



**RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR
GROUP TRAINING OF UP-TO
20 PEOPLE PROTOCOLS**

Prepared for AFL Victoria Affiliated Community
Football Leagues & Clubs
Effective June 1, 2020



RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING OF UP-TO 20 PEOPLE

BACKGROUND:

Returning to play in a safe, hygienic and controlled manner is paramount to the AFL. The safety and wellbeing of our participants is our number one priority.

Following the Victorian State Government advice around the return of community sport, AFL Victoria endorsed a return to club sanctioned small outdoor group training at community football level from Monday, May 25, provided participants follow the relevant Victorian State Government guidelines and AFL Victoria's COVID-19 guidelines are implemented. In advance of training recommencing we encourage Leagues, Clubs and volunteers to digest the protocols, go through an education period and formulate an education and implementation plan for their Club following which they would go through an education period and prepare their Clubs to return to train safely.

We will continue to work with the State Government to ensure alignment with their advice, and in the event of further easing of restrictions, we hope to be able to return to full training and competition later in the year, with hygiene and safety protocols firmly in place.

Our primary focus is preparing to return to train in a safe environment in a well-prepared and educated manner. In order for this return to small outdoor group training to be successful, and in line with Government advice, it is essential that clubs and individuals work within the timelines and protocols and do not move ahead of the level and restrictions in place.

AFL Victoria will continue to follow any direction from State Government and align with the AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport, so that any resumption of community football activity in Victoria does not compromise the health of individuals or the community. A rollback to tighter activity restrictions is a possible scenario. If this occurs, AFL Victoria will communicate any changes to affiliates as soon as practicably possible through all AFL Victoria's channels.

AFL VICTORIA AFFILIATED COMMUNITY CLUBS CAN RESUME SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING (UP-TO 20 PEOPLE) IF THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES AND PROTOCOLS ARE MET:

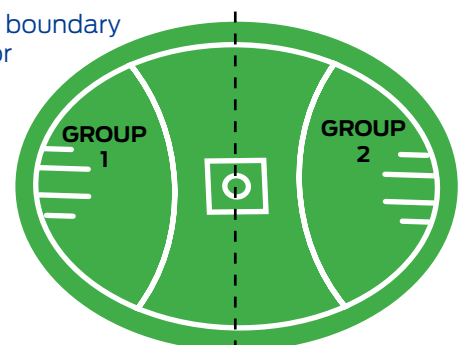
1. Clubs/teams are to strictly adhere to the maximum two (2) groups of 20 participants per group. The groups of 20 do not include a coach or the minimum number of support staff who are reasonably required to manage the activity as per the current Victorian Government restrictions. Two groups of 20 can utilise the same oval provided they do not operate closely together, and the oval is split into two zones. No more than two training groups of 20 per oval at any one time with groups not permitted to interact.
2. Strictly no physical contact between players can occur (i.e. no tackling, no bumping, no marking contests).
3. Social distancing of 1.5m must be maintained at all times.
4. No access to communal changerooms or wet areas can occur, other than toilets. Access will be permitted for the purpose of one person obtaining equipment, immediately following which the rooms must be locked.
5. Sporting clubs that operate a restaurant, café or canteen within its facility may reopen with limited dine-in arrangements from 11.59pm on 31 May, provided it strictly adheres to the restrictions on hospitality venues including only 20 patrons per enclosed space subject to the four square metre rule. Detailed guidelines of the requirements for cafes, restaurants and food and drink facilities to reopen are now available on the Business Victoria website.
6. Footballs can be used for small outdoor group training, however only limited additional equipment is permitted to be used during training (i.e. field marking cones are permitted).
7. Each club must nominate one COVID Safety Officer and as a minimum this person must undertake the free Australian Government online [COVID-19 Infection Control Training](#) prior to recommencement of Club activity. It is also strongly recommended other club officials also undertake this training. Certificate of completion needs to be emailed to your League Administrator prior to the recommencement of activity. Where possible, we encourage Clubs to have multiple people to take ownership of this role and share the responsibility. In addition, we strongly recommend the COVID Safety Officer completes the [AFL's COVID Protocols Course](#) to assist with interpreting the protocols involved for Returning to Community Football in a COVID-19 environment.
8. A log, or register, using the approved AFL Victoria template, League template, or an online app or similar, which clearly identifies all participants in attendance at each training session **MUST** be maintained and available upon request by the League, AFL Victoria or health authorities.
9. Return to small outdoor group training should not include NAB AFL Auskick at this stage.
10. The Return to Small Outdoor Group Training hygiene protocols outlined in this document are to be strictly adhered to at all times, with no exceptions.

WHAT DOES SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING LOOK LIKE?

- Staggered training schedule (e.g. start times, different days, potential for different locations) with no cross over to manage entry and exit points and help avoid gatherings.
- Clearly defined pick-up/drop-off zones and separating assembly areas for participants.
- Training groups of no larger than two groups of 20, not including a coach or the minimum number of support staff who are reasonably required to manage the activity.
- Training activities must be non-contact (e.g. no tackling, no bumping, no marking contests).
- Use of equipment to be limited to footballs and marking cones.
- If pair/group work is required, pairs must be consistent across each training session.
- Specific group activity footballs can be used but must be wiped down after each session.
- Any necessary meetings to occur remotely using video technology.
- Parents or caregivers for junior participants must remain outside the boundary line and observe social distancing and we strongly recommend junior players have a maximum of 1 parent/caregiver present at training.

FIELD LAYOUT FOR SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING

- No more than two (2) group of 20 will be permitted per oval (20 people max. training in each group at one time, not including a coach or the minimum number of support staff who are reasonably required to manage the activity).



HYGIENE PROTOCOLS FOR A RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING

- If you, or people you have been in contact with are sick, DO NOT attend small outdoor group training and advise your football coach who is responsible for informing the COVID Safety Officer.
- Generally, you should be tested for COVID-19 if you develop fever or respiratory symptoms and meet at least one the following criteria: You have returned from overseas in the past 14 days, been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days, travelled on a cruise ship (either passenger or crew) in the 14 days before developing symptoms, are a health care, aged care or residential care worker, have lived in an area where there is a higher risk of community transmission, as defined by the local public health unit.
- Staggered training schedule (e.g. start times, different days, potential for different locations)
- Alcohol-based hand sanitisers must be available for all team training sessions, with players encouraged to use prior, during and following training.
- There is strictly to be no sharing of personal items such as water bottles, food or towels. Personal items need to be easily distinguishable, labelled and kept separate.
- Players and coaches must not spit or clear nasal passages at small outdoor group training.
- No high fives, handshakes, or other physical contact.
- Changerooms and wet areas are not to be utilised for small outdoor group training (i.e. players arrive at venue in football gear and must shower at home), although use of toilets is allowed.
- Club provided footballs must be wiped with antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based sanitiser prior to and after small outdoor group training sessions.
- Players are to be responsible for their own strapping if required.
- No player massages.
- Entry and exit points should be cleaned between sessions.
- Sports medicine staff who share medical equipment must sterilise them between uses.

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 with your elbow to cough or sneeze.
- Any player or club member that has underlying health conditions or is considered a vulnerable person should consult with a healthcare professional prior to returning to small outdoor group training.
- People who present to training with symptoms to be sent home immediately.

COVID SAFETY OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensuring all players, coaches, officials, etc. are aware of the Return to Small Outdoor Group Training Protocols.
- Ensuring a club's adherence to these protocols and taking immediate steps to correct any identified breaches of the protocols.
- Developing any processes or initiatives that will aid a club's adherence to the Small Outdoor Group Training Protocols.
- Implementing and maintaining training logs/registers
- Keeping up to date with any changes to the protocols implemented by AFL Victoria and communicating these to all within the club.
- Contact point for any questions from club members (e.g. players, coaches, officials, spectators, etc.) relating to the Small Outdoor Group Training Protocols.
- We encourage Clubs to have multiple people to take ownership of this role and share the responsibility.



RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING OF UP-TO 20 PEOPLE

EDUCATION PROTOCOLS - REQUIREMENTS

- AFL Victoria strongly recommends community clubs implement a minimum one-week preparation and education phase to ensure clubs undertake the necessary preparations prior to small outdoor group training.
- Each club must nominate at least one COVID Safety Officer and as a minimum this person must undertake the free Australian Government online [COVID-19 Infection Control Training](#) prior to commencement of Club activity. In addition, we strongly recommend the COVID Safety Officer completes the [AFL's COVID Protocols Course](#) to assist with interpreting the protocols involved for Returning to Community Football in a COVID-19 environment.
- It is recommended other club officials also undertake this training. Certificate of completion needs to be emailed to your League Administrator prior to the commencement of activity. Where possible, we encourage Clubs to have multiple people to take ownership of this role and share the responsibility.
- All players and club officials are strongly encouraged to download the Government's COVID-19 tracing app.
- Protocol briefings (as outlined below) must be held in advance of return to small outdoor group training for players, coaches and officials.
- The Australian Football community must lead and promote a strong culture of COVID-19 safety for the health and wellbeing of participants and the broader community.

PARTICIPANT BRIEFING

Prior to the recommencement of small outdoor group training, clubs to provide a briefing to all participants, coaches, volunteers, parents that includes:

- Intended training dates, times and procedures established to limit team cross-over on ovals.
- Hygiene practices that have been implemented by the club, including hygiene procedures around the venue and equipment.
- Hygiene expectations of all participants.
- What to do if you are feeling unwell or have been into contact with people who are sick.
- Opt-out options for individuals who may not yet feel comfortable returning to small group training, and alternative training options available.
- Measures that the coaches are taking to limit physical contact of players (e.g. social distancing guidelines, no physical contact drills at training, etc.).
- Restrictions on the number of support staff (i.e. assistant coaches, trainers, etc.).
- Restrictions in place on club rooms, changerooms, club gyms, etc.
- Restrictions on people attending the training venue (i.e. no spectators).
- Highlight it is the choice of participants to train, noting that even with adherence to protocols there is some increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 (compared to staying at home), which for some people if contracted, has serious health consequences.

COACHES BRIEFING

Clubs should also brief all coaches on the required expectations as leaders within the club environment, including:

- Importance of the required hygiene protocols and practices.
- No crossover of teams.
- No use of communal changeroom facilities, apart from toilets.
- Limiting training drills to be non-contact.
- Acceptable skills and drills.
- Requirement for players to 'get in, train, get out'
- Responsibility as leaders to influence behaviour change.

ALL FOOTBALL CLUBS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN:

- Reducing the spread of COVID-19
- Promoting good hygiene practices amongst participants
- Adhering to and promoting the State Government requirements around social distancing and gatherings
- Promoting staying close to home to align with DHHS Victoria guidance
- Following the clear protocols and requirements around returning to small outdoor group training.

It is important that clubs are respectful in adhering to the protocols outlined as part of Return to Small Outdoor Group 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 it 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.

CLUBS MUST ENSURE THAT THESE HYGIENE PROTOCOLS ARE IN PLACE FOR ALL TEAMS THAT ARE CONDUCTING SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING. IF THESE PROTOCOLS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED THEN TRAINING SHOULD NOT PROCEED.



RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING OF UP-TO 20 PEOPLE

This guide has been established to support teams 'Returning to Small Outdoor Group Training' phase under the current Victorian Government COVID-19 restrictions. Community clubs and teams have an obligation to strictly adhere to these protocols at every training session.

The key principle for training must be **'Get in, Train, Get out'**.

SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING UP-TO 20

The club can undertake training in two (2) groups no larger than 20 people per group. The groups of 20 do not include a coach or the minimum number of support staff who are reasonably required to manage the activity. Two groups of 20 can utilise the same oval provided they do not operate closely together, and the oval is split into two zones. No more than two training groups of 20 per oval at any one time with groups not permitted to interact.

STRICTLY NO CONTACT

The club has advised its participants, coaches, volunteers and parents that all training must be strictly NON-CONTACT (i.e. no tackling, no bumping, no marking contests, etc.).

1.5M SOCIAL DISTANCING

The club has advised its participants, coaches, volunteers and parents that all training must strictly observe social distancing requirements of 1.5m.

NO ACCESS TO COMMUNAL CHANGEROOMS

The club is aware that all communal changerooms and wet areas are NOT to be used as part of the return to small outdoor group training, however toilets are permitted.

FOOTBALLS ALLOWED, BUT NO OTHER EQUIPMENT

The club is aware that footballs can be used for small outdoor group training, however only limited additional equipment is permitted (i.e. field marking cones are permitted).

CLUBS & TEAMS UNDERSTAND THE RETURN TO SMALL OUTDOOR GROUP TRAINING PROTOCOLS

The club and all teams have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the Return to Small Outdoor Group Training Protocols provided by AFL Victoria.

HYGIENE PROTOCOLS ARE IN PLACE

The club has implemented the hygiene protocols as outlined in the Return to Small Outdoor Group Training Protocols document.

AT LEAST ONE COVID SAFETY OFFICER

Nominated Club official(s) has undertaken the Australian Government online [COVID-19 Infection Control Training](#) and submitted a certificate of completion to their League Administrator contact prior to recommencement of Club activity.

A REGISTER OF PARTICIPANTS

A log, or register, using the approved AFL Victoria template, League template, or an online app or similar, which clearly identifies all participants in attendance at each training session MUST be maintained and available upon request by the League, AFL Victoria or health authorities.

COVIDSafe APP

The club has encouraged all players, volunteers and families to download the [COVIDSafe App](#) to help in tracing the spread of COVID-19.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

The club has received approval from the Local Government to access the oval for small outdoor group training.

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

The club and training groups understand that they must always follow the direction and advice of local and state authorities. People who present to training with symptoms to be sent home immediately.

CLUB DEFIBRILLATOR ACCESS

Clubs with a defibrillator has arranged access to their defibrillator for if and when required, the defibrillator has been tested and is in working order.