



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

COVID Management Plan

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

COVID Marshals

COVID Marshals are still required to be present during COVID Management Plan events, but no longer required for other activities.

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).

Masks are no longer required for football club settings, however masks continue to be strongly recommended by SA Health in all settings where persons cannot physically distance.

Check-in (via QR Code or manual register) is no longer required in football club settings.

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
- Routine cleaning and sanitisation
- Masks encouraged when indoors and unable to physically distance (to limit transmission, as well as close contact isolation requirements)

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 encouraged when not exercising

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 wearing is encouraged
- 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

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.

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 4 (four) hours 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.

A close contact definition exemption period of 12 weeks applies for persons who have had a COVID infection.



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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
 - there is insufficient staff/volunteers available to keep run the venue or deliver activities

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.

There is no longer any government direction for masks, however 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.

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>

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.

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 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

COVID SAFE CHECK IN

Check-in is no longer required for most activities in South Australia.

COVID MARSHALS

COVID Marshals are required at COVID Management Plan events.

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)



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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

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.

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

For more information on COVID Marshals, please visit https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/recovery/covid-marshals?fbclid=IwAR1wSKTsi0hjtZMgBcMLpdKKAe2ACAhfWaR3ADah8Bsrd_0Sng9VoB_PLj8