



Return to Hockey Guidelines

Version B.36

Please note that any content in red font signifies an update from the last version of the document.

Overview

The Victorian Government has announced updates to Victoria's COVIDSafe settings with restrictions set to ease for metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria from 11.59pm on Thursday 21 October. See the [Statement](#) from the Victorian Government.

Community sport, both indoor and outdoor, is excluded from vaccination requirements if participants are attending solely for that activity. The exclusion applies to attendees who are necessary to facilitate the community sporting activity, such as participants, workers, and volunteers.

RESTRICTIONS FOR METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

From 11:59pm on Thursday 21 October 2021 restrictions are in place across metropolitan Melbourne.

- Community sport teams (all ages) are allowed to train outdoors only, with only the minimum possible number of participants attending. **Competition is not permitted.**
- Spectators are not permitted unless to supervise dependants (1 parent/carer per dependant).
- COVID Check-in Marshals must be present at venue entrances for the facility to operate.
- You must check in at all recreation venues using the Victorian Government QR Code Service through the Service Victoria app, regardless of the duration of your visit.
- You must wear a face mask when indoors or outdoors, unless an exception applies. You do not need to wear a mask while exercising strenuously.
- Only toilets allowed to be open.
- Canteens can open subject to food and drink facility restrictions (incl. vaccination requirements).
- Residents can't travel between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria for community sport or exercise.

RESTRICTIONS FOR REGIONAL VICTORIA

From 11:59pm on Thursday 21 October 2021 restrictions are in place across regional Victoria.

- Community sport teams (all ages) are allowed to train outdoors only, with only the minimum possible number of participants attending. **Competition is not permitted.**
- Spectators are permitted in line with public gathering limits. Groups of up to 20 people are permitted, and must be socially distanced.
- COVID Check-in Marshals must be present at venue entrances for the facility to operate.
- You must check in at all recreation venues using the Victorian Government QR Code Service through the Service Victoria app, regardless of the duration of your visit.
- You must wear a face mask when indoors or outdoors, unless an exception applies. You do not need to wear a mask while exercising strenuously.
- Only toilets allowed to be open.
- Canteens can open subject to food and drink facility restrictions (incl. vaccination requirements).
- Residents can't travel between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria for community sport or exercise.

[COVID Check-in Marshal](#) means an employee/volunteer, or employees/volunteers, of a facility who monitors compliance with the records requirement at all entrances to the facility open to members of the public by checking whether patrons have provided their details prior to entry;

Community sport and recreation workplaces, venues/facilities, associations and clubs have two options on how to reopen/operate in line with current public health directions. They can:

- Complete **or update** a [Community Sport and Recreation COVIDSafe Plan](#) **OR**
- Update their existing voluntary Return to Play Plan to align with the mandatory [COVIDSafe Plan](#) template.

Hockey Victoria's recommendation is to update your existing Return to Hockey Plan to reflect the current Restrictions as per this Guideline and any other relevant direction issued by the State Government.

The Board and Management of Hockey Victoria (HV) are committed to enabling a safe, enjoyable and successful Hockey activities in 2020 where safe and possible in accordance with the restrictions. To help us get back on the hockey pitch in accordance with the State Government direction, we have been liaising with the **Sport & Recreation Victoria (SRV)** and utilising **The AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a Covid-19 Environment** principles to develop the Return to Hockey Guidelines (*the Guidelines*). As the Guidelines will continue to evolve relying on updated direction by relevant authorities, HV will state the date of when the document was last updated and version number in the footer of the document.

In the event there are changes which will have a material impact on our affiliates' guidelines or operations, HV will highlight these changes in a summary document and distribute to the affiliates via Hock-e-comms and by updating the relevant information on the HV website. In some instances, HV will send the information directly to the affiliates and repeat the information in Hock-e-comms.

The Guidelines, in addition to general hygiene advice, will cover advice on movement of people in and out of hockey facilities, hockey activities, use of equipment and communication as they relate to the current restriction level.

General Information

Victorian Government

NEW – [Open Premises Directions](#)

NEW - [Sport, exercise and physical recreation services sector guidance](#)

[Face Masks: whole of Victoria](#)

NEW - [Hospitality - food and beverage services sector guidance](#) (Guidance for canteens, kiosks or at-venue dining facilities)

UPDATED - [Sign, Posters and Templates](#)

[COVIDSafe Plan for Community Sport and Recreation](#)

[Victorian Government QR Code Service](#)

NEW - [COVID Check-In Marshals](#)

Additional Information

[Framework for rebooting sport in a COVID-19 environment – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY](#)

[Framework for rebooting sport in a COVID-19 environment – ENTIRE DOCUMENT](#)

[National Principles for the resumption of Sport and Recreation activities](#)

[FIH - Start to plan for when your hockey fields reopen](#)

[Hockey Australia COVID Safety Support Hub](#)

Federal Government

[Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19](#)

In preparing the **Return to Hockey Guidelines**, the safety and protection of the health of individuals and communities has been the primary focus and will remain the focus while the risk of COVID-19 transmission remains.

COVID-19 Symptoms

The Coronavirus can affect individuals in different ways, most infected people will develop mild to moderate symptoms of the virus which may include

- Fever
- Dry Cough
- Tiredness
- Flu like Aches & Pains

Some people may experience the following symptoms

- Nasal Congestion
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose
- Diarrhea

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19 or has the above symptoms within the last 14 days, please **do not present at a Hockey venue** and follow appropriate quarantine and testing requirements.

If you have any symptoms, you must put on a face mask when you go outdoors (i.e. to get a vaccine or get tested). This will help prevent spreading the infection to others. Avoid using public transport, taxi or rideshare services.

If you have symptoms and are advised by a doctor or healthcare worker, you should return home immediately after the test. There is a risk that you could have coronavirus (COVID-19) and could spread the virus to other people. You must remain in self-quarantine at home until you find out your test result.

For more information, read the [factsheet for suspected cases](#) of coronavirus.

COVID-19 dedicated hotline – open 24 hours, 7 days - **1800 675 398**.

Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only.

HV Return to Hockey Guidelines under the Open Premises Direction

Communication of HV Return to Hockey Guidelines

The Return to Hockey Guidelines will be emailed directly to HV Affiliate Presidents and Secretaries in the first instance and after every subsequent change to the document. A link to the plans will be placed on the HV Website and notification posted on social media sites with regular updates to ensure members are reading most recent versions.

All HV affiliates returning to hockey activities for the first time under these guidelines, irrespective of the document version, are required to provide a written statement to HV (admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au) prior to re-commencing hockey activities confirming they have:

- Read and understood the Return to Hockey Guidelines
- Formulated or amended their own individual plan based on the HV Return to Hockey Guidelines
- Received approval from their Facility Owner (i.e. council, school, university) to return to the facility and conduct hockey activities under the current restriction level.

Once your Club/Association has sent the confirmation to HV as per the above, we ask you to regularly update your plans based on the most recent version of the HV Return to Hockey Guidelines.

There is no requirement to notify HV every time your Plans are updated to reflect the most recent set of directions from the Government authorities.

It is hugely important that all Hockey Victoria affiliates and members follow all COVID-19 directions provided by the State Government and contained in this document. There is still a possible scenario where a rollback of tighter restrictions is implemented. In case that this scenario occurs, the communication protocol described above will be utilised to inform the hockey community.

Participants, coaches, support staff, parents and guardians are strongly advised to not attend any hockey activities if they are feeling unwell.

HOCKEY ACTIVITIES (Regional Victoria)

- **Full contact** Hockey training is allowed in small groups (not more than 20 people plus a coach or the minimum number of support staff reasonably required to manage the activity).
- **General spectators are permitted in groups of up to 20 people, socially distanced and subject to all other public gathering directions.**
- Hockey pitch can be divided into maximum two zones which can host 20 participants + coach/support staff per zone. Groups of 20 must not mix with each other and should remain constant, with participants and coaches strictly avoiding swapping between groups. It is advised to establish a “zone” for your group to train within, ensure the zone is clearly marked, which will allow other groups to avoid any unnecessary contact. Ideally, please leave a 5m space between the zones. It is important to review all protocols relating to social distancing and movement of people in and out of the facility to avoid unnecessary risk of congregation during all periods before, during and after training.
- HV recommends that, when possible, at least 15-minute gaps are scheduled in between training sessions to allow adequate time for commonly used areas to be wiped with disinfectant (i.e. player benches/dugouts, gates, etc).
- No high fives, handshakes or spitting.

- Shared equipment to be cleaned between users.
- Coaches to reiterate social distancing rules at the start of each session and while off the pitch, and consider the following:
 - Wherever possible, training drills should be designed with social distancing measures in place.
 - Avoid standing around close to other participants during or in between drills' (e.g. when waiting at a cone).
 - Consider the position of drink/break stations and entry/exit points to the pitch.
 - Once the session concludes, participants should leave the facility immediately.

To minimise unnecessary contact to reduce the risk of infection the AIS Framework recommends the following approach to training

'get in, train, get out'

HOCKEY ACTIVITIES (Metropolitan Melbourne)

- Full contact Hockey training is allowed in small groups (not more than 20 people plus a coach or the minimum number of support staff reasonably required to manage the activity).
- General spectators are not permitted. Note: only those persons required to facilitate the activity at the physical recreational facility are permitted to attend, which may include teachers, instructors, trainers, coaches, and umpires, as well as carers, parents and guardians attending to support participation of a child or person with disability (1 parent/carer per dependant). For example, a person accompanying their child or a person supporting a disabled person (child or an adult) can attend training.
- Hockey pitch can be divided into maximum two zones which can host 20 participants + coach/support staff per zone. Groups of 20 must not mix with each other and should remain constant, with participants and coaches strictly avoiding swapping between groups. It is advised to establish a "zone" for your group to train within, ensure the zone is clearly marked, which will allow other groups to avoid any unnecessary contact. Ideally, please leave a 5m space between the zones. It is important to review all protocols relating to social distancing and movement of people in and out of the facility to avoid unnecessary risk of congregation during all periods before, during and after training.
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 - Wherever possible, training drills should be designed with social distancing measures in place.
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Facility

For the FIH guidance on how to prepare your pitch for activities, please see [this link](#).

Due to major differences in regards to venue operations, HV strongly recommends that affiliates seek facility related guidelines from their facility owners (i.e. councils, schools, universities) before implementing any of the below:

- Only toilets allowed to be open and are subject to density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm.
- Canteens, kiosks or at-venue dining facilities can open and are subject to the information and compliance requirements on [this State Government page](#).
- Use signage to advise the maximum number of people allowed in each enclosed space, use floor markings to promote physical distancing and increase cleaning as appropriate.
- Hockey Victoria discourage any food sharing.

Hockey Victoria suggests that when considering opening up canteens to also keep in mind other measures to assist with minimising unnecessary risk of congregation. For example, clear signage on the number of people allowed indoors, provision of disinfectant, floor marking of 1.5m at the canteen counter, etc.

COVIDSafe PRINCIPLES

1. Ensure Physical Distancing

You must ensure participants, volunteers and organisers are 1.5 metres apart as much as possible.

This can be done by:

- Modifying sporting activities to ensure participants remain 1.5 metres apart where possible except when engaging in physical activity permitted under the Chief Health Officer directions (e.g. contact sport where permitted).
- Displaying signs to show patron limits at the entrance of enclosed areas where limits apply (where use of indoor areas are permitted under the restrictions).
- Clearly communicating any specific details that are relevant to participants, volunteers and organisers.
- Ensuring you abide by the relevant density quotient.
- Limiting the total number of patrons in an allowed enclosed area.
- Avoiding carpooling where possible.

You may also consider:

- Minimising the build-up of people waiting to enter and exit the venue/facility.
- Using floor markings to provide minimum physical distancing guides.
- Reinforcing the importance of not attending activities or events if unwell.

You must apply the density quotient (where applicable) to configure shared activity areas and publicly accessible spaces to ensure that you are complying with any density quotient; any group size limits and other restrictions applicable to the type of facility being used. Requirements can be found on above on this page.

2. Wear a face mask

- You must ensure all participants, volunteers and organisers entering the venue/facility wear a face mask as per public health advice.
- Updated public health advice on masks is available at: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-vic-covid-19>

- You should install screens or barriers in the venue/facility for additional protection where relevant.
- You should provide training, instruction and guidance on how to correctly fit, use and dispose of masks and PPE (where relevant).
- Masks must be worn at all times except when out of breath or puffing from strenuous exercise or unless a lawful exception applies. These include:
 - Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.
 - Persons for whom wearing a face mask would create a risk to that person's health and safety related to their work, as determined through OH&S guidelines.
 - Persons whose professions require clear enunciation or visibility of their mouth. This includes teaching or live broadcasting.
 - Professional sportspeople when training or competing.
 - When you are doing any exercise or physical activity where you are out of breath or puffing. Examples include jogging or running, but not walking. You must carry a face mask on you and wear it when you finish exercising.

3. Practice good hygiene

You must frequently and regularly clean and disinfect shared spaces, including high-touch communal items such as door knobs, hand-rails and shared equipment.

You must display a cleaning log in shared spaces.

Soap and hand sanitiser should be available for all participants, volunteers and organisers throughout the venue/facility and encourage regular handwashing.

Consider the following:

- People should use own equipment where possible and minimise sharing of equipment. If equipment is shared, it should be cleaned and sterilised before and after each use.
- It is advisable to clean and disinfect hockey balls and cones/markers following use and prior to being used again for another session.
- Use cleaning products that are antiviral, meaning it can kill the virus, such as chlorine-based disinfectants or freshly made diluted bleach solution in accordance with Department of Health guidelines available on the link provided on page 3 of the document.
- Always follow the manufacturers guidelines for the correct mixture when working with chemicals.
- Wash equipment (such as balls, markers etc) in the cleaning mixture, leaving it on for at least ten minutes, before rinsing and drying.
- Personal hygiene
 - Shower at home prior to training and wear clean clothing
 - Shower at home after training and wash clothing to reduce transmission risks
 - Wash your hands before and after training.
 - Take care to store your mouthguard appropriately when not in use and don't rinse it in public if possible; don't share sticks, clothing, towels etc
 - Bring your full water bottle to training with your name clearly visible on the bottle. Participants must not share water bottles. Water fountains may be available at your venue; however, usage is discouraged unless essential.
 - Use hand sanitiser when entering the pitch and as required during your training session.
- A full venue clean should be carried out on a weekly basis, with spot cleaning using sanitiser to be undertaken in line with small group training session timings e.g. after each session, the following will be sanitised:
 - Handrails
 - Sign in tables

- Toilet facilities – including doors, benches, hand dryers, paper towel bins emptied
- Rubbish bins will be placed outside of toilet facilities to encourage patrons to open doors with hand towels then dispose of on exit
- Paper towel, soap, and hand sanitiser levels to be monitored regularly

4. Keep records and act quickly if participants, volunteers or organisers become unwell.

You must support participants, volunteers and organisers to get tested and stay home even if they only have mild symptoms.

You must keep electronic records of all people who enter the venue/facility for contact tracing.

You must develop a plan to manage any outbreaks.

Outdoor and Indoor physical recreation and community sport facilities must use the free Victorian Government QR Service from 28 May 2021.

If an outbreak of COVID-19 does occur among the Hockey Community, HV and its affiliates must fully cooperate with the relevant local authorities. **You must have a plan to manage any outbreaks.** Should an outbreak occur, we must be ready to act quickly following instructions which may include restriction of activity, quarantine of teams and close contacts for a specified period.

If a member of your Club or Association tests positive for COVID-19, this should immediately be reported to a Club Committee member who will report it to the relevant authority who will advise of actions to be taken. Once the authorities have been contacted, please make contact with HV to report the case at your earliest convenience admin@hockeyvictoria.org.au

Consider the following actions:

- Establish a process for notifying participants, volunteers and organisers and close contacts about a positive case in the venue/facility.
- Establish a cleaning process in the event of a positive case.
- Establish a process and responsibility for notifying DHHS, WorkSafe and your health and safety representative/authorised officer, if applicable.
- Establish a process for confirming a participant, volunteer or organiser (with a suspected or confirmed case) does not have coronavirus (COVID-19) before returning to physical venue/facility
- Establish a process for notifying WorkSafe that the venue/facility is reopening
- Establish a process to collect records from participants, volunteers, parents/carers or organisers in attendance for activities/events (including cleaners, delivery drivers), including areas of the venue/facility accessed during each visit.
- Review processes to maintain up-to-date contact details for all participants, volunteers or organisers
- Provide information on protocols for collecting and storing information, e.g. contactless registration systems, 'sign on' and 'sign off' via mobile phone.

5. Avoid Interactions in enclosed spaces

Reduce the amount of time participants, organisers, parents, carers and anyone in attendance for activity are spending in allowed enclosed spaces (e.g. entrances, toilets, etc). This could include:

- Moving as much activity outside as possible, including meetings, tearooms and locker rooms.
- Enhancing airflow by opening windows and doors.
- Optimising fresh air flow in air conditioning systems.

6. Create activity bubbles

Limit the number of participants, volunteers and organisers engaging in activities across multiple teams/venues/facilities where practical. This includes avoiding having participants playing across multiple teams.

Consider the following:

- Stagger start and finish times, to reduce the use of common areas at the same time.
- Communicate training groups to participants prior to attending the venue/facility.
- Designate areas within the venue/facility (outdoors) for each group to store equipment and belongings (bags, sticks, etc.).
- Encourage participants, volunteers and organisers to minimise time in shared facilities when taking breaks/between games/sessions.

Non-compliance

Directions will continue to be enforced through spot checks by Victoria Police and use of emergency powers by the Department of Health and Human Services and authorised officers to ensure compliance with the directions of the Chief Health Officer.

Hockey Victoria will utilise its powers and procedures under the HV Constitution and the Rules & Regulations to provide a response to any instances of non-compliance to the HV Return to Hockey Guidelines.

If you have any questions about the above, please refer to the State Government resources in the first instance, and if required then contact Hockey Victoria.

Key contact:

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