



SANFL & COMMUNITY FOOTBALL **RETURN TO PLAY** SEASON 2022

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INTRODUCTION

We have recently seen wind back or removal of many COVID restrictions that impact the operations of our football clubs and leagues.

While this is welcome and will allow football clubs and venues to operate more normally, COVID continues to present ongoing health risks for our community, as well as disruption linked to government mandated isolation requirements.

The protocols included in this document are recommended to 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.

Clubs should use best endeavours to continue to provide a COVIDSafe environment for players, officials and spectators, and further to adhering to any government mandated directions, should consider continued implementation of the following best practice health advice.

CURRENT ENFORCEABLE DIRECTIONS

Masks

The following mask restrictions apply:

- 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.

COVID Management Plan

COVID Management Plans are still required for events for over 1,000 persons.

Check-In

QR Code Check-in or manual check in is still required for indoor activities (ie: persons accessing changerooms, inside licenced venue etc).

COVID Marshals

COVID Marshals are still required to be present during relevant public activities (ie: training, match day and operation of licenced venue).

Singing

Singing is permitted but when a person is singing indoors, they should wear a mask in limit transmission and order to avoid close contact isolation requirements. It is strongly recommended team songs occur outside.

Removed Restrictions

Please note that there are no longer any density restrictions in place, as well as no longer any restrictions on food and beverage service or consumption (ie: standing consumption permitted indoors and outside)

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>



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TRAINING & MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS

Clubs should use best endeavours to continue to provide a COVIDSafe environment for players and officials, and further to adhering to any government mandated directions, should consider continued implementation of the following best practice health advice.

Key Principles

- Maintaining 1.5m apart where possible
- Masks where required (to limit transmission, as well as close contact isolation requirements)
- QR Code Check In System in place for indoor areas
- Routine cleaning and sanitisation

Changerooms

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

Access to treatment rooms for strapping, massage etc is also allowed.

The following behaviours should be encouraged:

- Maintain 1.5m from others where possible
- Arrive dressed to train/play where possible
- Limit time coming together in larger groups (ie: match briefings)
- Wear masks when indoors, in particular when unable to physically distance

The following should be avoided due to increased risk of transmission:

- Avoid warm-up or drills in changerooms
- Avoid singing club song in changerooms

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

Gyms

- Access to gyms permitted, however due to the high risk environment the following is recommended:
 - Staggered gym/weights schedule
 - Any gym equipment to be wiped down before and after each session, including in between change over of users on equipment
 - Mask wearing requirements apply

Showers & Wet Areas

Showers are permitted, with the following best practice health advice encouraged:

- Avoid sharing of hard soaps (pump bottles permitted)
- Avoid sharing of towels
- Spot cleaning following each user, and routine cleaning following each training/match day
- Ice baths permitted

Coaches Box & Bench

- Coaches can access coaches' box, however masks should be worn
- Hand sanitiser and sanitising wipes to be available on the bench and in coaches boxes



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SPECTATOR MANAGEMENT

Clubs should use best endeavours to continue to provide a COVIDSafe environment for spectators, and should consider continued implementation of the following best practice health advice:

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
- Where possible, cashless payments should be used to collect payment for entry (if relevant)

Spectator Seating, Standing & Parking Areas

- Patrons/groups of patrons not known to each other should be seated or standing 1.5m apart 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

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 avoid gathering around huddles during breaks in play

Food & Beverage

- There is no longer any restriction on the types of food and beverage that can be available (including buffets)
- Standing consumption is now permitted, both indoors and outside
- Queuing lanes should be implemented for bars and kiosks if required
- Where possible, cashless payments should be used to pay for food and drink

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 MUST be in place for Indoor areas (ie: licenced venue/sporting club)

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



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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.

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.

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:



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- 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
 - 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.

TESTING

SA Health directions should be followed.

PCR Tests

- Individuals should get a PCR test as soon as possible if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- Individuals should get a PCR test if they have COVID-19 symptoms and test negative on a rapid antigen test.
- People must also get a PCR test if they are directed to by SA Health or SA Police. This includes if you are a close contact with COVID-19 symptoms or you are a close contact and cannot access a RAT Collection Point.

Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT)

- If you have been advised you are a close contact of a person with COVID-19 and have no symptoms, you can access free rapid antigen tests from RAT Collection Points across the state.
- If you test positive in a rapid antigen test, you do not need to get a PCR test to confirm the result. You are required to report positive results using the [online form](#).
 - It is recommended that you also report your negative and invalid results to help provide a full picture of rates of COVID-19 testing in the state.
- If you have COVID-19 symptoms and test negative using a rapid antigen test, you need to get a PCR test to confirm your result.



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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