

RETURN TO PLAY STAGE 3 PROTOCOLS

BASED ON THE COVID SAFE INDUSTRY PLAN FOR FIELD SPORTS



COVID SAFE INDUSTRY PLAN

https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/129924/Industry-COVID-Safe-Plan-Field-Sports.pdf

SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES BETWEEN STAGES 2 & 3

The key changes as we transition to Stage 3 of Return to Play Protocols are:

- Competition and games can commence
- Contact training and match simulation can commence
- Restricted access only to change rooms, showers, and gyms (strict social distancing and cleaning protocols apply)
- Increased servicing by medical support staff
- Increased numbers permitted on ovals
- Canteen and Bar use subject to State Government Food & Beverage restrictions
- Spectators are permitted to attend matches – Refer to Spectator Protocols on RTP Website

DETAIL FROM THE SPORTS INDUSTRY

Contact

Full contact is permitted on the Field of Play similar to pre-COVID contact activities. At all other times, participants, coaches, officials, trainers and spectators are to observe social distancing requirements and undertake sound hygiene practices (i.e. sanitations) as detailed in the relevant approved Industry COVID Safe Plan.

Facility capacity

The total number of people to attend training, competition and events is to be based on the social distancing standard of one person per four-square metres. Group segmentation and buffer zones will be used to limit co-mingling. Risks will also be managed through mandatory record keeping, which could include the use of technology (e.g. movement tracking apps, ticket purchasing)

Facility usage

All elements of community sport, recreation and fitness facilities to be accessible in line with relevant health guidelines and directives. Including revenue generation activities (i.e. canteens) to resume and use of all facilities required for training and competition (change rooms).

Events

Activities are to resume including championships, markets, carnivals and gala days. The total number of people allowed to attend an event will be based on the social distancing standard of one person per four-square metres. Whole of Government event principles are to be applied in addition to measures to reduce co-mingling between groups.

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Stadia

Crowds to return to stadia with strict social distancing measures and hygiene practices remaining central to COVID Safe Plans for stadia, in line with Public Health Directives. Crowd capacity will be limited and based on the social distancing standard of one person per four-square metres. Group segmentation and buffering measures will be used to reduce co-mingling.

Industry COVID Safe Plans

All activity is to be conducted in accordance with relevant Industry and Stadia COVID Safe Plans and Public Health Directives. This includes organisations detailing how all persons at the activity/facility will be tracked, and traced, including spectators

Canteens and Bars

Can reopen subject to the adherence to the following Checklist. Ensure licensed areas are seated.

[COVID-Safe Checklist for dining at Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs, Clubs, RSL clubs and Hotels.](#)

FOOTBALL TRAINING AND COMPETITION CAN RESUME IF THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS ARE IN PLACE:

1. Clubs/Teams strictly adhere to current State Government restrictions.
2. Full training activities to resume, including contact activities (i.e. tackling, bumping, marking contests). Physical contact restricted to the above or similar training activities, with officials, players, and umpires to maintain 1.5m distance between each other at all times unless in contact activity/match simulation.
3. Limit the coming together of players and coaches in tight huddles during training and quarter breaks. Keep players in player position groups where possible.
4. Minimise use of change rooms for Auskick/Juniors – use of change rooms, bathrooms, and communal areas to essential activities only. Activity that can take place outside is strongly encouraged to be conducted outside.
5. Access to change rooms permitted for Senior /Youth teams, with appropriate social distancing, sanitising of surfaces. Showering at home instead of at venues is encouraged (where possible) for seniors.
6. Umpires permitted use of umpire change rooms, however no more than the 1 person per 2sqm at any given time.
7. Access to gyms (with suitable supervisions), however no more than the 1 person per 2sqm at any given time.
8. A log, or register, of all participants in attendance at each training session and game must be maintained and available upon request by either AFL Queensland or health authorities. AFL Queensland recommends the TEAMAPP attendance tracker [CLICK HERE](#).
9. The Return to Play hygiene practices outlined in this document are to be strictly adhered to.

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STAGE 3 | COMPETITION COMMENCES/RESUMES

Stage 3 sees the commencement or resumption of Community Football matches in Queensland. This Stage will continue hygiene protocols introduced in Stage 2 Training but will also include venue management and inclusion of other parties such as spectators, and other required personnel. Hygiene, social distancing, and monitoring protocols described previously still apply for all participants.

Minimum standards are recommended in AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport to be followed.

- Access to support and treatment official for strapping, massage etc. (physios, sports trainers).
- Treatment officials to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in line with Health recommendations – e.g. gloves.
- Treatment equipment to be wiped down and sanitised before and after each use.
- For senior competition - access to change rooms only for players and essential staff only as required (i.e. coach, team manager, trainers – no spectators or parents - unless in case of emergency).
- No shared food or drinks (i.e. lollies, fruit, sandwiches, water bottles) to be made available.
- Canteen and Bar use subject to State Government Food & Beverage restrictions – [CLICK HERE](#) for the current Queensland Government Restrictions. All Licensed Areas are to be seated. No standing in bar areas.
- Venues and accessed areas to be cleaned and sanitised before and after each training session/game.
- Any necessary meetings to occur remotely using video technology, or in venues where the minimum person per square metre ruling can be followed.
- Match fixtures and schedules will need to reflect any time between matches to meet cleaning requirements, as well as limiting the crossover of large groups. AFL Queensland recommends 10-15 minutes between games, minimum.
- Junior competitions are encouraged to consider reducing half time breaks and to keep participants on field.
- It is recommended vulnerable individuals or people aged 70+years, consider their attendance. If attending, strict social distancing should apply.

HYGIENE FACTORS FOR A RETURN TO PLAY

Hygiene Protocols for a Return to Play

- Alcohol based hand sanitisers must be available for all teams training sessions, with players encouraged to use prior, during and following training and games.
- There is strictly to be no sharing of water bottles, food, or towels, and it is important to clean and disinfect these items following each training and game. Disinfect mouth guards after each session.
- Avoid high fives, handshakes, or unnecessary contact.
- Club provided footballs to be wiped with antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based sanitiser prior to and after training sessions.
- If you, or people you have been in contact with are sick, please DONOT attend training or games and advise the football coach.
- Players should shower immediately before and after training and games, not at the venue, where possible.

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General Hygiene Practices

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds - 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.
- Stay home and seek medical treatment when you are sick.
- Cover your mouth to cough or sneeze.
- Any player or official member that has underlying health conditions or is considered a vulnerable person should consult with a healthcare professional prior to returning to the training or match day environment.

CLUBS MUST ENSURE THAT THESE HYGIENE PROTOCOLS ARE IN PLACE FOR ALL TRAINING AND GAMES. IF THESE PROTOCOLS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED THEN TRAINING AND GAMES SHOULD NOT PROCEED.

WHAT DOES TRAINING IN STAGE 3 LOOK LIKE?

- Training groups of full teams/squads providing social distancing protocols are being observed in-between contact activities.
- Contact between players can occur, along with Match Simulation training.
- Footballs and all equipment can be used for all training sessions. Equipment must be cleaned after every session/game.
- If pair/group work is required, pairs should be consistent across each training session.
- Any necessary meetings to occur remotely using video technology.
- Parents or caregivers must remain socially distant to the athletes.

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EDUCATION PROTOCOLS

- Requirement → Any COVID-19 Safety Officer must complete the Australian Government COVID-19 infection control training designed for doctors, nurses and allied health personnel working in a medical/health setting as well as the AFL's Returning to Community Football in a COVID-19 Environment Education module found here and adhere to any additional AFL Queensland COVID-19 briefings.
- Requirement → Any Club Medical Official (doctors, physios, sports trainers) must complete the Australian Government COVID-19 infection control training designed for doctors, nurses and allied health personnel working in a medical/health setting.
- Requirement → All players and official are encouraged to subscribe to the Government's COVID-19 tracing app.
- Requirement → Briefings in advance of return to training for players, coaches and official to be held to outline protocols.
- Requirement → Club Office holders to lead a strong culture of COVID-19 safety for the health and wellbeing of Club members and the broader community.

ALL FOOTBALL CLUBS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN:

- Reducing the spread of COVID-19;
- Promoting good hygiene practices amongst players and officials;
- Adhering and promoting the State Government requirements around social distancing and gatherings; and
- Following the clear protocols and requirements around Return to Play and Training.

It is important that clubs are respectful in adhering to the protocols outlined as part of Return to Play and Training, as they form part of the current Government directions, and sanctions can be applied to individuals and to clubs if they are in breach. By every club and individual playing their part in adhering to the protocols, will mean that football would have played its part in the community through a commitment to community health outcomes, but will also improve the opportunity for football to return to play sooner.

WORKSAFE COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN

- Your Council/Landowner may require a WORKSAFE COVID-19 Safety Plan/[Statement of Compliance](#).
- If they request you to complete a plan - the protocols provided by AFL Queensland for clubs, if followed, will enable clubs to meet all obligations detailed in the plan for provision of a COVID Safe environment for training and matches.
- You can find the [COVID-19 SAFE WORKPLACE GUIDELINES HERE](#).