

**DETAILED CHECKLIST
FOR MEDIUM TO LARGE
SPORTING ORGANISATIONS**

# Introduction

Sport Australia is taking a leadership role in devising a centralised and consistent “Return to Sport” Toolkit (**Toolkit**) that all sports can leverage to ensure they are ready to recommence training, competitions and programs in a safe, responsible and low risk manner once the risks arising from COVID-19 are mitigated as far as is reasonably practicable.

The **Toolkit** has utility at all levels of Australian sport:

* For National Sporting Organisations (**NSOs**), National Sporting Organisations for People with Disability (**NSODs**) and State Sporting Organisations (**SSOs**) recommencing their own training, competitions and programs; and
* For participation programs and competitive sport (training and competition) conducted at local club and association level where the vast majority of sport participants are active. ­­

Many NSOs, NSODs, SSOs and the substantial majority of volunteer-led associations and clubs lack extensive risk, legal and medical/public health expertise. The Toolkit provides comprehensive guidance on a range of key considerations that should be considered and resolved before sporting activities can resume and during the resumption phase.

Sport Australia has also developed other tools that are intended to provide specific, more targeted guidance to local associations and clubs on the considerations to be take into account in resuming community sporting activity.

# Development of the Toolkit

The Toolkit has been developed in conjunction with the principal support of Hockey Australia and its Member Associations, together with the Chief Executive Officers and other staff of other NSO sport partners including Chief Medical Officers and High Performance Directors.

The Toolkit considers the AIS “Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment” (**AIS Framework**) which, in turn, is influenced by the National Cabinet “National Principles for Resumption of Sport and Recreation Activities”. This AIS Framework helps to guide the actions of sporting organisations in managing public health aspects of the resumption of sport:

The AIS Framework is a timely tool for ‘how’ reintroduction of sport activity will occur in a cautious and methodical manner, to optimise athlete and community safety. Decisions regarding the timing of resumption of sporting activity (the ‘when’) must be made in close consultation with Federal, State/Territory and Local Public Health Authorities. The priority at all times must be to preserve public health, minimising the risk of community transmission.

The Toolkit may be updated from time to time as further guidance material from government and public health authorities is provided.

# How to use the Toolkit

The Toolkit builds on the AIS Framework by establishing a checklist of considerations that all sporting organisations should take into account in determining a return to sport plan for each respective sport. Each sport will likely also have its own unique and specific requirements that should be factored into any plan for the resumption of sport. The Toolkit should be considered by other organisations having a role in the delivery of sporting activities at a national, state/territory or local level, such as venue owners.

As set out in the Toolkit, all sporting organisations should nominate their own **COVID-19 Safety Coordinator** to oversee the development and implementation of each organisation’s return to sport arrangements and document those sport arrangements in a **COVID-19 Safety Plan**. This role will be fundamental for helping to ensure the successful and stable return of sport across the Australian community.

While the actions outlined in the Toolkit can help to mitigate the likelihood of COVID-19 infection and transmission, they cannot completely eliminate that threat. The State and Territory Governments are responsible for sport and recreation resumption decisions, both at the professional and community level and will determine progression through the phases, taking account of local epidemiology, risk mitigation strategies and public health capability. The Checklist must be used subject to measures imposed by individual State and Territory Governments and to the advice of relevant public health authorities. Organisations should consider seeking independent legal and financial advice when finalising plans to return to sport.

The actions outlined under the Toolkit operate in addition to existing organisational risk management, policy and operational systems. Organisations that systematically consider each action within its organisational and jurisdictional context will be able to produce a coherent return to sport plan.

# Return to Sport Checklist

The Toolkit consist of two checklists outlining actions an organisation should consider taking as part of its return to sport plan. These checklists cover:

* Organisational considerations; and
* Operational considerations.

All organisations should consider all actions set out in each checklist. Some organisations may determine that the organisational capability or risk profile of their sporting activities do not justify undertaking particular actions. However, where an action in this checklist is not undertaken, the organisation should be able to justify that decision to relevant sport stakeholder groups, including government and public health authorities, on an “if not, why not?” basis. Space is provided at the bottom of each consideration for organisations to document the rationale behind such decisions.

It is important to properly consider the requirements of your sport’s return to sport plan to ensure your return to sport arrangements do not jeopardise the health of your sport’s participants.

# Part A: Organisational Considerations

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| Organisational Considerations | Actions |
| **Access to Information** | 1. Regularly check official COVID-19 information sources including:
	1. Australian Government Department of Health: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
	2. World Health Organisation:<https://www.who.int/>
	3. Australian Institute of Sport:<https://ais.gov.au/health-wellbeing/covid-19>
	4. Sport Australia:<https://www.sportaus.gov.au/>
2. Identify and adopt for use and prominent display in facilities and entry points, Australian Government COVID-19 “campaign resources”, including posters outlining hygiene practices:<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources>
3. Nominate a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator within your organisation who will act as the contact point for:
	1. Your members and participants to ask questions relating to return to sport; and
	2. Government, public health and other authorities.
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| **Governance** | 1. Identify, in collaboration with representatives from all levels of your sport, which entity/entities will be leading decisions on the return to sport planning process and the implementation of your return to sport arrangements in each state and territory.
2. Ensure that all levels of sport understand their role within the return to sport planning and implementation process and document those roles.
3. Consider the use of an intra-sport working group to plan and manage your sport’s return to sport.
4. Keep your organisation’s directors/management committee members informed of your organisational activities, plans and any issues your sport encounters as it resumes (including material departures from you return to sport arrangements and confirmed cases of COVID-19).
5. Undertake a risk review process to identify, assess and mitigate risks connected to return to sport, including the risk of a localised outbreak in your area or within your sport. Review the adequacy of your existing risk controls.
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| **Strategic** | 1. Conduct a general review of your organisation’s strategy and adjust based on changes in your financial and operational circumstances, including by resetting key measures of success or by considering how innovation might be applied to your sport/business model.
2. Determine, in consultation with your sport stakeholders, any changes required to:
	1. Season dates and fixturing;
	2. Venue and facility access;
	3. Game/competition rules; and
	4. Participation formats.
3. Undertake scenario planning to ensure preparedness for further disruptions to your sport and its return to sport plan. Consider scenarios including:
	1. A temporary seasonal disruption;
	2. A prolonged disruption;
	3. An interrupted return to sport; and
	4. The impact on your sport if an outbreak occurs in other sports or in your sport in a different jurisdiction.
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| **Financial** | 1. Review your organisation’s budget, revise forecasts based on likely changes in revenue and expenditure and communicate to relevant stakeholders.
2. Revise your organisation’s cash flow forecast associated with your sport’s return to play, taking into account likely revenue and expenditure and creditor/debtor positions.
3. Ensure you have and have made available to other stakeholders, sufficient information regarding government grants and other support/relief programs and remain in contact with key funding bodies to access funding opportunities and complete funding/grant acquittals.
4. Develop, in collaboration with representatives from all levels of your sport, a member/participant retention and attraction strategy to mitigate the impact of potential refunds/fee reductions, including a consideration of flexible refund policies.
5. Develop a sponsorship servicing strategy to mitigate the risk of a sponsor exit.
6. Ensure your sport (or a collective of sports) has access to legal advice around trading while insolvent, including the temporary Australian Securities & Investments Commission relief offered to directors/officers, and seek independent advice if your organisation has a specific concern.
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| **Legal and Compliance** | 1. Ensure that your organisation and sport’s return to sport plan follows any law, regulation or direction from the relevant State or Territory Government and aligns with the AIS Framework.
2. Empower your COVID-19 Safety Coordinator (see item 3) to oversee delivery of your organisation/sport’s COVID-19 Safety Plan and drive compliance where necessary. This role should be underpinned by a position description and supported by training and NSO/SSO support if possible.
3. Develop and implement a COVID-19 Safety Plan which addresses the following:
	1. Points of COVID-19 transmission risk;
	2. Transmission controls;
	3. Hygiene and behaviour requirements;
	4. Physical and fitness preparations before a restart; and
	5. Education and communication of advice to relevant stakeholders on how to minimise transmission risk.

More details of each of these elements are set out in the operational checklist below.1. If your organisation is seeking a specific exemption in order to recommence activity, engage with, and where necessary seek approvals from, the relevant State/Territory government and/or local public health authorities, subject to any additional measures required to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.
2. Seek independent legal advice, if required, on your organisation’s workplace health and safety obligations as an employer in relation to your return to sport arrangements.
3. Review your organisation’s policy framework to ensure it continues to cover your organisation’s new/return to sport operational model. Consider whether to adjust sanction regimes in your Codes of Conduct or tribunal procedures to accommodate a shorter season (if applicable).
4. Review your organisation’s licence conditions, leases and other contracts to ensure no breach arises through your return to sport arrangements. Manage any contractors to ensure they are operating safely and in compliance with your operating processes.
5. Communicate your specific return to sport plans with your insurer(s) or insurance broker and confirm coverage inclusions and exclusions. Clarify if there are any specific exclusions caused by COVID-19, if any conditions apply to your policies, if any specific approvals/consents are required and whether return to sport plans can be noted against relevant policies.
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| **Employees and Volunteers** | 1. Consider a resourcing plan for delivering your return to sport arrangements if you now have a smaller workforce or your staff are working fewer hours.
2. Support the transition of your workforce returning to work and/or returning to original roles, including staff returning to work who have recovered from COVID-19 or who have been in self-isolation.
3. Ensure you operate COVID-19 safe workplaces and educate staff on safe work practices. Facilitate COVID-19 education for volunteers and administrators in community sport on COVID-19 transmission control (e.g. see <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/COVID-19-Coronavirus/pandemic-plan-advice>).
4. Facilitate and promote mental health and wellbeing support services for employees, volunteers and participants.
5. Update employment and volunteer agreements for your workforce to reflect the new operating environment.
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| I have reviewed and completed the above Organisational Checklist for and on behalf of the sporting organisation listed below. The completed Checklist represents a true and correct reflection of the organisation's approach to each of the considerations set out in the Checklist. |
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# Part B: Operational Considerations

Each organisation should undertake a range of operational measures to limit the threat of further transmission of COVID-19 as part of its return to sport arrangements.
These measures can be characterised using the following framework:

* **Prevent** – actions taken to eliminate or reduce the risk of further transmission;
* **Prepare** – actions that build capacity of an organisation to manage transmission risk;
* **Respond** – actions to minimise the impact if a further transmission occurs; and
* **Recover** – actions to return an affected community to normal.

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| Phase | Organisational Considerations | Actions |  |
| **Prevent** | COVID-19 Safety Plan | 1. Develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan that covers, without limitation, the following:
	1. How your sport will consistently, across all levels implement a staged return to sport that aligns with the three phases outlined in the AIS Framework, considering sport-specific and localised health requirements and subject to Commonwealth, state and local laws/regulations and public health authority directives (including the Australian government “Roadmap to a COVIDSafe Australia”).
	2. Sport-specific structured risk assessment of your sport’s activities including a facility risk assessment that considers associated mitigation measures including hygiene and cleaning measures to reduce transmission risk;
	3. Modifications to playing conditions or activity rules to support physical distancing;
	4. How social/physical distancing will be managed at facilities and events;
	5. Management of change rooms, toilets, canteens, corridors, entry foyers and other indoor spaces;
	6. Management and/or provision of equipment, especially considering shared equipment; and
	7. Who is responsible for delivering each action, by when and any reporting requirements to confirm compliance.
2. The organisation(s) responsible for leading decisions and managing the return to sport planning process should provide checklists/templates based on the COVID-19 Safety Plan that outline the steps that should occur in relation to your sport’s activities at each of Level B and Level C of the AIS Framework.
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| Education and training | Your sport should encourage all participants (including participants, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers, parents and spectators) to subscribe to and appropriately use the Government’s COVIDSafe app.Provide training on COVID-19 infection control to staff and volunteers responsible for the conduct of training, event operations or any other relevant activity. Ensure they are aware of appropriate hygiene measures and that they should not attend if unwell.Government resources should be prominently displayed in facilities and at entry points, including handwashing and personal infection control advice.Provide briefings and/or educational materials to outline protocols under each of Level B and Level C of the AIS Framework in advance of return to sport for participants, including the obligations on and expectations of such participants. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Communications and stakeholder management | Implement an organisational communications plan that ensures your sport is regularly communicating with all stakeholders. This communications plan should ensure that your organisation:* 1. Has a system to share timely and accurate information to internal stakeholders – such as text/email/WhatsApp groups;
	2. Provides clear and coordinated guidance to participants and stakeholders across a range of communication channels on how your return to sport will be managed at each level of restriction;
	3. Advises participants on hygiene behaviours which will reduce risk of transmission;
	4. Advises participants not to attend if unwell, if they have travelled overseas or been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in the preceding 14 days or if they are an “at risk” individual due to age or medical condition;
	5. Displays posters and distributes information about COVID-19 at your activities; and
	6. Has identified and addressed potential language, cultural and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to participants and stakeholders.

Establish relationships with key community partners and stakeholders including local and national public health authorities and government funding partners through your organisation’s COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. Share timely and accurate information including how your organisation is responding to any localised outbreak.Establish and maintain channels for sharing information with other relevant sporting bodies. | [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Personal infection control | 1. Adopt and communicate protocols to participants, including individuals training/playing, organising, attending or supporting, to stay home if they:
	1. Have any cold or flu-like symptoms;
	2. Have been in direct contact with a known case of COVID-19 in the previous 14 days;
	3. Have travelled internationally in the previous 14 days; or
	4. Are at a high risk from a health perspective, including the elderly and those with pre-existing medical heath conditions.
2. Develop protocols (including self-isolation, COVID-19 exclusion and medical clearances) for management of:
	1. Illness in athletes and other participants;
	2. Individuals who, within the last 14 days, have been unwell (including any respiratory symptoms) or had contact with a suspected case of COVID-19; and
	3. Individuals returning to sport after COVID-19 infection.
3. Consider the use of:
	1. Health/medical clearances for participants to resume training and playing; and
	2. Waivers/declarations for participants and volunteers to sign acknowledging that participation is at their own risk.
4. Adopt a system to record, store and, if required, share data as it relates to personal infection control, subject to privacy law.
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| **Prepare** | Facilities | 1. Ensure seasonal availability of venues and resolve any potential overlap between summer and winter sport venue tenants.
2. Seek approval from reserve/facility owners eg Local Govt, schools ( public/private ) private owners and comply with their requirements
3. Implement requirements of COVID-19 Safety Plan (or require facility owner/manager to implement the requirements agreed between club/association and the owner/manager) to address facility issues.
4. Determine physical distancing protocols to be used within shared facility spaces (e.g. bar/canteen, change rooms, toilets, spectator viewing areas, entrance foyers, corridors and clubrooms), clearly demonstrate these protocols through marking tape and/or signage and encourage individuals to be respectful of shared space, minimise time spent in these areas and observe physical distancing measures.
5. Consider whether to permit bar/canteen operations – if so:
	1. Implement queuing requirements to maintain physical distancing;
	2. Ensure appropriate food/beverage and cash handling arrangements;
	3. Implement low(er) risk menu options (i.e. those requiring less direct food handling/contact); and
	4. Implement hygiene measures including hand sanitiser at point of sale, gloves and facemasks for bar/canteen volunteers and consider the use of protective physical barriers/shields.
6. Determine if water fountains can be used – if so:
	1. Ensure users are aware of appropriate usage protocols; and
	2. Implement appropriate cleaning and hygiene procedures.
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| Transport and arrival/departure | Amend fixtures and training days and times to reduce in-person contact for participants, family members and staff by:* 1. Scheduling time between events/training sessions for all attendees to safely arrive and exit the venue; and
	2. Considering staggered arrival and/or departure times for different groups/teams.

 Manage venue entries and exits to ensure a seamless flow of participants and attendees through the venue and limit the risk of overlap and congestion, subject to maximum attendee number restrictions. Restrict travel on buses, planes and carpools to activities where possible. Encourage participants to observe physical distancing on public transport. Observe relevant government restrictions on cross-border movements where interstate travel may be required and reconsider non-essential travel. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Attendance | Until full sporting activity can resume under Level C of the AIS Framework:* 1. Only essential participants should attend activities (i.e. participants, coaches, match officials, staff and volunteers involved in operations and parents/guardians of participants) and numbers should be limited to the minimum required to support the participant; and
	2. Young participants should be accompanied by not more than one parent or guardian, if possible. Where possible parents can be encouraged to stay in their car during activities.

Spectators may attend sporting activities upon full resumption of sporting activities (Level C of the AIS Framework) provided precautions are taken to minimise transmission risk such as spreading spectators throughout viewing areas and designating the use of specific seats/areas that meet physical distancing requirements.Scorers and media/commentators may continue to operate within a venue subject to maintaining physical distancing requirements and observing good personal hygiene/hand washing practices. Maintain an attendance register for all training and competition days, including venue entry and exit times and contact details. Adopt a system to record, store and, if required, share data, subject to privacy law. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Training | While training is limited to small groups (Level B of the AIS Framework), your sport should:* 1. Encourage participants to follow the approach to training of “get in, train, get out” to minimise unnecessary contact with change rooms, bathrooms and communal areas. This approach involves participants showering with soap and getting dressed to train at home and showering at home on completion; and
	2. Ensure training aligns with the minimum standards set out in the AIS Framework and local State/Territory restricted activity laws.

Apply a graded return to training/competition for participants to mitigate injury risk from sudden increases in training loads. | [ ] [ ]  |
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| Physical distancing | Develop and implement physical distancing requirements at your organisation’s activities including:* 1. On-field protocols to maintain a distance of at least 1.5 metres where practical, such as avoiding team huddles, handshakes and high fives, no sharing of headsets or computer screens/iPads and when sitting on the sidelines;
	2. Specific restrictions on contact training drills during Level B of the AIS Framework for contact sports; and
	3. Where access is permitted (Level C of the AIS Framework), restrictions on the use of facilities such as clubrooms, bars/canteens, toilets or change rooms based on ensuring minimum physical distancing and density requirements can be maintained within the dimensions of those spaces.
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| Hygiene | Promote good hygiene practices in line with Government advice including: * 1. Promoting regular and thorough hand washing by employees, volunteers and participants and providing relevant guidance by displaying posters: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources>;
	2. Providing hand sanitiser dispensers in prominent places around facilities (particularly entry or high use areas such as a registration desk, change rooms, toilets or canteen) and ensure dispensers are regularly refilled;
	3. Encouraging participants and spectators to carry hand sanitiser;
	4. Covering a sneeze or cough with an elbow or a tissue rather than hands;
	5. Providing bins and encouraging used tissues to be disposed in the bin straight away and regular waste disposal;
	6. Use of hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available;
	7. Avoiding close contact with people who are unwell;
	8. No touching of eyes, nose or mouth;
	9. No spitting or clearing nasal/respiratory secretions on ovals or in other sport settings; and
	10. Limiting contact with other participants – avoid handshakes, high fives, huddles and celebrations.

Cleaning standards:* 1. Ensure spaces at each facility are regularly cleaned with disinfectant in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions;
	2. Surfaces should be frequently wiped down with appropriate disinfectant wipes or soap, particularly those frequently touched. This includes door handles, light switches, kitchen surfaces, bathroom surface, phones, remote controls, dugout benches, gates, scoreboard control panels and any other high touch areas; and
	3. Adequately clean and disinfect participant facilities before use (prior to participant arrival).

Determine whether your organisation will receive payments in cash. If so, ensure your employees/volunteers observe good personal hygiene practices and wash their hands regularly.Prohibit the use of shared drink/water bottles and towels before, during and after training and competition. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Employees and volunteers | Employees and volunteers need to stay home when sick or when caring for a sick family member. Prepare for increased level of employee/volunteer absences and develop a plan to fill these vacancies at short notice (e.g. fast track accreditation).Reduce in-person contact between employees/volunteers and participants where reasonable, such as by offering the option to work from home if they can perform their job duties off-site, using email, and conducting meetings by phone or video conferencing.Roster and rotate employees and volunteers in such a way as to limit the number of in-person contacts.Consider alternative work assignments with less in-person contact for employees and volunteers with an increased risk of complication from COVID-19. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Equipment | Implement arrangements to minimise the shared use of equipment: * 1. Avoid sharing of articles of clothing such as volunteer high visibility vests (volunteers should take vests home to wash);
	2. Avoid sharing of stationery (pens, clip boards etc.) and personal IT equipment (laptops, iPads, headphones, etc.); and
	3. Officials should not share whistles, flags and other equipment.

Where possible, shared equipment (particularly balls) should be rotated, washed or wiped with antibacterial wipes or alcohol-based sanitiser prior to and after each use and at each activity break.Participants should not share personal equipment including playing equipment, drink bottles, towels and mouthguards and should not leave personal equipment on surfaces. Personal equipment bags should be arranged to permit physical distancing of participants (>1.5 metres). | [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Personal Protective Equipment | Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies to activity staff and participants such as hand sanitiser, tissues, cleaners and disinfectants. Retain additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies for use if an attendee at an activity becomes unwell. | [ ] [ ]  |
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| **Respond** | Activity cancellation |  Confirm there is an emergency management plan for each of your sport activities and they are suitable for managing a COVID-19 outbreak.Understand your organisation’s trigger points for cancelling, postponing or modifying an activity and identify who has responsibility for making that decision. Identify in advance actions to be taken if your organisation needs to postpone or cancel activities. If possible, plan alternative ways for participants to enjoy the activities by television, radio, or online. | [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| Testing | Develop testing protocols for participants in consultation with public health authorities. Testing may include the following:* 1. Any symptomatic participant may undergo relevant testing and follow isolation procedures until the results of the tests are available;
	2. Any other relevant testing as requested by health professionals.
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| Management of unwell participants | If possible, identify with clear and unambiguous signage, a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become unwell at an activity and cannot leave immediately. The isolation area should be equipped with necessary PPE supplies to facilitate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.Ensure activity staff understand that participants who become unwell should be immediately isolated and given a clean disposable facemask to wear. Establish procedures to help unwell staff or participants leave the event as soon as possible and added protections for activity staff in such circumstances. | [ ] [ ]  |
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| Notification of COVID-19 cases | Your organisation must liaise with public health authorities and facilitate the sharing of information about all symptomatic participants at an activity run by your organisation, subject to privacy law.Ensure your organisation can contact participants (referring to the attendance register described in point 26 above) if an activity attendee subsequently becomes unwell and provide advice what actions should be taken. | [ ] [ ]  |
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| Addressing non-compliance | 1. Consider whether your organisation will sanction individuals for non-compliance with any law, direction or protocol. If so, determine the basis on which your organisation may enforce such a sanction and seek advice if required.
2. Consider circumstances in which your sport may elevate issues to local law enforcement agencies.
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| **Recover** | Follow-up after COVID-19 outbreak has ended |  When public health officials determine that the outbreak has ended in your local community, consult with them to identify criteria for scaling back COVID-19 prevention actions at your activities. Consider which protocols can remain to optimise good public and participant health. Consider whether to reschedule cancelled activities. Evaluate the effectiveness of your COVID-19 Safety Plan and communications plan, adjust and recirculate to stakeholders as required. Meet with key stakeholders to review your organisation’s delivery of its return to sport arrangements. Gather feedback to note lessons learned and to improve organisational plans and systems. Review your organisation’s critical incident management arrangements and test your organisational readiness to respond to a localised outbreak of COVID-19. Update your organisation’s business continuity plan based on learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic. | [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  |
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| I have reviewed and completed the above Operational Checklist for and on behalf of the sporting organisation listed below. The completed Checklist represents a true and correct reflection of the organisation's approach to each of the considerations set out in the Checklist. |
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