



National Guidelines for restarting club environments



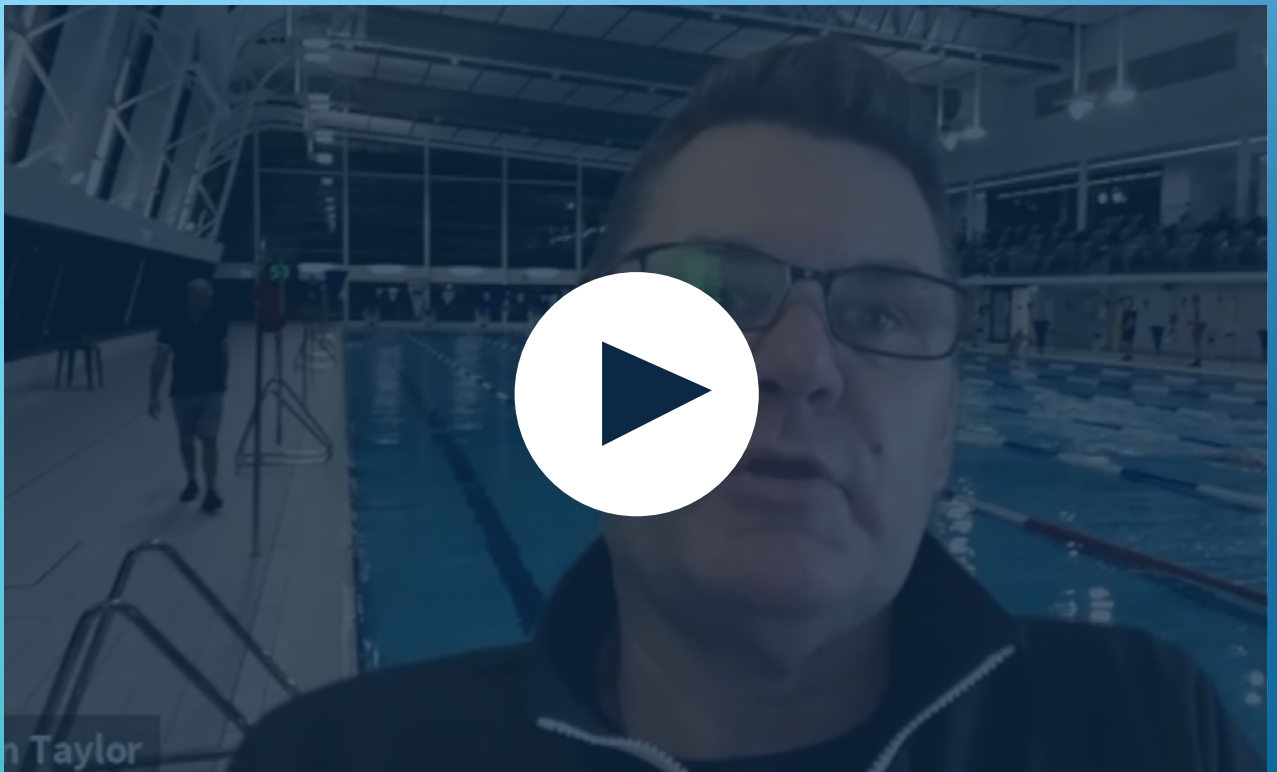
DISCLAIMERS:

This position is current as at 9am (AEST) on 14th May 2020.

Our guidelines must be considered against our remit as a national governing body for the sport of swimming, with a key focus on club/competitive swimming and elite athlete programs. These guidelines have been prepared for club officials, club coaches, parents and swimmers. While some of the following guidelines may be useful in the resumption of activity in the learn to swim environment (swim schools), Swimming Australia acknowledges the various industry bodies that are working on a safe return to the pool in the learn to swim environment, which is outside of our jurisdiction as the governing body for the sport of swimming.

While all care has been taken in the preparation of these guidelines and templates, Swimming Australia, its State/Territory Swimming Associations and ASCTA have not and cannot make any representation or warranty that relying on this guide and the templates will ensure the health and safety of participants in club, venue or swimming activities. Neither Swimming Australia, your State/Territory Swimming Association or ASCTA are liable to users of this guide and the templates for any loss or damage however caused resulting from the use of this guide and templates, nor do they accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information or your reliance upon it. You should consider whether you wish to obtain your own medical and legal advice.

WELCOME BACK TO THE POOL



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SECTION A

Returning to the pool – A guide for clubs and coaches

The following document has been developed to assist in the restarting of activity for swimming clubs across Australia. This information is designed to assist swimming club officials and coaches and seeks to provide further information for operating as safely as possible.

This document should be read in conjunction with the [AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport](#) that has been developed to assist sports recommence in a cautious and methodical manner. These guidelines should also be considered with each state and territory public health information/restrictions in place, and we recommend liaison with your relevant state swimming association. The AIS Framework covers high performance and community sport and is a general guide for sports as they look to resume activity.

In particular, the AIS Framework has 15 national principles for the resumption of sport and recreation activities and this document seeks to follow the principles, while providing more specific information pertinent to swimming clubs. The 15 principles are –

1. Resumption of sport and recreation activities can contribute many health, economic, social and cultural benefits to Australian society emerging from the COVID-19 environment.
2. Resumption of sport and recreation activities should not compromise the health of individuals or the community.
3. Resumption of sport and recreation activities will be based on objective health information to ensure they are conducted safely and do not risk increased COVID-19 local transmission rates.
4. All decisions about resumption of sport and recreation activities must take place with careful reference to these National Principles following close consultation with Federal, State/Territory and/or Local Public Health Authorities, as relevant.
5. The AIS 'Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment' provides a guide for the reintroduction of sport and recreation in Australia, including high performance sport. The AIS Framework incorporates consideration of the differences between contact and non-contact sport and indoor and outdoor activity. Whilst the three phases A, B and C of the AIS Framework provide a general guide, individual jurisdictions may provide guidance on the timing of introduction of various levels of sport participation with regard to local epidemiology, risk mitigation strategies and public health capacity.
6. International evidence to date is suggestive that outdoor activities are a lower risk setting for COVID-19 transmission. There is no good data on risks of indoor sporting activity but, at this time, the risk is assumed to be greater than for outdoor sporting activity, even with similar mitigation steps taken.
7. All individuals who participate in, and contribute to, sport and recreation will be considered in resumption plans, including those at the high performance/professional level, those at the community competitive level, and those who wish to enjoy passive (non-contact) individual sports and recreation.
8. Resumption of community sport and recreation activity should take place in a staged fashion with an initial phase of small group (<10) activities in a non-contact fashion, prior to moving on to a subsequent phase of large group (>10) activities including full contact training/competition in sport. Individual jurisdictions will determine progression through these phases, taking account of local epidemiology, risk mitigation strategies and public health capability.
 - This includes the resumption of children's outdoor sport with strict physical distancing measures for non-sporting attendees such as parents.
 - This includes the resumption of outdoor recreational activities including (but not limited to) outdoor-based personal training and boot camps, golf, fishing, bush-walking, swimming, etc.

9. Significantly enhanced risk mitigation (including avoidance and physical distancing) must be applied to all indoor activities associated with outdoor sporting codes (e.g. club rooms, training facilities, gymnasias and the like).
 10. For high performance and professional sporting organisations, the regimen underpinned in the AIS Framework is considered a minimum baseline standard required to be met before the resumption of training and match play, noting most sports and participants are currently operating at level A of the AIS Framework.
 11. If sporting organisations are seeking specific exemptions in order to recommence activity, particularly with regard to competitions, they are required to engage with, and where necessary seek approvals from, the respective State/Territory and/or Local Public Health Authorities regarding additional measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.
 12. At all times sport and recreation organisations must respond to the directives of Public Health Authorities. Localised outbreaks may require sporting organisations to again restrict activity and those organisations must be ready to respond accordingly. The detection of a positive COVID-19 case in a sporting or recreation club or organisation will result in a standard public health response, which could include quarantine of a whole team or large group, and close contacts, for the required period.
 13. The risks associated with large gatherings are such that, for the foreseeable future, elite sports, if recommenced, should do so in a spectator-free environment with the minimum support staff available to support the competition. Community sport and recreation activities should limit those present to the minimum required to support the participants (e.g. one parent or carer per child if necessary).
 14. The sporting environment (training and competition venues) should be assessed to ensure precautions are taken to minimise risk to those participating in sport and those attending sporting events as spectators (where and when permissible).
 15. The safety and well-being of the Australian community will be the priority in any further and specific decisions about the resumption of sport, which will be considered by the COVID-19 Sports and Health Committee.
- It is important to remember that all plans must comply with local, state and federal public health guidelines which at this time, vary across the various jurisdictions across the country. There are a number of links at the end of the AIS document that will assist clubs in keeping up to date with the latest information pertaining to COVID-19. Decisions and processes of facility owners and their associated business will also impact club planning.
- Swimming is an important sport and recreation activity for millions of Australians. Over 4.5 million Aussies swim each week, with nearly 900 swimming clubs of competitive swimming participants across the country. Swimming is a big part of our lifestyle and getting back to the water safely as soon as is possible is the goal. As with all sport and exercise activity at this time, the resumption of swimming must follow guidelines for social distancing and hygiene practices. As a non-contact sport, swimming can safely comply with social distancing measures currently in place and does not require direct contact between people (swimmers, coaches and club officials).

As restrictions change

- Keep up to date with the latest COVID-19 information and continually communicate any changes to your club members.
- Be aware that although we expect restrictions will be eased over time, safety precautions must remain in place in accordance with state requirements relative to availability of vaccinations or effective treatment for the coronavirus.

SECTION B

COVID-19 and pools

According to the scientific literature, there is no increased risk of contracting COVID-19 from swimming in chlorinated pools, and pool operators adhering to previously set guidelines will control risk from waterborne COVID-19 .

Further, the US based Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to people through water in pools but individuals need to continue to protect themselves and others both in and out of the water through following appropriate social distancing measures and good hand hygiene practices.

Following the AIS guidelines, it is imperative that all swimmers follow the 'get in, train, get out' approach and avoid showering/using changeroom facilities.

Swimming Australia commends the work of Royal Life Saving Australia (RLSA) on its "COVID-19 Pandemic and the Case for Re-opening Aquatic Centres and Swim Schools" document of 30 April 2020 that can be found [here](#).

The RLSA document draws on insights from the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and includes an analysis of some aquatic adaptations to COVID-19 regarding public health measures extracted from AHPPC statements covering public health, community sport and swimming pools.

The RLSA document also highlights that:

- Just as was seen with the process of closures, we can expect Federal or State Government to formulate policies allowing for the re-opening of facilities, but see fragmentation in implementation across communities as local government and business owners conduct risk assessments and make decisions based on multiple factors.
- This fragmentation may be compounded by differences in approaches by States and Territories who may adopt slightly different strategies and at staggered timelines. However, this does provide our industry with an opportunity to learn lessons from those States and Territories who choose to re-open soonest.

SECTION C

Recommendations for clubs and coaches to minimise risk to swimming environments

1. Each club should have a COVID-19 liaison responsible for staying up to date on community and state recommendations and any associated changes. This responsibility is important and needs consideration of who might be best placed to undertake the specific tasks below. Each club/coach may approach this differently but it is recommended that a senior club official undertake the role of liaison. Before the resumption of activity, we recommend one or more persons undertake the [‘COVID-19 infection control training’](#) provided by the Government (30 min module). Once complete, the COVID-19 liaison can fill out the Resumption of Club Swimming Checklist (see Attachment 1) to answer the following questions guiding your steps –
2. What are the current local /state restrictions re COVID-19?
 - What is the transmission data for your local area?
 - How will you share information and communicate to parents and swimmers re plans in place?
 - What are the community expectations in your area? Returning is as much a reputational risk as it is a health activity.
 - Why are you returning to training?
3. Where your club swims, what restrictions have the pool operators/local officials put in place? Are you aware of any concerns or additional measures that your facility has in place that may impact the resumption of club activity? How are they mitigating risk – e.g. has the pool facility owner got a plan in place for social distancing measures around pool deck, entrances, change rooms? Is there a plan in place to increase air flow around the pool while swimmers are training? What plan does the club need to follow specifically around social distancing in relation to where you train?
4. How will the club limit possible infection around water bottles, equipment?
5. How will you manage numbers of swimmers at any time within the guidelines?
6. What is the plan should a coach/swimmer become sick whilst training? (See Section E).
7. What is your communication plan to your club should a case of COVID-19 be confirmed? (Please note that clubs must immediately log any COVID-19 case with

their State/Territory Swimming Association.)

8. With new COVID-19 related steps in place, do you need to consider any further work health & safety practices/safe sport practices? Safe Work Australia provides many resources in this area from their [website](#).
9. What is the drop off/pick up procedure for your swimmers?
10. Do you need to consider any groups in the community more vulnerable to COVID-19?

People at most risk of serious infection from COVID-19 include:

- Older people
- People with weakened immune systems
- People with diagnosed chronic medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart and lung conditions, kidney disease and diabetes)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who have higher rates of chronic illness

[Website](#) for further information on COVID-19 vulnerable groups

Note – Your state swimming association will advise if they need each club to complete the attachment 1 Checklist for submission, or for internal club use only.

Current COVID-19 related government restrictions as they apply to swimmers –

- Any club member that has travelled overseas must self-isolate for 14 days and not attend training or club events.
- Any club member that has been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days.
- Any swimmer with symptoms or signs of COVID-19 (see Attachment 2 Health Questionnaire) MUST NOT attend a pool until full recovery has taken place.

In reference to this Attachment 2 Health Questionnaire, the information collected in these forms is personal information and health information. Clubs are reminded that all personal information should be collected, used and stored in accordance with [Swimming Australia’s Privacy Policy](#) and the Australian Privacy laws.

SECTION D

Coach/club/official guidelines

1. Be clear and consistent about the following guidelines to all swimmers and their parents/caregivers.
2. Before recommencement of sessions, encourage all swimmers and their caregivers to download the Australian Government's COVIDSafe app to assist in tracing cases and notifying impacted individuals.
3. Eliminate or try to avoid overuse of low ventilated spaces and rooms that prevent social distancing, such as change rooms. Use of toilets is not discouraged or expected to be avoided.
4. Any dry land meeting or activity should follow social distancing guidelines and also the current relevant state regulations/exemptions. If face-to-face meetings of groups are required, implement virtual meetings.
5. Coach/official to communicate to all swimmers regularly the need to inform the coach prior to any session if they feel unwell in any way, and stay away until further medical advice/checks are completed. Coach should ensure that swimmers and parents understand that there is no penalty for missing sessions should anyone be concerned about any illness. It is best to stay away and err on the side of caution, for their health and the health of the squad.
6. Before the first session of training as the club resumes activity, parents/swimmers are asked to sign a Health Questionnaire (see Attachment 2) that outlines that the swimmer is not experiencing COVID symptoms, and provides an emergency contact that is available at all times while the swimmer is training. Should the swimmer start to experience symptoms, the club will contact the parent/emergency contact immediately with the expectation that they will arrive promptly to pick up their swimmer.
7. Before each session, a coach or official should ask swimmers prior to entry into the water if they have any symptoms that may indicate infection of COVID-19 and to confirm that their original Health Questionnaire (see Attachment 2) remains current.
8. Coaches, officials and swimmers to immediately move away from any person who begins to cough/sneeze for any reason.
9. It is imperative that all swimmers follow the 'get in, train, get out' approach and avoid showering/using changeroom facilities.
10. Spectators/parents in facility or on pool deck is dependent on the restrictions at the pool facility and current social distancing requirements.
11. Move dryland sessions outside where possible.
12. Coaches to consider structure of sessions within the following parameters –
 - Focus should be on a healthy environment, quality experience, progressive training, and safety. Communicate your changed expectations to swimmers during this recommencement phase and reassure swimmers who may be anxious to get 'back to normal'.
 - Social distancing guidelines need to be accounted for in planning sessions.
 - Consider how to stagger sessions or utilise smaller groups.
 - Coaches/officials may need to be at either end of the pool to direct this approach.
13. Entry and exit to the pool – clubs and coaches to work with facility managers to create an optimal flow for social distancing.
14. Clubs and coaches should request for the pool providers to, and/or be prepared to, provide additional cleaning before and after training access, so that high use areas and touch points are kept clean.

SECTION E

What to do if a club member becomes ill during training/whilst in your care

Identify a room or area where someone who is feeling unwell or has symptoms can be safely isolated, given a mask, and for a club official to call a parent/caregiver and/or the COVID-19 triage care hotline for further advice –1800 020 080.

[For more information click here](#)

Have a prepared plan on how they can be safely transferred from your pool facility to a health facility (if required) – work with the pool facility beforehand to understand their first aid procedures and COVID-19 specific procedures they have in place.

- Have a plan in place to communicate to club if a coach, swimmer or other member tests positive for COVID-19.
- Swimmers must see a physician and be cleared for training after being diagnosed or suspected to have COVID-19.

Any swimmer that presents with symptoms (and/or diagnosed with COVID-19) should be treated with the upmost care and consideration. Protecting privacy and reassuring the swimmer, while balancing the need for public safety, is important. If your club members know and understand your protocols before any activity resumes, and coaches/club officials are empowered with information and support, this will assist in moving through any potential cases and impact on the health of your members. De-stigmatising COVID-19 and relevant follow up is important.

See Attachment 2 Health Questionnaire.

SECTION F

Protecting against infection – Guidelines in general

In general

- Wash your hands with soap and water (for 20 seconds or longer) or use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available, before going to the pool.
- Do not make physical contact with others.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Do not share food, drinks, equipment or towels.
- Bring a full water bottle to avoid touching a tap or water fountain handle.
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue (and dispose immediately into an appropriate receptacle) or cough/sneeze into upper sleeve/arm area.
- Arrive as close as possible to when activity begins.
- Avoid touching gates, fences, benches, etc.
- Do not attend training if you, or a member of your household do not feel well. It is better to be cautious than proceed with training. Communicate this to your coach/club.

When swimming

- Follow current directions for distancing in the water as you would on land.
- Maintain appropriate social distancing from other athletes when taking a break.
- Wear your suit to and from training, come ready to swim, and leave the pool as soon as possible after you finish training, showering at home.

After swimming

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap or use a hand sanitizer after leaving the pool.
- Avoid changerooms, prepare for your training at home and shower when you return home.
- Cleaning equipment

No groups to gather before or after training.



These Guidelines have been prepared by Swimming Australia in conjunction with, and with the support of, all its State/Territory Member Associations and the Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA)

For further information, please contact your relevant State Association.

This document is current from 14 May 2020 and updated advice will be reviewed regularly during the transition phase back to full activity.

For the latest version, please check the [Swimming Australia](https://www.swimming.org.au) website.

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Attachment 1 Resumption of Club Swimming Checklist

Swimming Club is/has:

(INSERT CLUB NAME:)



1. NOMINATED A COVID-19 LIAISON

NAME & CONTACT DETAILS: _____



2. MADE ITSELF AWARE OF STATE/LOCAL RESTRICTIONS RE COVID-19

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



3. CHECKED ITS FACILITY'S SAFETY PROTOCOLS

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



4. PUT IN PLACE INFECTION LIMITATION MEASURES AROUND WATER BOTTLES AND EQUIPMENT

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



5. MANAGING SWIMMER NUMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GUIDELINES

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



6. READY TO RESPOND IF A SWIMMER BECOMES SICK WHILST TRAINING

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



7. A CLUB COMMUNICATION PLAN SHOULD A CASE OF COVID-19 BE CONFIRMED *(including immediately logging such with its state/territory swimming association)*

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



8. CONSIDERING AND PRACTICING CURRENT WORK HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



9. AN APPROPRIATE DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURE FOR SWIMMERS IN PLACE

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____



10. CONSIDERING COVID-19 VULNERABLE GROUPS WITHIN THE CLUB ENVIRONMENT

NOTES OR FURTHER DETAILS: _____

Attachment 2

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Questionnaire

Swimmer/coach/venue employee Information

The World Health Organisation declared the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) a Global Health Emergency on the 30th January 2020 and a Pandemic on 11th March 2020.

_____ Swimming Club will take reasonable, proportionate steps in accordance with published advice, to respond to the current (known) risks associated with the virus.

It is important that any person who enters any part of the pool, club or venue is medically and physically fit and is not a danger to themselves or to the health and safety of others. If you are not sure, you should seek medical advice from the **National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080**.

Question	Circle your answer	
Have you travelled internationally and returned to Australia, in the last 14 days?	Yes	No
Have you knowingly been in contact with any person who has returned from overseas in the last 14 days?	Yes	No
Have you been exposed to a confirmed case of Coronavirus?	Yes	No
Have you had contact with person(s) with flu-like symptoms?	Yes	No

Do you have any of the following symptoms? Please tick all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/> Fever	<input type="checkbox"/> Stuffy nose	<input type="checkbox"/> Running nose	<input type="checkbox"/> No Symptoms
<input type="checkbox"/> Cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> Breathing difficulty	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sorethroat	<input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhoea		
<input type="checkbox"/> Muscle and/or joint pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting		

If you have answered "YES" to any of the above:

- Access to the Pool is DENIED.
- The Australian Government – Department of Health advises that you must self-isolate for 14 days to help limit the spread of coronavirus.
- If you have any concerns about your health and COVID-19, you can call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.
- If you are confirmed with COVID-19 you must immediately advise _____ Swimming Club on phone: _____

Emergency Contact Details			
Name:		Contact Number:	
Relationship:			

I warrant that, to my knowledge, I am medically and physically fit and able to undertake and participate in swimming and club activities and will not be a danger to myself or to the health and safety of others.

I understand that while at the venue, participating in club activities or swimming (and before and after swimming), I must ensure I undertake and comply with social distancing and exemplary hygiene measures.

I acknowledge that I undertake all activities at my own risk and the club and venue (as well as Swimming Australia and Swimming [insert relevant state body]) have not and cannot make any representation or warranty that attending the venue or participating in swimming or club activities is free from risk.

I declare that all the information given in this form is true and correct:			
Name:			
Swimmer/Coach/Employee:			
Contact Number:			
Signature:		Date:	