



Bowls Victoria: navigating a return to play, COVID guidelines for Bowls Clubs

Key introductory points:

- Information is changing rapidly, be sure to check the BV website, Facebook page and DHHS for updates.
- Check with your local council for any rules they may have.
- There can be different rules where clubs are interstate but affiliated with BV, awareness of the local rules is a must.
- At all times, keep safe and use common-sense.
- If any member is unwell, tell them to get tested and not attend the club.
- Be patient with others, particularly those who are trying to construct/interpret rules and regulations.

The following pages are designed to complement the guidelines on the BV, DHHS and SRV websites.

UPDATED: 10 November 2020 (V6)

Topic of advice	ALL OF VICTORIA (Metropolitan and Regional) (Third Step as of 9 November 2020)
Masks	<p>The Victorian Government have clarified their advice on masks as of 30 October 2020. All Victorian's must wear a mask unless they have a lawful excuse not to wear a mask – as per the direction of the Victorian State Government.</p> <p>The definitive guidance has been updated by DHHS on 30 October 2020 and is shown here which includes lawful reasons not to wear a mask and other government directives: https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/face-masks-vic-covid-19</p> <p>For the sport of bowls, a mask must be worn and should only be lowered to enable a player to play their shot, communicate game play (tactics or instructions), to momentarily regain composure if a player is short of breath or any other valid safety reason.</p> <p>Wearing a face covering protects you/your community by providing an additional physical barrier to COVID-19.</p> <p>Where a person has a lawful excuse not to wear a mask, the club takes no responsibility in any fine or sanction applied under law to the individual (e.g. by the Police).</p> <p>When playing in NSW located clubs, NSW law applies.</p>
Masks and eating, drinking or smoking	<p>Can I remove my face covering to smoke or use an e-cigarette? Yes, subject to existing restrictions on smoking in public places in Victoria. A person may remove their face covering to smoke or use an e-cigarette, but must put a face covering back on as soon as they finish.</p> <p>The hand-to-mouth action of smoking and e-cigarette use means that people who smoke may be more vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19), as they are touching their face and mouth more often. You should wash your hands as soon as you finish and not share an individual cigarette or vaping device.</p> <p>Can I take my face covering off when eating or drinking? Yes. You can take your face covering off when eating or drinking. You should maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres and practise good hygiene. Eating and drinking should not be used as an excuse not to wear a face covering. You must use common sense and wear a face covering at all times where possible.</p> <p>Do I need to put on a new face covering if I take it off to eat or drink? If you are using a mask, it is best if you put on a new face covering to avoid the risk of contamination from touching the front of the face covering. If it is not possible, make sure to wash your hands with soap and water before you put on your face covering.</p>

	<p>If you are using a reusable mask you should carry a paper bag or zip lock bag with you to carry clean masks and keep them clean. If it is not possible, make sure to wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel before you put on your face covering.</p> <p>You should always wash your hands before and after changing your face covering.</p>
<p>Number of players</p>	<p>The restrictions on the number of players has changed as of 30 October 2020 and is now a little more complex.</p> <p>As per previous advice, outdoor non-contact sport can resume, limited to the minimum number of people required for the activity (e.g. players, necessary coaches and umpires), and applies to both club members and non members. There are further limits to the number of people permitted to play that do not apply to pennant or championships explained below.</p> <p>Not more than 10 members of the public in total are permitted at the outdoor facility at any one time, except where a distance of at least 10 metres between groups can be maintained at all times. For most clubs, this means groups of 10 then need a rink in between the next group of 10 and groups should not mix.</p> <p>As per the comments above, this total 10 person venue cap <u>does not apply</u> to community sport training and competition e.g. pennant, pennant practice and/or championships (where sanctioned by a state sporting association or equivalent governing body) which is instead limited to the minimum number of people required to participate in and conduct the activity.</p> <p>Outdoor greens only may be used and covered greens that are not fully enclosed are considered outdoor.</p> <p>For example, this means that if a club has 2 x pennant teams of 16 players, then they can conduct bowls with 64 players at their venue (2 x 16 = 32 players from the Home team, and 32 from the Away team).</p> <p>Clubs should consider how breaks will be managed given restrictions to clubhouse entry and may elect not to have a break. Additionally, staggered starting times should be considered to ease congestion of foot traffic.</p> <p>Clubs must set up their venue to ensure players can keep 1.5m apart at all times and can use the bank and surrounds to assist. Clubs and players should also consider options for inclement weather.</p> <p>The number of players doesn't include the minimum number of employees or agents of the person necessary to safely operate the facility are present at the facility to operate the facility. People must keep 1.5m apart at all times.</p>
<p>Social distancing</p>	<p>All players should keep 1.5m apart at all times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from shaking hands, high-fives or any contact with others.

<p>Access to the clubhouse</p>	<p>We have requested advice on whether a clubhouse can open from the State Government and at the time of publication we have not received a response.</p> <p>Toilets, showers and changerooms are definitely open and should be cleaned/sanitised regularly. No other information is known.</p>
<p>Sanitising and hygiene</p>	<p>Good hygiene is critical for slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Everyone should be taking the following hygiene actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, using soap and water, or use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 70 percent alcohol. • Wash your hands when you get home, arrive at other people’s homes, at venues or at work. • Wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or using the toilet. <p>https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/staying-safe-covid-19</p> <p>All attendees shall sanitise their hands upon arrival and leaving the venue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads shall also sanitise their hands after every end prior to picking up the mat and jack • All other players should sanitise their hands after every 6 ends.
<p>Travel, Transport and Carpooling</p>	<p>The DHHS website states:</p> <p>Can I have passengers in my car? <u>Where possible</u>, carrying passengers in your car should be avoided, unless they live in your household or are part of your bubble.</p> <p>The enclosed space of a car presents a heightened risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).</p> <p>The DHHS website further states: <i>Do I need to wear a face covering when I am driving?</i></p> <p><i>If you are driving alone or only travelling with people from your household, you do not need to wear a face covering. You must put your face covering on before you leave your vehicle or if you wind down the window to talk to someone, including at a drive through to collect food or goods where being served by another person.</i></p>

	<p><i>If you are driving with people for work or people you don't live with then you must wear a face covering unless you have a lawful excuse.</i></p> <p><i>For clarification if you don't have a licence or have a legitimate reason for not being able to drive then you are able to travel with another person. The passenger is required to travel in the rear seat diagonally across from the driver to ensure 1.5m separation is achieved. Masks must be worn.</i></p> <p><i>You must wear a face covering if you are a passenger or driver in a commercial vehicle such as a taxi or Uber, unless you have a lawful excuse.</i></p>
<p>'COVID Marshal' or 'COVID Officer'</p>	<p>BV recommends clubs have a designated COVID Marshal on duty at all times. We recommend having multiple COVID Marshals available to ensure there is always at least one COVID Marshal on duty during club opening hours. We stress that the role of a COVID marshal for sport is not onerous but provides some responsibility for ensuring participants use the sign in/out process to assist with contact tracing and to ensure the equipment is sanitised etc.</p> <p>A COVID Marshal must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be 18 years of age or over. • Take reasonable steps to visually identify as a COVID Marshal (whiteboard, rink marker, etc). <p>A COVID Marshal is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and ensure infection control practices (e.g. frequent hand washing) are followed. • Promote and take practical steps to ensure people* participating in the operations are complying with density requirements as per guidelines. • Promote and take practical steps to ensure people are physical distancing, comply with 1.5 metre rule. • Ensure that all COVID Safe Plans and COVID Management Plans (where relevant) or specific policies/protocols in relation to the prevention of coronavirus are effectively implemented and monitored. • Ensure that the operation has sufficient seating, hand washing facilities and cleaning regimes. <p>Other resources can be found here: https://www.sportaus.gov.au/return-to-sport# covid-19_safety_coordinator https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-marshals</p>
<p>Spectators</p>	<p>Spectators are only allowed if they are coaching, umpiring, or supervising children or if needed as support persons for persons with additional needs and exercising appropriate distancing requirements.</p> <p>If present, spectators must not gather in groups of more than 10.</p>

Members and non-members	<p>Members are permitted to play.</p> <p>Non-members are permitted to play.</p>
Breaks in play	<p>The historical tea break is not recommended in the current circumstances with the mandatory distancing requirements needed and the limit on numbers currently allowed inside Club rooms.</p> <p>Should any Club consider they can have a workable alternative arrangement that would allow them to provide a tea break outside of the Club Rooms than it is their responsibility to mutually arrange such with the visiting Club/Clubs.</p> <p>BV's recommendation is that Clubs consider playing straight through over 21 ends and that such be allowed with the Playing areas/Divisions Conditions of Play. This must be arranged prior to the commencement of any play and agreed on by both Clubs.</p> <p>A short break of 10 minutes can be arranged during the play period but this would be at differing times for each rink so as to not create a crowding and distancing issue.</p> <p>Breaks for bad weather and potential rain periods could cause a major concern for some home Clubs. Players will need to be able to seek whatever cover is available during any rain delay being mindful of social distancing requirements. If the available covered area is limited then Managers and Umpires may need to make an early decision on cancellation of play.</p> <p>Players should be prepared for inclement weather which may include rain-coats and/or spray jacket and/or an umbrella.</p>
Types of competitions	<p>Outdoor non-contact sport can resume, limited to the minimum number of people required for the activity (e.g. players, necessary coaches and umpires). People must keep 1.5m apart at all times.</p> <p>Pennant: can occur as per the comment above.</p> <p>Pennant Practice: can occur as per the comment above.</p> <p>Social play: can occur as per the comment above and the advice under the heading "Number of Players".</p> <p>Training/Practice/Roll-ups: can occur as per the comment above and the advice under the heading vice "Number of Players".</p> <p>Club Championships: can occur as per the comment above and the advice under the heading "Number of Players".</p> <p>Tournaments: can occur as per the comment above and the advice under the heading "Number of Players".</p> <p>Barefoot bowls: can occur as per the advice under the heading "Number of Players"</p>

<p>Equipment (mats and jacks etc)</p>	<p>All equipment must be sanitised when placed out by the home side and also by the lead bowlers prior to them commencing the end.</p> <p>Spray chalk and liquid chalk must be the only markers used.</p> <p>Players are not to touch other players bowls unless of absolute necessity. If such does occur further hand sanitising is required immediately.</p> <p>The handling of the mat and kitty is to be limited as much as possible to the leads.</p> <p>Leads' should use hand sanitiser prior to picking up the jack and the mat to commence the next end. Once the jack is rolled the Skip at the other end is to straighten it with his or her foot. Should the jack go into the ditch or out of bounds such should be collected with a lifter and returned as necessary. Skips picking up the mat should use a lifter, or if none available sanitise their hands regularly. Prior to further delivery the lead bowler will need to sanitise their hands.</p> <p>Under no circumstances can bowls be shared.</p> <p>The home team should supply one player per rink responsible for updating the scoreboard. Away teams should not touch the scoreboard.</p> <p>Pens to keep score should not be shared. For Regional areas not yet using BowlsLink and therefore still completing the yellow pennant-check forms, they are to be completed by the Home team only.</p>
<p>Contact tracing register</p>	<p>To support contact tracing, Clubs must request that each person who attends the premise for more than 15 minutes (including staff) provide (clubs can elect to record all persons regardless of the duration they spend in the club):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First name and Last name • Phone number <p>Clubs must keep a record of those details, and the date and time at which the person attended the facility. Where the patrons spend most of their time in a single space (i.e. a dining room), a record of the space used should also be kept. There is no need to keep multiple records if patrons move through multiple spaces. Records can be kept electronically or in hard copy. Records must be kept for 28 days. Entering player data accurately in BowlsLink will greatly assist with contact tracing.</p> <p>Records should be destroyed after 28 days.</p> <p>Pens used to record details should be wiped with an alcohol wipe between users.</p>

<p>Green and surrounds Maintenance</p>	<p>Greenkeeping and surrounds work is currently permitted, however, workers should be aware of the current rules in their area and ensure they practice recommended social distancing and sanitising.</p>
<p>Meals and drinks</p>	<p>The rules regarding meals are constantly changing and clubs should consult the DHHS website referring to the hospitality and club guidelines. https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/cafes-and-restaurants-regional-victoria-third-step-covid-19 and https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/Industry%20Restart%20Guidelines%20Hospitality.pdf</p> <p>Restaurants, cafes, pubs, canteens and other hospitality venues must have a COVID plan and are open for seated services only (no more than 10 per group/booking/table and 1.5m between groups/booking/table).</p> <p><u>INDOOR</u>: Maximum number of patrons is the number permitted by the density quotient (one patron per four square metres) or a maximum of 10 patrons per space, whichever is the lesser. Limit of 40 patrons indoors per venue. Infants under 12 months of age are not included in the limit. Temporary structures remain allowed to separate spaces, otherwise 5m distance is required between clusters of up to 10 patrons.</p> <p><u>OUTDOOR</u>: Maximum number of patrons is the number permitted by the density quotient (one patron per two square metres) or 70, whichever is the lesser. Limit of 70 patrons outdoors per venue. Infants under 12 months of age are not included in the limit</p> <p>Groups must be spaced at least 1.5 metres apart. Staff must clean tables after patrons leave. Clubs must keep patrons' contact details.</p>
<p>Temperature checks</p>	<p>Temperature checks of members and visitors may be useful as an added precaution in high-risk places such as hospitals and aged care facilities. This helps protect the vulnerable people in those settings.</p> <p>If the scanner's reading result is within the normal range of body temperature (equal to or less than 37.3°C) then it is considered safe to allow access to the location. If a person's temperature is equal to or in excess of 37.4°C, the designated screener must follow the procedure to manage a person with symptoms and the person will not be allowed to enter the location to commence work. The person shall be placed in an approved location until reassessment occurs.</p> <p>But temperature checks aren't always an accurate way of knowing whether someone has COVID-19. This is because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people with COVID-19 don't always have a fever • various other medical conditions or infection can cause a fever, not just COVID-19

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fever can go up and down during an infection or after taking medication—it might be down at the time of the check. • Temperature gauge calibration might not be 100% accurate.
Shared facilities – water fountains	Water fountains are not to be used until further notice. Clubs can provide or sell bottled water. Members can bring their own subject to the rules of the club.
Bins	Ensure there are plenty of bins situated around the facilities and cleaned regularly.
Shared facilities – toilets	<p>Minimise use of communal facilities (toilet or medical use only with strict social distancing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean bathrooms more frequently than lower traffic areas, especially taps, door handles and other frequently touched points. • Take all reasonable steps to ensure that frequently touched surfaces accessible to members of the public, including tables, bars, chairs, toilets and handrails, are cleaned regularly including when visibly soiled and post events or between groups. • Cleaning principles can be found via the SafeWork Australia website which should help as a reference point to what cleaning guidelines are recommended. https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/cleaning-table-covid19-2september2020.pdf
Use of club cutlery, crockery etc	<p>Venues may continue to use their cutlery, crockery and beverage containers with appropriate hygiene, cleaning and sanitation processes in place https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-sector-guidance-accommodation-and-food-services</p> <p>How often should surfaces be cleaned? This should be done regularly (at least twice a day) for high-touch surfaces, between users, and immediately after spills. Surfaces and fittings should also be cleaned immediately when visibly soiled. See Cleaning and disinfecting to reduce coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission - tips for business and construction sites.</p> <p>Personal items used in the workplace, such as glasses and phones, should be cleansed and disinfected frequently (e.g. by using isopropyl alcohol wipes).</p> <p>Workplace amenities, including kitchens, lunchrooms, communal areas, change rooms, toilets, drink fountains and vending machines, should also be regularly cleaned. https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-sector-guidance-accommodation-and-food-services</p> <p>Are smoking areas allowed?</p>

	<p>Yes. However, no food or drink is permitted in these areas. These areas count towards density quotients/patron caps.</p> <p>You must also take into account the requirements of the Tobacco Act, which are set out on the BetterHealth website and COVIDSafe measures such as social distancing must be adhered to in these areas. https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-sector-guidance-accommodation-and-food-services</p>
Bringing meals from home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No communal food/drinks shall be supplied by clubs. Players and officials shall either bring their own personal drinks/food or purchase at any available canteen/kiosk. • Any food brought to the match should be in a sealed or pre-packaged container. <p>Canteens, kiosks or at-venue dining facilities may be opened in line with 'industry restart hospitality guidelines' including the 'four and two square metre rule' and density poster signage. Check with your council for assistance if required.</p> <p>Home Clubs to provide tea and coffee facilities as their facilities permit. Individual players to provide their own food/water.</p> <p>Cash can still be accepted as payment, but it is strongly recommended that all clubs use contactless payments.</p> <p>https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-sector-guidance-accommodation-and-food-services</p>
Shared facilities – tea/coffee stations	<p>Shared/Communal tea and coffee stations are not to be used until further notice. Clubs can provide tea or coffee (i.e. served by volunteers/staff and not for general member use). Members can bring their own subject to the rules of the club.</p>
Signage requirements	<p>Clubs should display all signage as per DHHS guidelines.</p> <p>Copies of a selection of posters are available for download from the following link: https://www.bowlsvic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Club-Poster-COVID-19-Step-3-Regional.pdf</p>
AGMs	<p>Outdoor AGMs can occur for up to 70 persons which is an opportunity to conduct an AGM in person (subject to physical distancing of 1.5m).</p> <p>Online meetings can also occur which your RBM can assist you to set up.</p>

<p>Should the club provide sanitiser?</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>HAND SANITISER (ALCOHOL-BASED ANTIBACTERIAL WITH MINIMUM 70% ALCOHOL (ETHANOL))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol-based hand sanitisers - min. 70% alcohol (ethanol) content must be readily available at facilities for all training/games. • Soap/Handwash must be readily available in all bathrooms/toilets. • Clubs must ensure that frequently touched surfaces and objects (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles) are cleaned regularly when in use. <p>Ensure signs that can't be secured, and club-based sanitiser are safely stored. If the club stores large quantities of sanitiser check with the manufacturer for storage instructions as the Dangerous Goods Act 1985 (Vic) has required protocols for the storage and handling of flammable and combustible liquids with respect to hand sanitiser. To reduce the likelihood of excess storage at the club consider each team storing some sanitiser for match day offsite.</p>
<p>What to do if someone contracts COVID</p>	<p>Anyone who is unwell should not be at a club/workplace. If anyone develops symptoms at the club/work such as fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath, you should ask them to seek medical advice.</p> <p>It is important to remember that if a person becomes sick with these symptoms at work they may be suffering from a cold, the flu or other respiratory illness and not COVID-19.</p> <p>For the full list of steps to take, visit: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/office/covid-19-your-workplace</p>
<p>Gaming</p>	<p>Clubs with Gaming should consult the guidelines: https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/Industry%20Restart%20Guidelines%20Hospitality.pdf</p>