



CAPITAL
FOOTBALL

RETURN TO FOOTBALL GUIDELINES

Introduction

Due to the impact of COVID-19, all football activities were suspended from 18 March 2020 until at least 31 May 2020. Since this suspension began, Capital Football staff have been planning and preparing for a return to football when it is safe, and the suspension is lifted.

Capital Football has a responsibility to protect not just the football community, but the broader community in the ACT and surrounding regions, and to assist in preventing any outbreaks of COVID-19 where possible. We as a football community, including players, coaches, match officials, staff, volunteers and parents/guardians, must play a role if we are to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

The resumption of football activities is subject to the provisions of each State/Territory government and/or Local Public Health Authorities. For sport in the ACT, it is the ACT Government. It is important to note that clubs are required to comply with the public health advice for the state/territory in which they reside.

CovidSafe App

Capital Football supports the Australian Government's COVIDSafe app and we strongly encourage all members of the football community to download the app. For more information including where to download the app please click [here](#).

Return to Football Guidelines - ACT

On Wednesday 13 May 2020 the ACT Government announced easing of restrictions to allow a return to community sport training from Saturday 16 May. The limitations applied and advice on how to comply are set out in these guidelines. As at 14 May 2020 the NSW Government is yet to announce easing of restrictions that would allow a return to community sport training.

These *Return to Football Guidelines* have been developed by Capital Football in line with the [Australian Institute of Sport \(AIS\) Framework For Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment](#), as well as directions from the ACT Governments and Football Federation Australia. The AIS Framework outlines three recommended levels of community activities and individual sport, these levels are:

- Level A – only solo training allowed (one individual by themselves)
- Level B – small groups can return to non-contact training
- Level C – games can resume with some limitations still in place

Capital Football has set out these guidelines for clubs and participants (referees, coaches, players, volunteers, administrators, parents and spectators) who are part of Capital Football activities, including but not limited to; National Premier Leagues, Senior Leagues, Junior Leagues and MiniRoos to assist with the implementation of **Level B**.

This document will be updated in accordance with advice from Government and FFA.

Return to Football Guidelines - NSW

On Sunday 10 May 2020, the NSW Government announced that it will ease the restrictions from Friday 15 May 2020, including outdoor gatherings of up to 10 people.

The NSW Office of Sport has been working closely with government agencies to provide guidelines and principles for sporting organisations to recommence activity in a safe manner, in adherence with the revised Public Health Orders.

Now that the nature of these eased restrictions commencing on Friday 15 May 2020 are known, the Office of Sport is finalising this work as a matter of priority.

The NSW Government notes that National Cabinet endorsed the Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment developed by the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) on Friday 1 May 2020.

The NSW Public Health order signed on 30 March 2020, remains in force and prohibits exercise in groups of greater than two.

Capital Football will monitor changes to the restrictions in NSW and update the guide accordingly.

Snapshot of Return to Football Guidelines - Level B

Training

- ▶ Outdoor training can be conducted in small groups (10 people including players, team and club officials)
- ▶ Non-contact skills can commence (i.e. striking the ball, running with the ball, 1st touch and conditioning)
- ▶ No physical contact or tackling
- ▶ Adequate spacing for each player and staff (applying the 1.5 metre social distancing rule and 4m² per person)
- ▶ Players to turn up no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start of training
- ▶ Warm ups are to be done in the allocated training session or done at home prior to training

Football Venues

- ▶ Only essential participants should attend football activities (i.e. players, team and club officials, and if needed one parent/guardian)
- ▶ Where possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to remain in the car
- ▶ Limit the use of facilities (i.e. no changerooms to be used unless it is to use the toilet)
- ▶ One parent/guardian to drop off and pick up player from venue (applying the 1.5 metre social distancing rule)
- ▶ Encourage all venues to have clear vehicle and pedestrian entry and exits
- ▶ Players, staff and parents are required to leave the venue immediately after training

General Precautions

- ▶ Wash hands with soap and water often
- ▶ Use hand sanitiser if soap and water not available
- ▶ Clubs and venues should avoid any presentations or unnecessary gatherings
- ▶ Drink bottles must not be shared
- ▶ No handshakes, high-fives and body contact
- ▶ Education Theory sessions held online, practical sessions held in small groups (no more than 10 people, including instructors) on ovals
- ▶ Club meetings held online

Travel

- ▶ Avoid carpooling to and from training

Dos and Don'ts Summary

Do

- Adhere to the guidelines
- Book sportsgrounds prior to use
- Train outdoors
- Practice good hand hygiene before and after training
- Comply with the maximum of 10 people rule
- Maintain social distancing requirements
- Adhere to non-contact principles
- Training only – get in, train and get out

Don't

- Participate if unwell
- Train indoors
- Exceed the number of people permitted per field/space
- Use equipment unnecessarily – if used, clean and disinfect before and between sessions
- Use changerooms or pavilions
- Stay at the field after training
- Share things – drink bottles, towels, bibs etc.



Training

Attendance at Training

Participants are not to return to training if they:

- Feel unwell;
- Have any flu-like symptoms;
- Have travelled internationally or been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in the preceding 14 days; or
- Are at a high risk from a health perspective, including the elderly and those with pre-existing medical health conditions

Training Times and Setup

To ensure that Level B guidelines are being met at training, [start times of trainings should be staggered](#), [football fields are to be divided into spaces](#) whereby no more than 10 people are located in one space (including players and team and coaching officials) and the density requirement is adhered to.

Under Level B guidelines:

- Outdoor training can be conducted in small groups (10 people including all participants - players, coaches, team and club officials);
- Players and staff to turn up no earlier than 15 minutes prior to training;
- No indoor training can occur (i.e. if rain occurs, teams cannot train indoors);
- Ensure adequate spacing for each player, team and club officials, applying the 1.5 metre social distancing rule (no more than 1 person per 4m²)



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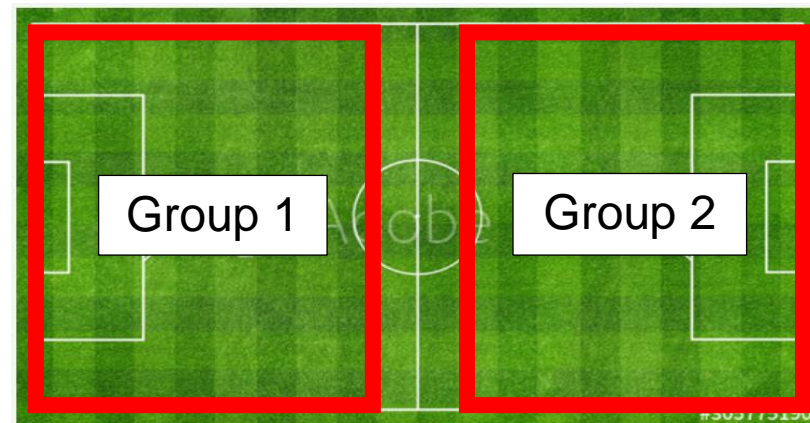
Examples of Training Setups

Ages	Group Size	Training Area Size	Training areas per Football Field
U6 - U9	10 people including the coach	40 m x 20 m	4
U10 - U11	10 people including the coach	40 m x 20 m	4
U12 - U16	10 people including the coach	60 m x 40 m	2
U18 and above	10 people including the coach	60 m x 40 m	2

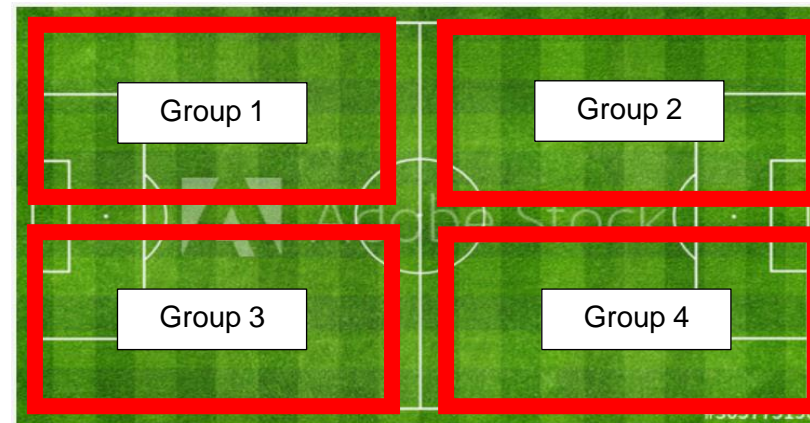
Example of how fields can be divided for training purposes

Ages	Arrival Time	Training Start Time	Training Finish Time
U6 - U11	4:15 pm	4:30 pm	5:30 pm
U12 - U16	5:45 pm	6:00 pm	7:00 pm
U18 and above	7:15 pm	7:30 pm	8:30 pm

Example of training times to avoid overlap of players, parents/guardians and team and club officials.



Example of 60m x 40m fields split into two groups



Example of 40m x 20m fields split into four groups



Rules at Training

The following rules are to be applied at all training sessions under Level B restrictions;

- Children are to be accompanied by no more than one parent or guardian (and siblings as required)
- Ensure that all players, club and team officials are advised to wash their hands with soap and water before training starts
- If a team/club official or player starts to feel unwell whilst at training they are to leave immediately
- Warm ups and cool downs need to be incorporated into training sessions or completed at home prior to and post training
- Only the coach to handle and set up the equipment
- Players and coaches cannot move between groups of 10, i.e. training cannot be delivered in stations. People should only be exposed to contact with 9 other people for the entirety of training
- Only non-contact skills can be conducted (i.e. striking the ball, running with the ball, 1st touch and conditioning). **Games are not permitted (including practice matches, modified training games)**
 - Heading of the ball may occur during the natural process of a skill. However, practicing of heading by picking up the ball and throwing is not permitted
 - Handling of the ball should be kept to a minimum, including drills with goal keepers
- If bibs are used, please ensure that each player is given a bib for the whole session and then takes the bib home to wash
- No sharing of drink bottles, shin-pads, towels etc.
- No shaking of hands, high-fives or body contact
- If teams have physios or sports trainers attending training please ensure that before treating they wear protective gloves and avoid rub downs (where possible) Note: the attendance of a physio or sports trainer is included in the 10 people total

After Training

To assist in complying with Level B guidelines;

- Ensure that all players, club, and team officials are advised to wash their hands with soap and water after training finishes
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Players, parents, team, and club officials leave the training facility immediately after training has finished
- No gatherings or team dinners are to occur

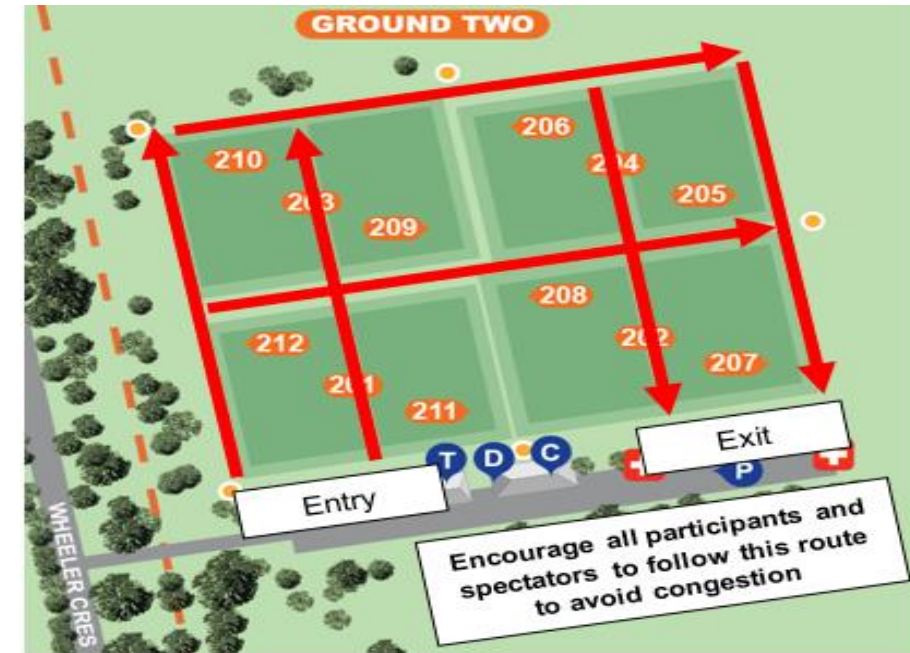


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Venue

To assist in complying with Level B guidelines at training venues:

- Only essential participants should attend training (i.e. players, team and club officials and if needed one parent/guardian);
- At venues where possible, parents/guardians are encouraged to remain in the car (only to come out to drop off or collect the player);
- If parents/guardians cannot remain in the car they are to remain at least 3 metres from the field of play as well as keeping 1.5 metres from other people;
- Limit the use of facilities (i.e. no changerooms to be used unless it is to use the toilet);
- Identify different entry and exit areas to reduce congestion of people (signposted where able);
- If coaches or club officials need to access storage containers or clubhouses whilst at training, ensure that only one person is in there at a time;
- Canteens should not be opened for training, and barbeques can not be used at venues



Example of entry and exit areas for venue



General Precautions

To assist in complying with Level B guidelines the following conditions apply

Education Sessions and Club Meetings

- All theory education sessions (i.e. coaching courses, team sessions/meetings, referee courses etc.) need to be held through online portals i.e. google meets or zoom
- Any practical sessions that must happen should take place at an outdoor facility with a maximum of 10 people (this includes instructors, players and/or participants, team and club officials)
- If practical sessions go ahead please ensure you abide by all relevant sections in this document
- If coaches need to pick up kits prior to commencement of training it must be done taking a staggered approach (i.e. 10 coaches at a time, only one person in clubhouse/container handing out equipment)

General Precautions

Hygiene

- Ensure spaces, surfaces and objects at each training venue are regularly cleaned;
- Provide [hand washing guidance](#), including access to water, soap and/or hand sanitiser;
- Encourage people to bring hand sanitiser
- Promote regular and thorough hand washing by club and team officials and participants;
- No sharing of pens or clipboards, each team and club officials must bring their own to venues;
- No sharing of drink bottles, and ensure that any bottles are clearly labelled;
- Ensure bins are provided around the venue

Behaviour

- If unwell, do not attend training
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze;
- If using tissues, place them directly in the bins provided;
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean;
- No spitting at any time

Travel

- Avoid carpooling where possible to and from training



Incident Management

- In the event of a COVID-19 positive result within the football family, clubs may be required to support contact tracing efforts by ACT Health (including access to records related to training and groupings)
- To enable this, team and/or club officials are required to record attendance at training (i.e. record every team and/or club official as well as players and parents/guardians that attend all training sessions)
- Protocols will apply related to quarantine/self isolation for the individual/s and those contacts considered at risk.



Resources

Capital Football has a COVID-19 resources page which can be found [here](#). This webpage has up to date information for clubs and members of the Capital Football community.

For further information about COVID-19 please visit the below resources

Government

- [Australian Government information and resources](#)
- [ACT Government COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- [NSW Government COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#)
- [National Principles for the resumption of sport and recreation activity](#)

Downloads

- [COVIDSafe app](#)
- [Google Meet](#)
- [Zoom](#)

