

# WA FOOTBALL COVID GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY FOOTBALL FEBRUARY 2022



The WA Football **COVID Guidelines for Community Football** have been developed to provide both Leagues and Clubs with key principles and guidance around delivering community football in 2022 and a range of considerations when dealing with COVID.

These guidelines are intended to assist in removing ambiguity around decision making, reduce the stress and anxiety on administrators/volunteers, and outline a way forward in a simple format. It is proposed that provisions be made by each League to adopt by-laws and regulations to manage the scenarios of a COVID impacted season.

## WA FOOTBALL GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

### Continue to follow all WA State Government Regulations

All Leagues and Clubs must continue to follow WA State Government regulations relating to Community Sport, and the associated guidance provided by the WAFC.

Following the requirements should a club member receive a positive test result, including all isolation requirements & timeframes.

The WA State Government definition of a close contact will determine whether a person participates in training / games.

The WAFC continues to encourage all participants to be vaccinated.

### Health and Safety remain the Key Focus

The Health & Safety of participants and their families involved in Community Football remains a key priority.

Leagues and Clubs should take the necessary steps to ensure that the club environments are as safe as possible.

If participants are feeling unwell, they must NOT attend training or games at the football club and should be tested or seek medical advice.

If a participant tests positive, then they must isolate for the required time and undertake the necessary testing requirements to return to the club from isolation.

### Play where Possible

The priority across Community Football in WA is to continue to provide an opportunity for people to play football across the State.

Whilst competition integrity / equity is important, this should not override the priority to play in this environment.

Flexibility and support from everyone will be important in managing any competition impacts resulting from COVID.

No Blame approach – we don't associate blame with a team who contracts COVID

## PROOF OF VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS:

In Western Australia, from Monday 31 January 2022, proof of vaccination requirements apply State-wide and have been expanded to include higher-risk venues.

**However, it is important to note that community sport is exempt from these requirements.**

In saying that, there are some scenarios that do apply to Community Sport where proof of vaccination **will be** required, and these include:

1. **Licensed Facilities** - If a club operates a bar under any form of liquor license, then Proof of Vaccination is required for anyone entering the licensed area, unless it is to use a bathroom or to get changed for community sport.
2. **Canteens / Kiosks / Cafes** - If a club provides food service, then Proof of Vaccination is required, unless the food is takeaway. Regarding post training player meals at the club or after match functions, it is very clear that all staff, volunteers, players, spectators etc are required to show proof of vaccination before entering any licensed venue including club rooms.
3. **Gymnasiums** – if a club has a gym, weight bench, weights etc, then if participants are using this equipment for the purposes of lifting weights then proof of vaccination is required.
4. **A venue that operates under a Proof of Vaccination Policy** - If the event or competition is held at a facility or venue that operates under a Proof of Vaccination policy.

## VOLUNTEERS AND PROOF OF VACCINATION:

Volunteers in Community Sport are exempt from any Proof of Vaccination Requirements, unless:

1. The venue where they are undertaking their volunteering duties has a Proof of Vaccination policy in place.
2. They are undertaking duties that fall under one of the occupations listed as part of the mandatory vaccination restrictions which include bar / hospitality staff, and potentially maintenance staff. Please refer to the WA State Government list of occupations that require Proof of Vaccination.

**NOTE:** Coaches, officials, team managers and other volunteers etc are not listed in the occupations that fall under the mandate, and therefore do not require Proof of Vaccination. These will need to show proof of vaccination to access licensed facilities, food service areas, etc.

3. The volunteers access licensed facilities, food services or venues as outlined above.

## CLOSE CONTACTS:

The WA State Government has outlined what a definition of a close contact is. This being:

- **A household member or an intimate partner** of an infectious case.
- **15 minutes face to face or two hours in a room** with an infectious case without a mask for this period.
- **Someone who has been notified by WA Health** that they are a close contact.

What does this mean for a Football Club? Some examples of what would constitute a close contact at a football club include:

- If two players, or a player / coach are in a changeroom face to face for 15 minutes at half time with out a mask then they are considered a close contact if one of them was infectious at the time.
- If a group of players are in the club rooms with no masks for over two hours for a player dinner and one of the players is infectious – then all the players would be considered a close contact.
- If your partner or kids who live in the same house as you are infectious then you are considered a close contact.

The WA State Governments definition on what a close contact is may change from time to time and the WAFC will update clubs and leagues if anything changes that impacts this.

## BEST PRACTICE FOR CLUBS:

The below table provides clubs with what is considered Best Practice in terms of dealing with COVID and Proof of Vaccination requirements.

RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS	
Proof of Vaccination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not mandated for participation in Community Sport</li> <li>Proof of vaccination <b>is required</b> for all licenced areas, food service areas (takeaway exempt), gyms and at venues that require proof of vaccination</li> <li>Required for staff / volunteers who serve alcohol</li> <li>Encourage vaccination for all players, coaches, volunteers and umpires</li> </ul>
Responding to Positive cases / close contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow State Government and WA Health advice and directions</li> <li>Have a clear process in place that can be activated in the event of a positive case / close contact.</li> <li>If a positive case or close contact attends training/game, inform the club president, League and WAFC immediately.</li> <li>Communication from the club to all participants that were at the venue that a positive case / close contact was at the club and that they need to get tested ASAP.</li> <li>If a positive case was involved in a game, then the opposition club and umpires must also be informed.</li> </ul>
Service WA / Safe WA App	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check in requirement for all club rooms and changerooms</li> <li>Check in QR codes displayed at the club in a number of locations</li> <li>Check in reminder posters displayed at clubs</li> <li>Maintain manual attendance records in people don't use the app that includes their name and contact details.</li> </ul>
Wearing of masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masks are to be worn at all times indoors as per WA State Government requirements</li> </ul>
Social Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage all participants, spectators to maintain a 1.5m social distancing</li> <li>Display posters reminding people to socially distance</li> </ul>
Density limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow all WA State Government advice and direction in relation to limiting the number of people inside changerooms and club rooms.</li> </ul>
Stay outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stay outside where possible, and limit the time spent indoors at the football club i.e. club rooms, changerooms</li> <li>Maintain social distancing of 1.5m</li> </ul>
If a person has symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind players to stay away from the club if they have symptoms or are unwell, or have been in contact with a person who is unwell.</li> <li>Place posters around the club</li> <li>Promote testing and isolation until negative test result.</li> </ul>
Hand Sanitiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcohol based hand sanitisers are available at a number of locations around the club including at canteen facilities.</li> <li>Hand washing is encouraged through posters displayed at the club</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS

Drink Bottles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not share drink bottles at training or throughout games</li> </ul>
Sharing of equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not share towels</li> <li>Limit the use of shared equipment between participants</li> <li>Sanitise or disinfect any equipment that is shared including footballs.</li> </ul>
Team Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise the 'Get in, Train, Get out' training approach</li> <li>Separate the team into smaller groups that don't mix during training to eliminate a situation where a whole team must isolate if there is a positive test.</li> <li>Maintain 1.5m social distancing and limit social interaction at training</li> </ul>
Physical Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit unnecessary physical contact including handshakes, high fives, hugs etc.</li> </ul>
Personal Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All participants to avoid spitting or clearing nasal passages at training</li> <li>Disinfect your mouth guard regularly</li> <li>Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds</li> <li>Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.</li> <li>Cover your mouth and nose to cough or sneeze</li> <li>Stay home if you are unwell or have been in contact with someone who is unwell.</li> </ul>
Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>RAT's</b> should be a personal purchase by players however when available clubs may have some Rapid Antigen Tests on hand to test participants if required</li> </ul>
Local Government (LGA's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We encourage all clubs to work closely with their LGA's on ensuring venues are COVID safe.</li> <li>Liaise with the LGA's on the requirements around access to your venue as applicable.</li> </ul>

### CLUB ACCESS TO SCHOOL FACILITIES:

If a club uses a school facility for the purposes of training or matches out of school hours, there is currently **NO** requirement to provide Proof of Vaccination. If, however, any set up or packing up activity needs to happen on the school site, during school hours, Proof of Vaccination will need to be provided by whoever is tasked with these activities.

Access to school sites during school hours by club volunteers, on more than an ad hoc basis (i.e.: more than once a week) will require Proof of Vaccination.

Clubs are encouraged to talk to their relevant school contact to discuss any additional requirements that might apply

### CHANGING LANDSCAPE:

As clubs are aware, the environment with COVID and the WA State Government requirements can change very quickly. The WAFC will work with the State Government to provide updated information to all clubs as it comes to hand.