



Arrive
Play
Leave

Return to Play Guidelines
Level C July 1 2020

Introduction

The impact of COVID-19 had resulted in the suspension of all Softball activities from late March and now with NSW Government advice the resumption of competition can occur from July 1st 2020.

During this time, the priority of Softball NSW has been to provide regular updates and also safeguard the health and wellbeing of the community and to do everything we can to slow down the spread of COVID-19.

As such, these guidelines are set out to follow government directions as at the date stated above. This document and its conditions will be adjusted in accordance with further future government directives.

These guidelines provide an outline for our community to resume competition from July 1st 2020.

These Return to Play Guidelines will supersede the previously advertised Guidelines:

- Return to Train Guidelines Level 1 May 22nd, 2020
- Return to Train Guidelines Level 2 June 13th, 2020

With the NSW Government announcing the Return to Play/Competition as of July 1 appropriate guidelines and resources have now been developed to assist Associations, Clubs, Individuals, Officials, Parents and Carers.

Given that Softball is played outdoors, the risk of infection through playing sport is minimal, and now with the rate of infection greatly reduced, it is time to reintroduce Softball competition.

Having had 4 - 5 weeks of training with the previous Return to Training Guidelines, we need to continue to satisfy players, volunteers and their families that it is safe to do so, and to ensure that venue operators (typically local councils) and others are satisfied that our Associations and Clubs are taking reasonable steps to keep people safe

Please note: On Friday 12 June, NSW Government released its COVID-19 Safety Plan Template for Community Sporting Organisations. Softball NSW has been advised, some Councils and Local Government Agencies (LGA) may require this to be completed and submitted prior to allowing ground hirers to return to competitive Softball, while for other authorities the submission of the Softball NSW Return to Play Guidelines and other related resources will suffice. A Softball NSW developed Template for the benefit of Associations/Clubs can be found at the Softball NSW COVID Resource Library- <https://nsw.softball.org.au/covid-resources/>



Getting Back on the Diamond Level C Training & Play

Softball NSW is following the framework provided by the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) Level C and is implementing Level 3 of the Australian Government Roadmap to a COVIDSafe Australia, as of Wednesday 1st July 2020.

The Australian
Institute of Sport
Framework for
Rebooting Sport



The Federal
Government's
COVIDsafe Australia
Roadmap



Full squad training is now allowed. Whereas previously, it was advised to divide the Diamond into thirds with no more than 10 people per third, or halves with no more than 20 people per half. This has now been relaxed and the amount of space that a team trains within is up to the Associations, Clubs and ground allocations.

For all intents and purposes, the organisation of training sessions – as they were prior to COVID-19 - can be resumed.

That being said, Softball NSW continues to recommend the practices of good hygiene.

Getting Back on the Diamond Level C Training & Play

WHAT IS ALLOWED FOR TRAINING

- Full Team Training is now allowed.
- Full competitive training with no restrictions is allowed
- Training games are allowed
- Body contact is now allowed
- Sharing of equipment is allowed however continue to maintain cleaning and disinfectant measures
- Use of changerooms should be limited to umpires with social distancing, hygiene protocols and cleaning recommended.
- Once training has finished, social activity should be limited to essential activities only.

WHAT IS ALLOWED FOR PLAY

- Full competitive matches permitted within the normal rules of the Game
- With team dugouts and umpire changerooms we will ensure a minimum of 1.5 metres between each person.
- Use of changerooms should be limited to umpires with social distancing, hygiene protocols and cleaning recommended
- Schedule time between games/training sessions when possible, to enable all attendees to arrive and exit the facility safely, with minimal contact with others.
- Social distancing of 1.5 metre between spectators (e.g. parents/carers).
- Once the game has finished, social activity should be limited to essential activities only.

Organising Training & Games: Coaches, Officials, Clubs & Associations

Planning & Conduct

- Record of attendance at training and games are maintained and coordinated by a nominated member of each club.
- Players, Team Management, Umpires & Officials will provide their own hand sanitiser within the facility and ensure it is regularly utilised and refilled.
- With team dugouts and umpire changerooms we will ensure a minimum of 1.5 metres between each person. Where possible, we will mark seats with signage/masking tape and if necessary, provide additional seating.
- Will schedule time between games/training sessions when possible, to enable all attendees to arrive and exit the facility safely, with minimal contact with others.
- Where practical, some degree of social distancing should be considered
- Any handling of shared equipment is to be kept to a minimum.
- Parents/spectators may attend training and games, however they must follow the social distancing protocols.
- Regular breaks are to be provided for the purpose of rehydrating and hand sanitising.
- Toilets will be open for public use and will display clear signage to indicate the recommended number of people entering. Restriction on the number of people using the toilets at any one time to apply dependent upon the size of the amenities.
- Soap and sanitiser to be available in the toilets at all times.
- Players should not arrive more than 15 minutes prior to training/games commencing, and if arriving by car, remain in the car until 5 minutes before training to avoid gatherings.
- Ideally, players are to come already prepared to train/play
- Players are to enter and leave the diamond and venue in a coordinated manner minimising contact with others and not gathering in large groups.
- No social activity is to occur once training/play has concluded.
- Download the COVIDsafe App and keep a list of people at training or game to enable contact tracing

Training, Game Hygiene & Ball Sanitation Protocols

- All personnel to provide their own personal sanitiser. This must be applied prior to warm up, prior to game, during innings changeover and after game.
- The banning of non-essential person to person contact such as; handshakes and high fives.
- Communal use of water bottles is banned. All players should be in possession of their own drink bottle and must not share with any other players. These should all be clearly labelled.
- Must not share towels, lip balm, sunscreen with others (have own).
- Where possible no sharing of any equipment between players including; gloves, helmets and bats.
If shared, the following protocols should be implemented:
 - Bats: if shared, the handle needs to be wiped between each batter's use
 - Helmets: if shared, enough helmets to have one spare (recommended to have at least 5 per team) – participants to wear their club hat/visor underneath as an added barrier – dedicated person to clean each communal helmet as it is used.
- It is recommended that there is no spitting, no chewing gum, no food is to be in the dugouts – this includes lollies, oranges etc.
- All personal belongings to be stored in bags in the dugouts (e.g. jumpers once removed to be placed into their own bag) – not left lying around.
- We encourage there to be a dedicated person for each team in the dugout (Manager or other) to remind the participants to be diligent with their hygiene each time they enter and exit the dugouts. As well as assist the umpires with maintaining ball sanitation

Training, Game Hygiene & Ball Sanitation Protocols

Process for Ball Usage & Sanitation

- A dedicated person from each team will maintain the ball sanitation protocol. This would ideally be the Manager.
- All participants are to be diligent with their hand hygiene and clean regularly throughout games with wipes, sanitiser, soap etc. prior to game and during innings changeover
- At the commencement of the game as well as at the end of each innings (also when returned from out of bounds), the ball in play is given to the dedicated person in the dugout who will oversee washing/sanitisation then return the ball to the umpire
- The umpire will give a ball to the catcher who will return to the pitcher.

N.B Ideal products for this include No Rinse Antibacterial hand wash/sanitiser with alcohol content.

Individual Behaviours

Arrive
Play
Leave

Behaviours

- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash hands with soap and water often.
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- No spitting at any time.
- Wipe down all surfaces and objects with appropriate anti-bacterial/disinfectant wipes or soap, particularly those frequently touched. This includes door handles, light switches, kitchen surfaces, bathroom surface, phones, remote controls and any other high touch areas.
- Do not share drink bottles.
- Do not touch mobile phones during breaks in play or training
- Practice social distancing. If someone comes and stand next to you, move around the field and ensure you implement social distancing requirements.

Individual Responsibilities Checklist

Arrive
Play
Leave

Personal Considerations

Yes | No

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. I have considered downloading the COVIDSafe app? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. I am up to date with all the latest COVID-19 information from the NSW Government? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Have I been unwell with flu like-symptoms in the past 14 days? If yes, I am not to attend training | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. I have showered and changed before heading to training? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. I will wash and sanitise my hands regularly at the Diamonds? (when appropriate) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. I will check in and out via the Team Attendance Register at the venue? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. I will "Arrive, Train/Play, Leave"? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. I will maintain social distancing (1.5 metres) where possible? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Do I have my own labelled water bottle that I won't share? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. I will avoid spitting and will use a tissue to blow my nose? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. I will avoid physical contact? (e.g. high fives, handshakes etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. Do I have access to all my own equipment? (i.e. bat, glove, etc) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. I will allow my coaching staff to handle all communal equipment. (e.g. cones, balls etc.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. Am I in a high-risk category? (ie elderly, immunocompromised). If yes, seek medical advice, consider avoiding communal activities and inform your club of your individual training routine | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Preparing for Playing & Training

Arrive
Play
Leave

Officials & Coaches

- Ensure the 'Organising Training Planning & Conduct' steps are followed
- Effectively Communicate session details, location and time as well as the 1 Page Guidelines to athletes and carers.
- Hand hygiene stations at the entry and exits of the dugout & bullpens.
- Provide hand washing guidance to all participants and volunteers.
- Wipe down all surfaces and objects with appropriate anti-bacterial /disinfectant wipes or soap, particularly those frequently touched. This includes door handles, light switches, kitchen surfaces, bathroom surface, phones, remote controls and any other high touch areas.
- Where possible set up training space on Diamond inline with social distancing protocols.
- Use caution throughout all sessions/games.

Players & Carers

- Tasks that can be completed at home should be (stretching/recovery)
- Must not arrive more than 15 minutes prior to training/game commencing, and if arriving by vehicle, remain in the vehicle until 5 minutes before training/game to avoid gatherings.
- Bring personal Sanitiser
- Maintain social distancing protocols.
- Come already prepared to train/play – changing rooms will not be in use.
- Bring their own drink bottles and they must to be clearly labelled. No sharing of drink bottles is to be permitted.
- Leave the venue immediately once the training/game has concluded.

Preparing for Playing & Training

Arrive
Play
Leave

Illness

Prior to participating in or attending any Softball activity, we have advised all players, umpires, scorers, team management, parents/carers and other Association/Club members they must not attend training or games, if in the past 14 days if they have:

- been unwell or had any flu-like symptoms, or
- been in contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19, or
- 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.

Softball NSW encourages the regular use of the following resources and websites in order to obtain accurate information:

- Australian Government Department of Health
<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- NSW Government Department of Health
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/covid-19/Pages/default.aspx>
- World Health Organisation: <https://www.who.int/> Australian Institute of Sport: <https://ais.gov.au/health-wellbeing/covid-19>
- Sport Australia: <https://www.sportaus.gov.au/>

A range of COVID-19 “campaign resources” produced by the Federal Government, including posters outlining hygiene practices (e.g. promoting regular and thorough hand washing) can be found at:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-campaign-resources>

Coaching Responsibilities Checklist

Arrive
Play
Leave

Pre-Session/Game

1. Check that athletes have viewed and understood the Individual Checklist

Yes | No

2. Check the Coach Checklist and relevant COVID resources in the Softball NSW COVID resource library at <https://nsw.softball.org.au/covid-resources/>

3. Vigilant to the following:

- Session/Game arrival times & session start time
- Having personal, labelled water bottle **NO SHARING ALLOWED!!**
- Washing hands and sanitising before and after session
- Driving to session/game in own vehicles - unless house shared with other member of squad/team (i.e. no car pooling)

Start of Session/Game

1. Adhere to stipulated training numbers (total includes athletes and coaches)

2. Remind athletes:

- Agreed physical distancing rules
- **NO SHARING** of water bottles
- Hands washed and sanitised
- Coaching staff to set up/handle any training equipment

Coaching Responsibilities Checklist

Arrive
Play
Leave

During Session/Game

1. Monitor physical distancing rules
2. Monitor athletes to ensure they are not sharing water bottles
3. Any shared equipment sanitised at appropriate intervals
4. Remind athletes to wash and sanitise hands on leaving venue
5. Coaching staff only to move/change training equipment
6. Enforce the Ball & Equipment Hygiene protocols as per the Training, Game Hygiene & Ball sanitation protocols
7. Ensure athletes leave venue immediately (no post session 'socialising')

Yes | No

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Post Session/Game

1. Coach to clear and remove all training aids used
2. Sanitise training aides

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Facilities

- Ensure spaces at each facility, surfaces and objects are regularly cleaned with disinfectant.
- Promote regular and thorough hand washing by volunteers and participants.
- Provide sanitising hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the venue.
- Ensure sanitising hand rub dispensers are regularly refilled.
- Ensure soap dispensers in toilets are regularly refilled.
- Ensure bins are provided around the venue.

Individuals

- Players, officials, volunteers and/or their parents/carers should carry hand sanitiser on their person in order to enable good personal hygiene.
- Maintain social distancing protocols
- If using tissues, place them directly in the bins provided.
- Seek to avoid the use of public toilets, however if necessary, ensure hands are washed thoroughly.
- Each participant is to provide their own drink bottle that is clearly labelled and is only used by that individual. No sharing of drink bottles.
- No sharing of pens or clip boards, each volunteer must bring their own to venues.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.



Guidelines for Return to Play

THESE 'RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES' ARE THE NEXT LEVEL, AND PROVIDE FOR THE RESUMPTION OF FULL COMPETITIVE GAMES AND OTHER SOFTBALL ACTIVITIES AT ALL AGES AND FOR ALL LEVELS ACROSS THE VARIOUS COMPETITIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

Be Prepared to Train/Play

- Tasks that can be completed at home should be (stretching/recovery)
- Must not arrive more than 15 minutes prior to training/game commencing, and if arriving by vehicle, remain in the vehicle until 5 minutes before training to avoid gatherings.
- Come already prepared to train/play – changing rooms will be minimally used.
- Bring their own drink bottles and they must be clearly labelled. No sharing of drink bottles is to be permitted.
- Leave the venue immediately once the training/game session has concluded.

Arrive
Play
Leave

Social Distancing

- With team dugouts and umpire changerooms we will ensure a minimum of 1.5 metres between each person.
- Social distancing of 1.5 metres between spectators (e.g. parents/carers).
- No hand shaking, high fives or body contact
- Stagger arrival and/or departure times when possible for different groups and teams.
- Do not hang around the diamond or facility pre or post training/game.



Illness

- If you feel unwell, do not attend training/games and you must seek medical clearance before returning
- If you have had contact in the past 14 days with a known or suspected case of COVID-19 you must not attend training/game & seek medical clearance before returning
- All suspected cases must be reported



Hygiene & Contact

- All persons must have own personal sanitiser
- Hand hygiene pre, during & post training/game.
- Thorough, full body showers with soap @ home before and after training.
- Hand hygiene at the entry and exits of the dugout & bullpens.
- Minimise sharing of equipment.
- Cleaning of personal equipment post training.



Contact Tracing

- Records of attendance at training are maintained and coordinated by a nominated member of each Team, Club or Association.
- Download the COVIDsafe App and keep a list of people at training to enable contact tracing.



