gyms permitted for essential physical conditioning that cannot be achieved by the player or umpire at home
 - Staggered gym/weights schedule ensuring no more than density limits allow
 - Any gym equipment to be wiped down before and after each session, including in between change over of users on equipment
 - Density requirements apply
 - Mask wearing requirements apply

Changerooms

Access to changerooms is permitted, with each team and umpires to be allocated a changeroom for their exclusive use. Access to change rooms should be limited to essential personnel only.

Showers and wet areas can be accessed if required, with strict cleaning and density limits to be observed.

Access to treatment rooms for strapping, massage etc is also allowed. Treatment rooms must adhere to density limits.

The following behaviours should be encouraged:

- Maintain 1.5m from others where possible
- Arrive dressed to train/play where possible
- Players should utilise personal towels or matting if required to lay or sit on floor for any reason
- Limit time coming together in larger groups (ie: match briefings)
- Get In/Get Out (no loitering post-training)

The following is NOT permitted:

- Strictly no warm-up or drills to be conducted in changerooms
- Teams/Umpires cannot access a changeroom until the previous user group has vacated, and cleaning has been undertaken
- No access for non-essential personnel

Change rooms, and any other areas to be deep cleaned and sanitised before and after each training, and spot cleaned between user groups



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Showers & Wet Areas

Showers are permitted under the following conditions:

- Capacity limits as per density requirements must be observed
- One person in a shower cubicle at each time or use of every second shower in an open shower room
- No sharing of hard soaps (pump bottles permitted)
- No sharing of towels
- Spot cleaning following each user, and deep cleaning following each training/match day
- Showers users are responsible for cleaning the shower following use as per checklist (available on Return to Play website)
- Venues must ensure cleaning supplies available in all shower cubicles, and for each shower station being utilised as follows:
 - Disposable cloths or paper towels, which must be changed between each user
 - Alcohol based cleaning spray or solution
 - Rubbish bins
- Ice baths permitted limited to one user per ice bath at a time

Coaches Box & Bench

- Coaches can access coaches' box, however no more than density requirements permit
- Any players, coaches and support staff must maintain 1.5m from each other on the bench. Additional chairs may be added if extra seats are required but must be spaced 1.5m apart. Seating positions on benches should be marked with tape or stickers
- Hand sanitiser and sanitising wipes to be available on the bench
 - Each participating team is responsible for bringing hand sanitiser for their team/bench, with the host venue responsible for providing umpires with sanitiser

GET IN/GET OUT

Strategies to limit time and person-to-person contact on site – promoting social distancing – should be implemented:

- Arrive dressed and ready to train where possible
- Minimise use of bathrooms and communal areas
- Showering at home instead of at training/match venues
- Maintain at least 1.5m apart
- Any tasks that can be done at home, should be done at home



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HYGIENE

The following general hygiene practices apply at all times, in line with Government advice:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- Wash or sanitise your hands before eating (all players and official should have personalised hand sanitiser);
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Cover your mouth to cough or sneeze (using your elbow);
- No sharing of towels/water bottles/food, including lolly or fruit bowls;
- Any areas accessed to be comprehensively cleaned and sanitised after each use;
- Clubs must do all they can to reinforce the above precautions, including making available appropriate hand washing facilities, as well as the provision of alcohol-based hand sanitiser and tissues
- Wear a mask if physical distancing can not occur

Additional hygiene

- Spitting and clearing of nasal/respiratory secretions on ovals or other sport settings not permitted;
- Avoid high fives, handshakes or other unnecessary physical contact;
- Training and Gym equipment to be wiped with antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based sanitiser prior to and after each use

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Everyone should maintain 1.5m physical distancing from others who are not in their household or others they may otherwise regularly spend time with.



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SPECTATOR MANAGEMENT

Clubs must use their best endeavours to ensure their venue does not exceed permitted capacity, as well as encourage appropriate social distancing of spectators.

Entry/Exit Gates

- Multiple gates open (where possible) to allow for consistent ingress and spreading of crowd
- Queuing lanes should be implemented if required for ticket sales and entry, with points marked out on the ground 1.5m apart
- Crowd clickers or apps used at gates to ensure the maximum attendance does not exceed restriction
- Where possible, cashless payments should be used to collect payment for entry (if relevant)

Spectator Seating, Standing & Parking Areas

- Patrons/groups of patrons should be seated or standing 1.5m apart at all times where possible
- Patrons encouraged to bring their own chairs to sit in
- Patrons encouraged to spread around ground as much as possible
- Car parking around ovals is permitted at relevant venues. Patrons in cars, even if they remain in the vehicle must be included in spectator numbers

Oval Access

- At the discretion of the officiating League, Spectators/Patrons may enter the oval to participate in kick and catch. This should occur in the 50m arcs. Participants must maintain 1.5m from those not known to them while participating in kick and catch activities
- Spectators/Patrons should maintain physical distance from players and officials, and should not gather around huddles during breaks in play

Food & Beverage

- Snack food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages can be sold and purchased at the club canteen and bars
- Queuing lanes should be implemented for bars and kiosks if required
- Where possible, cashless payments should be used to pay for food and drink
- Follow any applicable seated consumption requirements

Cleaning & Hygiene Provisions

- High traffic surface areas such as handrails, entry points, door handles, canteen surfaces, should be regularly wiped down
- Soap, water and disposable hand towel or dryers must be available in all bathrooms
 - Routine cleaning will occur, with particular focus on frequently touched surfaces such as door locks, toilet buttons, sinks and tapware
- If possible, clubs can provide hand sanitiser at entry points and food/drink service points

Records & Contact Tracing

- QR Code and Manual Check In Systems to be in Place for Indoor areas



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Spectator Number Exemptions

The following staff/officials do not need to be included in spectator numbers:

- Umpires
- Coaches
- Team Managers
- Medical Support Staff
- Water Carriers
- Property Steward
- Match Day Managers/Officers
- Time Keeper/s & Statisticians
- Club COVID Safe Officer
- Cleaners
- Gate Staff
- Canteen & Bar Staff
- Media/Broadcast/Live Streaming*
- Licenced Venue Staff/Patrons*

The numbers of persons in the above roles should be strictly limited to essential only, and as soon as they are no longer functioning in an official capacity, they must be included in spectator numbers.

Any other club person or contact that doesn't have an official role must be included in spectator numbers (ie: club sponsors, committee members etc).

Media/Broadcast/Live Streaming*

Clubs and Leagues can continue to deliver on commitments to media and outside broadcast (such as livestreaming etc). The numbers of these persons should be limited to essential to deliver the service or cover the match.

Media are also subject to social distancing requirements.

Strictly no changeroom access is permitted.

Licenced Venue

The licenced venue staff and patrons are not included in the total spectator number at the premises. The licenced venue can operate as per its Government COVIDSafe Plan during training and match days.

While spectator limits apply, clubs should be mindful of patrons moving between the licenced venue and the oval viewing/spectator areas. If they do not believe they can manage the flow of persons between the two areas, they should include the licenced venue area in the overall spectator numbers.

Venues with No Gates & Multi Sport

SANFL appreciates the additional challenges of venues without gates, as well as hosting other sports. SANFL recommends the following:

- Monitor numbers in attendance where possible
- Ensure those who are in attendance are following social distancing protocols
- Communicate in advance with key stakeholders who may be able to support messaging to local residents and other user groups such as Council, as well as the other sporting clubs on-site
- If concerned with spectator numbers, kindly ask people to leave the venue
 - Ensure that parents/caregivers of junior participants are able to remain
- If further concerns, contact SAPOL for support



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Spectator Non-Compliance

Every attendee at football has a personal responsibility to abide by COVIDSafe practices, including maintaining 1.5m apart at all times, using appropriate hygiene measures and not attending matches or training if they are unwell.

If the club has concerns over behaviour of spectators they should do the following:

- Kindly remind patron/s of their responsibilities in keeping others safe
- If continued non-compliance, ask the patron/s to leave the venue
- If further issue, contact SAPOL

SANFL will provide a number of resources to support clubs in providing safe environments for spectators, including:

- Posters
- Social media graphics & messages
- Scripts for ground announcers outlining key messages
- EDM content

CLUB FUNCTIONS & LICENCED VENUE

Clubs must manage their licenced venue and any functions in accordance with their COVIDSafe Plan (or COVID Management Plan where relevant).

This includes caps on attendance as per density limits and contact tracing via the Government's QR Code system.

SANFL recommends Clubs/Leagues contact Clubs SA to discuss any concerns or queries regarding the COVIDSafe management of their licenced venue, as well as regularly monitor the emergency directions/public activities information here - <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/restrictions-and-responsibilities/activities-and-gatherings>