

Guidelines for sports clubs, gyms, fitness and dance studios – stage 3

Introduction

From noon on 5 June 2020, people can resume officiating, participating and supporting the playing of team sports such as football, basketball, soccer and netball.

However, the Chief Health Officer (the CHO) has placed requirements on the resuming of these activities.

These requirements are specified in CHO Directions No 36– Directions for Safety Measures at Reopened Places, Businesses, Activities, Services and Premises (the Directions).

CHO Directions and mandatory requirements

Under the Directions, a business or organisation that provides these activities must:

- complete and submit to the Department of Health a COVID-19 safety plan checklist before reopening or resuming
- make available/provide hand sanitiser to customers unless handwashing facilities are available
- Display signage stating that a person should consider the following:
 - keeping 1.5m away from a person who is not a member of the person’s family, a friend or an acquaintance (a person not known to them);
 - if it isn’t possible to keep 1.5m away from a person not known to them - keeping close contact to less than 15 minutes
 - practising hand hygiene by washing hands or using hand sanitiser
 - staying home if feeling unwell
 - downloading the COVIDSafe app.

The signs must be displayed in an area or areas that is open to the public and accessible to employees.

A business or organisation that has already submitted a COVID-19 safety plan checklist prior to 5 June 2020, does not need to submit another checklist.

For more information, visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au

The CHO's directions are laws and it is an offence to contravene a direction of the CHO.

It is important that you keep informed about the [Directions of the Chief Health Officer](#) and any requirements which relate to the types of activities that you may undertake.

Guidelines for sport and active recreation businesses

In addition to the mandatory requirements under the Directions, the following information may be helpful to assist businesses in reopening.

If your venue or premises incorporates a registered food premises you must follow any [Directions of the Chief Health Officer](#) for food businesses.

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is spread from person-to-person through close contact and droplets including:

- Direct contact with infected persons.
- Contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze.
- Touching contaminated objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or equipment), and then touching your mouth or face.

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect your business is through maintaining good hygiene practices and following physical distancing principles.

Protect yourself and others

Before reopening, you should review all aspects of the business that may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

This will allow your business to apply practical measures to reduce risk of infection between staff or to the general public.

Hygiene practices

It is important that everyone involved in sport and recreation activities take responsibility for their health and hygiene practices to keep the community safe.

The manager of a business should provide training to staff on hygiene practices and any procedural changes that have been implemented to avoid spread of the virus.

For more information, visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au

Staff members, volunteers, participants and spectators should:

- Wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitiser, before and after activities, after going to the bathroom, and after touching your face or hair.
- Avoid touching their eyes, mouth and nose.
- Avoid touching areas that have been in direct contact with participants.
- Bring their own water bottles.
- Wipe down shared equipment, avoid sharing equipment where possible.

Staff information

Staff members and volunteers should not attend work if they are unwell. Managers should advise staff members and volunteers to go home if unwell.

Participants/spectators/staff with symptoms such as sore throat, runny or blocked nose, coughing or sneezing should be advised not to attend activities. This may be through signage placed at the entrance to the venue.

Refer to [SafeWork Australia](#) for further information on keeping your workplace safe during COVID-19.

Gloves

Washing hands regularly or using hand sanitiser will offer more protection against COVID-19 than wearing gloves. If you are feeling well, there is currently **no need** to wear gloves, other than as part of the business's normal safety practices e.g. handling ready to eat foods or cash.

It is important to change gloves regularly between activities and wash hands thoroughly between glove changing to prevent contamination from used gloves onto the fresh gloves.

Masks If you are feeling well, there is currently **no need** to wear a protective mask. People should practise good hygiene and physical distancing in their workplace.

For more information: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/use-of-masks-by-the-public-in-the-community>

Physical distancing

An organisation or business should:

- Arrange the venue layout of a gymnasium, fitness or dance studio or similar to maintain 1.5 metres between participants.
Example: Exercise stations and equipment in a gym should be spaced 1.5 metres apart.
- Encourage participants and spectators to refrain from crowding together at the beginning or at the end of sport or recreational activities, through signage where appropriate.
- Manage the entry and exit points of the venue so that participants and spectators are not queuing at these points.
- Ensure seating arrangements for spectators allow 1.5 metres between groups and between rows of seats.
- Place signage around the premises to remind participants, and employees to maintain hygiene practices and to go home if feeling unwell.
- Encourage participants and spectators to remain 1.5 metres apart when moving through the venue.
- Encourage staff or spectators to minimise time spent in close contact with a particular focus on minimising face-to-face contact. Face-to-face contact with people not from your group should be 15 minutes or less.

Cleaning and disinfecting

During the pandemic, extra cleaning should be carried out throughout the premises or venue. You should keep your place of business clean and sanitised by taking the following measures:

- Maintain thorough cleaning and disinfecting of facilities and equipment.
- Participants should wipe down shared surfaces after use e.g. gym and exercise equipment.
- Clean common use areas and shared surfaces more frequently. This could include door handles, benches, bathrooms, service counters, and sporting and gym equipment.
- If you think a surface may be contaminated, clean it with a common household disinfectant.
- Increase cleaning regimes for all areas within the business. Consider whether aspects of the [Australian government cleaning advice](#) will add anything to your cleaning and disinfecting procedures.
- If applicable - wash and sanitise all food preparation containers, utensils, chopping boards.

For more information, visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au

Cleaning products

Use a disinfectant which the manufacturer claims can kill viruses. Chlorine-based (bleach) disinfectants are a suitable product. Read the label and follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution and usage.

Bleach solutions should be made fresh daily as they become less effective over time.

The recommended concentration of available chlorine for routine disinfection of cleaned surfaces is 1000ppm as this concentration has been shown to be effective against the majority of microbial pathogens.

Physical barriers

In certain situations, a physical barrier such as widening the counter can be used to help maintain physical distance between people.

Opaque or clear screen dividers of a suitable material that can be easily cleaned and disinfected can be used to create separation between people. These barriers should be appropriately designed and installed and be a size that creates protection for the person, especially around the face area.

Rubbish disposal

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 when handling waste is low. Normal collection of waste for households, retail and other businesses continues.

When managing waste, the following hygiene practices should be followed:

- Items should be placed in a rubbish bag before disposing of them with other domestic waste.
- Hands should be washed with soap and running water or sanitised an alcohol based hand sanitiser immediately after handling these items.

Payments

Promote cashless payments. However, if cash is exchanged, hands should be washed with soap and water, or use a hand sanitiser after handling money.

Communication

It is important to communicate your COVID-19 safety steps with officials, teams, participants, spectators, parents and carers. Provide updates on social media or via emails and provide signage and information at venues. Encourage all your staff, volunteers, spectators and participants to follow these guidelines in their daily life to keep our community safe.

For more information

- Contact Environmental Health COVID-19 Compliance on 1800 095 646
- Safe Work Australia – COVID-19 information for workplaces [website](#)
- Fitness Australia provide further related information on their website <https://fitness.org.au/>
- SecureNT [website](#).
- NT Coronavirus [website](#).