

Future Activity / Return to Play Plan

Version 5
2 August 2020



INTRODUCTION

Baseball Victoria, it's members, clubs and the wider community have all been affected by COVID-19. The health, wellbeing and safety of all involved in our sport is paramount, as such Baseball Victoria will continue to work closely with the relevant health authorities, both at a national and state level, to ensure we successfully navigate our way to safely resuming activity and play for baseball in Victoria.

"These have been challenging times for everyone, and we appreciate the patience of our community during the shutdown of Victorian baseball," Baseball Victoria President Myles Foreman said. "We are pleased to see our country's success at flattening the curve and moving forward as a sport we need to remain extremely vigilant and cautious to protect the health and wellbeing of our community. Although changes must be made, we remain confident that we can safely return to baseball activity and eventually to playing our game."

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide the Office of Sport and Recreation Victoria and the associated government department that manage venues and facilities throughout the state with a comprehensive strategy of a 'Return to Activity' and a 'Return to Play.'

All information provided is sourced from relevant national and state government departments and strictly follows the guidelines as prepared by Sport Australia in the [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 environment](#) and the Department of Sport and Recreation Victoria. In an evolving landscape with COVID-19, the recommendations and guidelines detailed in this document will be updated regularly in line with national and state announcements.



DOCUMENT VERSIONS

DOCUMENT VERSION	APPLICABLE DATES	CHANGES
Version One	25 May 2020 – 1 June 2020	Return to Activity
Version Two	1 June 2020 – Onwards	Activity Groups from 10 to 20 athletes
Version Three – A	19 June 2020 – Onwards	Continued Activity – 20 athletes Return to Contact Training – 20 athletes, Return to Baseball – Full Competition
Version Three – B	24 June 2020	Continued Activity – 20 Athletes, Junior Return to Baseball
Version Three – C	30 June 2020	Continued Activity – 20 Athletes, Junior Return to Baseball, Lockdown Postcode Information
Version Three – D	4 July 2020	Continued Activity – 20 Athletes, Junior Return to Baseball, ADDITION - Lockdown Postcode Information – 2 additional postcodes
Version Four	9 July 2020	Melbourne Metro and Mitchell Shire Lockdown – Continued Activity in Regional Victoria
Version Five	2 August 2020	Victorian Update Restrictions, Stage 4 Melbourne, Stage 3 Regional Victoria



KEY PRINCIPLES

In addition to the [National Principles for the Resumption of Sport and Recreation Activities](#) published by the Australian Government on 2 May 2020, Baseball Victoria is adhering to the following guidelines as part of the national family of baseball states and territories:

1. GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES

1. Baseball Victoria will follow any direction from the State and Federal Government and align with the [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#).
2. Baseball Victoria will review activities as directed by the State Government should restrictions or guidelines be amended or updated.
3. Baseball Victoria encourages the use of the Australian Government's [COVIDSafe App](#).
2. Return to Activity will see no use of any indoor facilities, Return to Play will see restricted use of indoor facilities.
3. No mass gatherings including club or committee meetings, team meetings, on-field huddles or game discussions. Baseball Victoria supports the use of video and telephone conference technology to replace face to face interaction.

2. GOOD HYGIENE

1. Hand hygiene facilities or products must be available to all participants and attendees. This includes access to a sink and soap for handwashing and/or hand sanitiser with over 60 percent alcohol.
2. Avoid sharing equipment or apparel.
3. Minimise catering or shared food/drink facilities.
4. Frequently touched surfaces, work areas and equipment are cleaned thoroughly.

3. SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. Maintain social distancing measures. In accordance with the AIS principle of *'Get in, train and get out,'* this means participants should come prepared to training and games, as well as quickly pack up and leave once their activities have finished.

4. RESTRICTIONS

Under **no** circumstances should anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 attend any baseball training, games or events.

This includes any fever, respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, sore throat, cough, fatigue, or lack of sense or smell.

Under **no** circumstances should anyone attend the event if they have been:

- i. overseas in the previous 14 days; or
- ii. in contact with someone who has been overseas in the previous 14 days; or
- iii. in contact with a known COVID-19 positive case in the previous 14 days.

5. MONITORING

1. A COVID-19 Officer will be appointed at each club to ensure protocols are undertaken and maintained.
2. In addition to encouraging all participants to download the [COVIDSafe App](#),
 1. all participants will be required to register with SportsTG that they are attending training, including any club committee members or coaching staff;
 2. all clubs will maintain a register of attendees, including dates and times, and this information will be shared with and monitored by Baseball Victoria.

6. GENERAL

1. Safety of all participants and the wider community is the top priority for Baseball Victoria and underpins all decisions related to the Return to Activity and Return to Play.
2. Resumption of Baseball Victoria activities should not compromise the health of individuals or the community.
3. The resumption of Baseball Victoria activities will contribute to the health, economic, social and cultural benefits of the participants and wider Victorian community.



RESTRICTIONS

Currently applicable

From Sunday, 2 August 2020 from 6:00PM for Six Weeks.

MELBOURNE (METRO)

Baseball Victoria in alignment with the Victorian Government implements the Stage Four restrictions across Melbourne from Sunday, 2 August 2020.

Baseball Victoria confirms that no members (both in Melbourne and regional Victoria) will be allowed to attend any Baseball Victoria training, clubs, committee meeting or events.

REGIONAL VICTORIA

Baseball Victoria, in alignment with the Victorian Government, implements the Stage Three restrictions across regional Victoria from Wednesday, 5 August 2020.

The official Victorian Government Stage Three restrictions in regional Victoria do not come into effect until Wednesday, 5 August 2020, however Baseball Victoria is ceasing all baseball activity from Sunday, 2 August 2020 at 6:00 PM in anticipation of the additional restrictions in regional Victoria.

Regional clubs that had scheduled training on Monday, 3 and Tuesday, 4 August have cancelled all their activities.

RETURN TO ACTIVITY

Currently not applicable

Baseball Victoria will continue with its Return to Activity as follows:

CLUBS

- All clubs need to nominate a COVID-19 Coordinator, who will be the Baseball Victoria direct contact for updated information and compliance.
- Clubs can now access indoor facilities, including batting cages for training while maintaining indoor social distancing rules (1.5 metres apart, 4 square metre rule).
- Clubs can now access change room and shower facilities.
- Clubs can access and utilise their canteen facilities.

JUNIORS

- Junior full contact training can commence.
- Junior full contact competition can commence.

ADULTS

- All clubs must adhere to the maximum of 20 athletes and two coaching staff per training group.
- There can be two groups on the field, one in the diamond and one in the outfield with approximately 20 metres in between them.
- Each group may have 20 athletes and two coaching staff; the groups may swap over at any time but need to remain in their original group of 20 athletes for the entire training session.
- Where multiple training sessions are being run, there must be a 15-minute gap between each training group.
- Groundskeepers, spectators and other club members may not be on the field during training, otherwise they will count toward the maximum number of people.
- All athletes and coaches must use hand sanitiser before, during and after training. Hand sanitiser must be applied for members to obtain access to the field. Parents will be able to attend training with children in limited numbers while maintaining social distancing.
- All training will be conducted so that there is no personal contact and appropriate space between participants.

Baseball Victoria has prepared a list of frequently asked questions, which will be regularly updated on our website [HERE](#).

RETURN TO PLAY

Currently not applicable

Baseball Victoria continues to develop the return to play protocols in line with government restrictions, and we anticipate the update of frequently asked questions and specific Return to Play documentation for clubs prior to reaching this next step. Hygiene, social distancing, monitoring and testing protocols described previously still apply. Refer to the [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#). **Currently, a Return to Play for Senior members in regional Victoria has not been confirmed.**

RESTRICTIONS:

- Full contact training activities. Officials and players to maintain 1.5 metres distance between each other at all times, unless during game play. Scorers desk to be cleaned during the game.
- Australian Government Health Department resources will be prominently displayed in the facilities and entry points, including handwashing, social distancing and cough advice.
- Entry into venue and exit out of venue to be clearly identified if possible, with arrows on the ground. Designated area for incoming teams (both home and away) to gather and warm up at the venue. Limited physical contact and coming together in tight huddles during training or games.
- Access to support and treatment officials for strapping or massage is limited (physios, sports trainers), with limited access to changerooms for treatment (no wet areas or gym).
- Sports medicine equipment used for more than one person must be sterilised between uses.
- Treatment officials to wear required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in line with Victorian Department of Health and Human Services recommendations.
- Personal drink bottles only.
- Provide external benches/chairs at the facility to maintain physical distancing on the bench.
- Treatment equipment to be wiped down and sanitised before and after each use.
- Venues to be secure with a single access point for players, officials and other personnel required at venue (such as umpires, security, media). Records of attendees to be maintained for each match.
- Entry and exit points should be marked with signage and communicated to athletes and officials prior to commencing competition.
- Where possible, pick up and drop off zones should be established in car parks or at the front entrance to a facility to clearly indicate where people should wait, while maintaining social distance, for drop off or collection from the facility.
- Venues and accessed areas to be cleaned and sanitised before and after each use.
- Minimum contact of non-essential surfaces to occur and hands on treatment should be kept to essential only.
- Match fixtures and schedules will need to reflect any time between venues to meet cleaning requirements as detailed in the venue's plans as well as limiting the crossover of large groups.

Baseball Victoria has prepared a list of frequently asked questions, which will be regularly updated on our website [HERE](#).

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

HYGIENE

The following general hygiene practices for players and officials always apply, in line with government advice:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash or sanitise your hands before eating (all players and officials should have personal hand sanitiser).
- 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.
- Cover your mouth to cough or sneeze (using your elbow).
- No sharing of towels/water bottles/food, including lolly or fruit bowls.
- Any areas (meeting rooms, treatment rooms, change rooms etc) accessed by players and officials to be comprehensively cleaned and sanitised after each use.
- Clubs to take steps to adequately clean and disinfect player facilities (once available) before and after use.
- Clubs must do all they can to reinforce the above precautions, including making appropriate hand washing facilities available, as well as the provision of alcohol-based hand sanitiser and tissues.
- Medical officials must follow protocols as outlined in infection control training (ie: disposal of gloves in between treatments, wearing of face masks).

ADDITIONAL GAME & TRAINING HYGIENE

- Alcohol-based hand sanitisers must be available in the dugout once competition has resumed.
- Players must remain 1.5m apart at all times.
- Spitting and clearing of nasal/respiratory secretions on diamonds or other sport settings is not permitted.
- No sharing of headsets or computer screens/iPads, without cleaning measures in place.
- All equipment to be cleaned and disinfected prior to and after sessions and games.
- No high fives, handshakes or other physical contact.

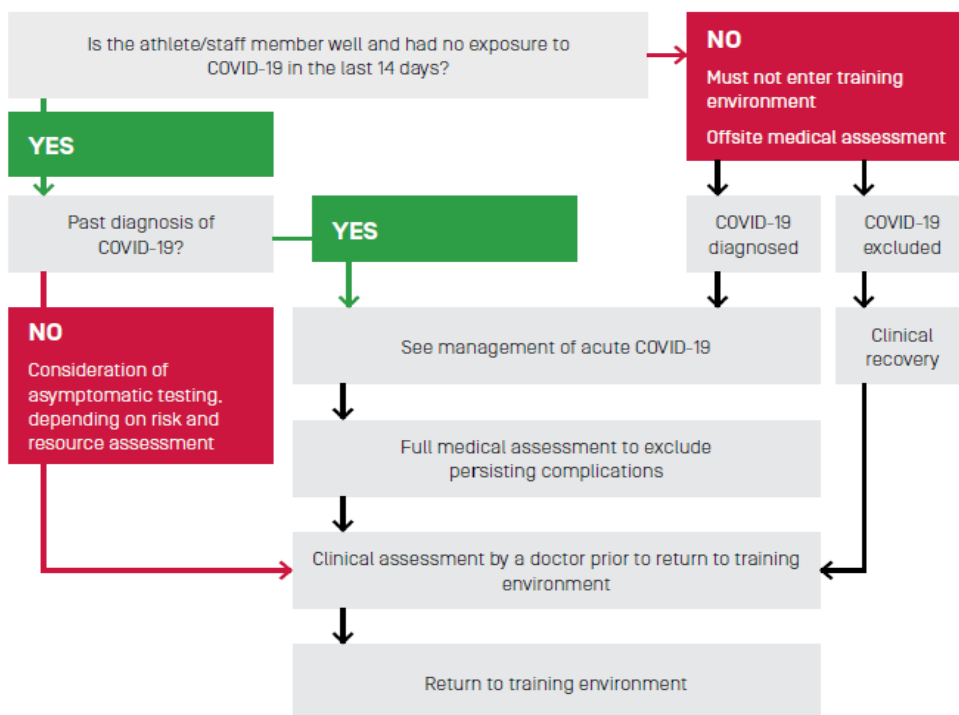


TESTING

- Any advice on testing for COVID-19 will be guided by the State Government and health officials.
- Should any member become symptomatic, they must undergo relevant testing and follow isolation procedures until the results of the test are available.
- Any other relevant testing will be implemented at the request of health professionals.

RETURN TO TRAINING ASSESSMENT

- A player/official member must not join the training or playing environment if in the last 14 days they have been unwell or had contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19.



- Any player/official member who 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. Refer to *Vulnerable Cohorts* section below.

OFFICIALS – UMPIRES AND SCORERS

Umpires, scorers and game day officials will follow the same protocols as players detailed in the Return to Activity when competition resumes. Baseball Victoria will be working with the Baseball Umpires Association of Victoria to ensure umpires are ready to commence a Return to Play.

VULNERABLE COHORTS

Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. As part of the Return to Activity with training in small groups, there will be limited coach interaction and no officials (umpires or scorers) permitted to be present. For the Return to Play, any person who is over 65 years of age or with underlying medical conditions would be required to continue to follow current social distancing requirements, and when needed, additional measures will be put into place to ensure those distancing requirements can be achieved.

SANCTIONS

If clubs are either warned or fined by Police for breaking an enforceable direction, Baseball Victoria will follow the process under the [Baseball Victoria By-Laws](#) and [Member Protection Policy](#). If Baseball Victoria is notified of an instance where a club is reported to have breached an enforceable direction, the matter will be reported to Victorian Police.

An individual found in breach of current restrictions may be fined \$1000 on the spot and a club/association/business may be fined \$5000 on the spot by the Victorian Police. Non-compliance is considered a breach of the [Baseball Victoria Member Protection Policy](#) and [Baseball Victoria Code of Conduct](#) and as such penalties will apply.



RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

- [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 environment](#)
- [National Principles for the Resumption of Sport and Recreation Activities](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Website – COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Website – Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Website – COVID-19 Club Documents](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Website – COVID- 19 Club Checklist](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Website – COVID-19 Club Signage](#)
- [Baseball Victoria Insurance – Certificates of Currency](#)
- [Australian Government COVID-19 Information](#)
- [COVIDSafe App](#)
- [Victorian Government COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services](#)



BASEBALL
VICTORIA