

# FAQ REGARDING THE RETURN TO FOOTBALL TRAINING

(VERSION 3 – updated to reflect changes to restrictions under the [Canberra Recovery Plan: COVID-19 Easing of Restrictions Roadmap](#), effective from noon 19 June 2020)

This document has been developed to supplement:

- the ACT Government's [Stage 2.2 Return to Sport and Recreation and Swimming Pools](#) FAQ publication; and,
- the NSW Government's [Local Government FAQ \(updated 18 June\)](#) document.

The information presented below is accurate as at 19 June 2020 and will continue to be updated to reflect changes to restrictions.

## WHAT RECENT CHANGES WERE MADE TO THE RESTRICTIONS BY THE ACT AND NSW GOVERNMENTS THAT IMPACT DELIVER OF FOOTBALL TRAINING?

Step 2.2 of the Canberra Recovery Plan came into effect 19 June and supports the delivery of football activities in groups of up to 100 participants/players, including coaches, referees, trainers and spectators in a training environment. Participants will continue to be encouraged to “get in, train, get out”, with an emphasis on supporting social participation and activities within groups of 100.

Full-contact training activities are now permitted. If equipment needs to be shared at training, proper handling, cleaning and disinfecting will be required during and between sessions. The attached [poster](#) summarises what is and is not permitted by the ACT Government from 19 June.

NSW continues to operate under Government restrictions effective 13 June 2020. NSW-based clubs must comply with the current NSW Public Health Orders, which limits training to a being within maximum groups of 20 people and applies the 4 square metre per person rule. The Order also requires that training be non-contact and physical distancing of 1.5m is applied between individuals. The attached [poster](#) summarises what is and is not permitted by NSW Government from 13 June.

Physical distancing, personal and respiratory hygiene and avoiding football if unwell continue to apply in both jurisdictions. Clubs must also have *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* that reflect their current training needs and comply with the relevant Government requirements.

## **CLUB TRAINING**

### **WHEN CAN ACT CLUBS COMMENCE TRAINING IN GROUPS OF 100?**

Clubs in the ACT can commence training with groups of 100 from 19 June 2020 as long as they have submitted the required plans to Capital Football.

Each Club should spend some time considering the changed restrictions and what adjustments may need to be made to their Club training environment. They can then review and update their *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* to reflect the new Government requirements. They should also post it on their website and promote the changed *Plan* directly to their participants.

Clubs do not need to provide their revised *Plan* to Capital Football or complete any other 'check' process. Clubs that had a *Plan* compliant at Stage 2.1 are also compliant to deliver training at Stage 2.2, if they have updated their *Plan* to reflect changes to restrictions, particularly those relating to delivering full-contact training, in a training environment. Each Club that Capital Football recognises as being compliant at Stage 2.1 will have received an email from Capital Football on Friday 22 June 2020. If a Club believes that should have received an email and did not, they should contact Kelly Stirton via [kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au).

Clubs that have not submitted a *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* compliant with the previous restrictions are not to commence training until they have provided a *Plan* to Capital Football that reflects the current restrictions. Capital Football will then review the *Plan* and advise the Club that it complies with Government requirements and they can commence training.

Clubs must also book fields with ACT Sportsground or their grounds provider.

### **WHEN CAN NSW CLUBS RECOMMENCE TRAINING IN GROUPS OF 20?**

Clubs in NSW can commence training with groups of 20 from 13 June 2020 as long as they have submitted the required plans to Capital Football.

NSW Government requires training in groups of 20 people, in a manner that supports physical distancing and is inclusive of the coach. Training must be non-contact. It remains; however, up to each NSW local Council to determine whether or not to open their sporting grounds and facilities. For more information check the [Local Government FAQ \(updated 18 June\)](#) publication and contact the relevant local councils.

NSW clubs must also prepare and submit to Capital Football a *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* which is compliant with the NSW and ACT Government requirements. Once the *Plan* has been checked by Capital Football and the Club has been given the go-ahead, they must post their *Plan* to their website and promote its implementation directly to all their participants before football training can recommence. It is also important that clubs ensure that the required fields are booked with the respective facility providers.

Capital Football staff will communicate directly with NSW based clubs to offer support and guidance on how to develop a *Plan* that complies with both NSW and ACT Government requirements.

## **WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN INDIVIDUAL ATTENDS TRAINING AND APPEARS UNWELL OR HAS FLU-TYPE SYMPTOMS?**

Individuals must not work/train/coach if they have:

- ▶ been unwell or have any flu-like symptoms,
- ▶ been in contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19;
- ▶ had any sudden loss of smell or loss of taste,
- ▶ or are at a high risk from a health perspective, including the elderly and those with pre-existing medical health conditions.

Club and team officials should monitor any of the above being applicable to training and be prepared to respond in a confidential and appropriate manner. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate for a Club official to exclude an individual from training – but this should be done with support and sensitivity.

## **CAN A COACH TRAIN MULTIPLE GROUPS ON THE SAME DAY?**

In the ACT – Yes, as long as they do not interact with more than 99 other people during the combined sessions and in line with risk management strategies applied in the *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan*

In NSW – Yes, the coach can work with multiple groups on the same day, but like the ACT, appropriate risk management strategies should be applied; e.g. washing of equipment between sessions. (IMPORTANT NOTE - in NSW players cannot training with multiple groups on the same day – only the coach can).

## **CAN INDIVIDUALS MOVE BETWEEN GROUPS DURING A TRAINING SESSION (I.E. SWAPPING PLAYERS OR COACHES FROM GROUP A TO GROUP B)?**

In the ACT – Yes, as long as they do not interact with more than 99 people during their training session or combined sessions.

In NSW - No, people cannot swap between groups at the same training session and players should not move between 'stations'. Doing so does not comply with the Government requirement to limit the sharing of equipment and restrict people's exposure to no more than 19 other people.

## **CAN GROUPS OF PEOPLE FROM THE SAME CLUB GET TOGETHER AND TRAIN WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THEIR CLUB?**

The advice in relation to this matter is the same as previously provided by Capital Football.

If participants play or train without the permission of their club, these activities are not sanctioned by Capital Football and as such the participants will not be insured. The National Insurance Program that Capital Football subscribes to, and which provides personal accident cover, only applies if members are:

- ▶ playing in official matches sanctioned by Capital Football; and
- ▶ engaged in official training or practice (including practice matches) sanctioned by Capital Football or their club.

## **CANBERRA'S RECOVERY PLAN INCLUDES THAT FROM 19 JUNE, FULL CONTACT SPORT IS PERMITTED IN A TRAINING ENVIRONMENT. WHAT IS MEANT BY FULL CONTACT IN A TRAINING ENVIRONMENT?**

Prior to 19 June only no-contact or low-contact training could occur. Restrictions have now been eased to allow full-contact, which can include tackling, small sided games and contact drills. Training games are also permitted but all full-contact training, including training games, must occur within a club's training environment. This means that two teams from within the same Club can play a practice game against each other under the current restrictions.

It is important to note that the restrictions in regards to delivery of training is different in NSW. Training continues to be of a no-contact nature in NSW. As such training games are not permitted, nor are drills involving tackling or contact.

## **CAN CLUBS PARTICIPATE IN INTER-CLUB TRIAL MATCHES?**

No inter-club trial matches (i.e. those involving teams from two different Clubs) are not permitted. Only practice games between two teams from the same club are permitted.

In the ACT - under Stage 3 of the [Canberra Recovery Plan](#) it is anticipated that full-contact in a training environment will be permitted, which will mean inter-club trial games will be permitted. Stage 3 of the Plan is expected to commence from 10 July.

In NSW - from 1 July full-contact sport is permitted. Clubs can participate in trial matches from that date. Any ACT based clubs participating in training matches in NSW must ensure strong adherence to their COVID-safe plans, particularly hand hygiene and physical distancing, to minimise any risk of transmission back into the ACT.

Clubs that wish to deliver trial matches need to complete a [Trial Match Request Form](#) and lodge it with Capital Football for review and approval.

## **HOW MANY GROUPS CAN USE A FOOTBALL FIELD?**

In the ACT groups of 100 can undertake full-contact training, while in NSW the group is limited to 20 and their training must be no-contact. The size of the group and the type of training being delivered will impact how many groups clubs choose to have on a field.

A number of groups are allowed to train within an outdoor area, such as a venue with multiple football fields, if the groups are clearly separated at all times and following the one person per 4 square metre rule. Clubs should refer to the Capital Football's *Return to Sport Guidelines* for information on determining how many groups can fit on a field at their venue in a manner that reflect the requirements. In particular Clubs need to consider how the groups will remain separate from when they enter the venue and field while undertaking training and when exiting at the conclusion of training.

## **COMPETITIONS**

### **WHEN WILL COMPETITIONS COMMENCE?**

Capital Football has communicated their revised 2020 competition structure and information on it is available from the Capital Football website: [media release](#) / [competition structure](#). Matches kick off from 18 July 2020.

## **WHAT DO CLUBS NEED TO DO TO KICK OFF THEIR CLUB-BASED MINIROOS PROGRAMS (U5 to U9)?**

In the ACT – Club-based MiniRoos Programs (U5 to U9) are considered training and development Football programs, and as such can commence from 19 June under Stage 2, Step 2.2 of the Canberra Recovery Plan. Clubs wanting to commence MiniRoos are asked to review the *MiniRoos Return to Play Guidelines* and then develop their own MiniRoos-specific Plan using the *MiniRoos Return to Play Resource*. Clubs then need to forward their MiniRoos-specific Resource to Kelly Stirton via [kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au) for review. The Resource must then be published as an addendum to the Club's current *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* and promoted to relevant members.

In NSW – MiniRoos (U5 to U9) can commence from 1 July. If NSW based Clubs are intending to deliver MiniRoos based Programs they also need to review the *MiniRoos Return to Play Guidelines* and then develop their own MiniRoos specific Plan using the *MiniRoos Return to Play Resource*. Clubs then need to forward the Resource to Kelly Stirton via [kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au) for review. The Resource must then be published as an addendum to the Club's current *Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment Plan* and promoted to relevant members.

## **CAN CLUBS OPEN THEIR CLUBHOUSE/ROOMS FACILITIES AND CONDUCT A CANTEEN? WILL CHANGEROOMS BE OPEN TO MEMBERS?**

In the ACT, Clubs are permitted to open their Clubhouse/rooms to members but are encouraged to limit any unnecessary social gatherings, even those less than 100 people. Clubs must also ensure that the 1 person per 4sqm requirement is maintained.

Clubs can also deliver canteen services; however, they must do so in a manner that support the requirements under the Canberra Recovery Plan. As such canteens need to be set up in a way that provides 1.5m between individuals and provides access to hand sanitiser. Comprehensive cleaning and hygiene practices supporting food services must also be in place. For more information on cleaning and food handling ACT Government suggests visiting the [Infection control and training resources page](#) and the [Food Standards Australia and New Zealand website](#).

Sport and Recreation will re-open changerooms for access but as stated above, Clubs are encouraged to limit any unnecessary social engagement. Changerooms will be subject to limitations on the number of people that can be inside based on the one person per 4 square metres rule.

Decisions regarding access to communal spaces such as clubrooms, canteens and changerooms in non-government facilities is at the discretion of the owner/manager.

In NSW, clubs are not permitted to open their clubhouse/rooms, changerooms or canteen under current restrictions.

## **CAN SPECTATORS ATTEND?**

Spectators are permitted to gather in groups of 100 in the ACT and 20 in NSW. Multiple groups are permitted to gather at one venue. Club return to Football Plans need to outline a range of measures to manage spectators. In particular spectators should be separated from participants, should maintain physical distancing of at least 1.5 metres, and be prevented from merging or congregating together.

Spectators are an important part of the football community but in the current environment measures need to be put in place to manage potential risks. It is recommended that Clubs maintain a minimum number of officials, administrators, referees and spectators at this time to ensure physical distancing can be maintained.

Capital Football recognises that particularly in the MiniRoos and junior football space, the attendance of a parent or guardian is usually necessary. One adult per minor participant is recommended to minimise the number of spectators.

### **CAN PLAYERS AND OR SPECTATORS GATHER SOCIALLY AFTER GAMES?**

Even with the reintroduction of full-contact training activities, Step 2.2 continues to support the “get in, train and get out” principle. Any social engagement beyond the current training and MiniRoos programs should be discouraged.

### **CAN GOVERNMENT AND CAPITAL FOOTBALL SUPPORT CLUBS WITH IMPLEMENTING ADDITIONAL HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS AT GOVERNMENT OWNED VENUES?**

Capital Football has developed signage specific to ACT and NSW restrictions which Clubs can print off to use at their venues. Two of Capital Football’s partners are offering hand sanitiser deals to local clubs and participants. For more information visit the [Capital Football website](#).

ACT Sport and Recreation Facilities have installed additional soap dispensers in toilet facilities at sportsgrounds. All ACT Government sportsground facilities will also be cleaned weekly by a professional cleaning company.

Clubs are encouraged to remind all members to take responsibility for their own hygiene requirements, including provision of sanitiser, tissues and wipes as required.

## **FIELD BOOKINGS**

### **HOW DO I BOOK AN ACT SPORTSGROUND FOR MID-WEEK TRAINING?**

- ▶ I have an existing booking from prior to the suspension of football activities

All bookings made in the ACT Sport and Recreation booking system prior to the suspension of football have now been returned to an active status. Should you wish to cancel or adjust any bookings, please contact ACT Sport and Rec on 6207 5141 or email [sportsgrounds@act.gov.au](mailto:sportsgrounds@act.gov.au)

- ▶ I am a historic user but did not make any bookings prior to the suspension of football.

You will need to make a booking via the ACT Sport and Recreation booking system. Should you require any assistance with the booking system, please contact ACT Sport and Recreation on 6207 5141 or email [sportsgrounds@act.gov.au](mailto:sportsgrounds@act.gov.au)

- ▶ I am not a historic user or I am from NSW and would like to make a booking

You will need to work with both Capital Football and ACT Sport and Recreation, to find a suitable venue for your training requirements. In the first instance, the appropriate Club



administrator should contact Kelly Stirton ([kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au)) at Capital Football and discuss what your specific needs are. Capital Football will then liaise with ACT Sport and Recreation and negotiate a plan forward that compliments current clubs' bookings and then advise you of the next steps.

- ▶ I placed bookings prior to the suspension of football activities but may no longer require all of those bookings placed

Due to the number of NSW and University clubs who are also trying to obtain access to grounds, we ask that any club who may no longer require their booking (whether in its entirety or in some aspect i.e. alteration to times) cancels or adjusts those bookings to ensure everyone is able to obtain access to venues during this challenging time.

Should you wish to cancel or adjust any bookings already made, please contact ACT Sport and Recreation on 6207 5141 or email [sportsgrounds@act.gov.au](mailto:sportsgrounds@act.gov.au) and copy in Kelly Stirton ([kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au)) at Capital Football. ACT Sport and Recreation will cancel your booking and Capital Football will note this in case another club is looking for access to grounds.

### **CAN I BOOK AN ACT SPORTSGROUND FOR WEEKEND TRAINING?**

As competitions are unable to resume at this point in time, ACT Sport and Recreation have opened grounds to be booked for weekend training, under the following conditions:

- ▶ Grounds are available on the weekend from 12.00pm-5.30pm. There will be no match play and sportsground flood lights will not be turned on.
- ▶ There will be three daily training sessions of 90 minutes each with a 15 minute changeover between hirers. The times are (which allows for dusk getting earlier):
  - ▶ 12.00pm – 1.30pm
  - ▶ 1.45pm – 3.15pm
  - ▶ 3.30pm - 5.00pm
- ▶ On grounds where there are multiple allocated sports during the week, these clubs will all be given the opportunity to access the same field on the weekend. Where a sport has the training 5 nights a week – they will receive all 6 time slots on the weekend if requested.
- ▶ ACT Sport and Recreation will make the final determination where there are unresolved conflicts.
- ▶ I am a historic user; how do I make a booking?

You will need to make a booking via the ACT Sport and Recreation booking system. Should you require any assistance with the booking system please contact ACT Sport and Recreation on 6207 5141 or email [sportsgrounds@act.gov.au](mailto:sportsgrounds@act.gov.au).

Please note: the existing suspended match play bookings for weekends will remain in the system. This means when you are attempting to make a training booking it will come up with a conflict message. Please continue to press through with the booking to the end and a staff member will approve it.

- ▶ I am not a historic user or I am from NSW; how do I make a booking?

You will need to work with both Capital Football and ACT Sport and Recreation, to find a suitable venue for your training requirements. In the first instance, the appropriate club administrator should contact Kelly Stirton ([kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au](mailto:kelly.stirton@capitalfootball.com.au)) and discuss what your specific needs are. Capital Football will then liaise with ACT Sport and Recreation and negotiate a plan forward that compliments current clubs' bookings and then advise you of the next steps.