

BOWLS ACT FRAMEWORK FOR RETURN TO PLAY IN A COVID-SAFE ENVIRONMENT: PHASE 2.2

Date: 19 June 2020

Introduction

The ACT Government further eased COVID-19 restrictions in relation to community sport on Friday 19 June (from 12.00 pm). The **key change** for Bowls is that a maximum of 100 participants (including coaches) can now train in an outdoor area. The general approach of "get in, play, get out" continues to apply. Physical distancing and hygiene requirements remain in place.

The ACT Government expects sports to have a clear "Return to Play in a COVID-safe Environment" framework that details how, in a sport-specific setting, activity will be delivered under each phase. This requirement applies to both sporting organisations, such as Bowls ACT, and the clubs which are members of those organisations. Organisations and clubs must be able to produce a copy of their completed framework for compliance purposes if asked.

This document is the framework prepared by Bowls ACT for phase 2. Clubs in the ACT should continue to draw on the Bowls ACT Framework in relation to their own documents. Clubs which are located in New South Wales should follow the requirements laid down by the State Government.

At this stage, Government officials advise that a general return to competition for sports will not occur until phase 3, which is anticipated to commence in mid-July if the situation with COVID-19 permits.

Frameworks are to be consistent with the ACT Public Health Directions, ACT Government guidelines and take account of the AIS Framework for Rebooting Sport in a COVID-19 Environment. The Public Health Directions are made under the Public Health Act. Failure to comply with the Directions may be penalised by a significant fine.

FRAMEWORK

The highest priority of Bowls ACT remains the full resumption of bowls under arrangements which protect the health of our bowling community. This can only be done within the framework of ACT Government restrictions to combat COVID-19.

Bowls ACT recognises that there are members of the bowling community who are at greater risk in relation to COVID-19 because of age or underlying medical conditions. Those most at risk are:

- people aged 70 years and over;
- people aged 65 years and over with chronic medical conditions;
- people with compromised immune systems; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 with one or more chronic medical conditions.

If you are at greater risk, please consider carefully whether you should be bowling at this time.

Practice and social bowls

- Greens may be used for practice and social bowls (no return as yet to championships and barefoot bowls), subject to the following requirements.

"Get in, play, get out"

- Bowlers should be prepared for play before arriving at the club. When their session on the green is completed and after cleaning equipment, bowlers should leave the club. However, if the club's bar and other facilities are open, bowlers may want to use those facilities. If so, they must be taken into account in the number of people allowed in the club.

Number of bowlers per green

- A maximum of 100 participants (which includes coaches) can now train in an outdoor area. In light of this significant increase in the number of participants (20 to 100), Bowls ACT contacted Bowls Australia about its guidelines, in particular, that there be an empty rink between rinks in use. Bowls Australia advised that, as a result of the increase in numbers, it would not continue to recommend maintaining empty rinks between rinks in use. However, Bowls Australia emphasised the importance of observing the 1.5m distance requirement in relation to bowlers on neighbouring rinks. Accordingly, 4 remains the maximum number of bowlers per rink.

- The maximum number of bowlers per green will depend on the number of rinks that can be used. If 7 rinks are in use, the maximum number of bowlers on the green would be 28.
- No spectators should be allowed at sessions. However, a bowler may be accompanied by a parent or carer.

Keep your distance

- A distance of at least 1.5m is to be maintained between persons on a green, in the area around that green and elsewhere on club grounds and premises (including carparks).
- A parent or carer accompanying a bowler should remain away from the green if at all possible.

Pay close attention to hygiene

- Do not play if you are unwell and leave the club if you begin to feel unwell.
- Hand hygiene is very important, including washing hands before and after bowling. Clubs must have hand sanitisers available to be used by bowlers on entry to, and exit from, the club, as well as pre, post and during play.
- Avoid physical contact.
- Bowls equipment cannot be shared between bowlers. Club bowls should not be used.
- Bowlers are to use separate mats and jacks (or ensure that the same bowler on each rink places the mat or places/rolls the jack). Mats and jacks are to be cleaned after use. Clubs should provide disinfectant spray and disposable wipes for cleaning, which should be done, if possible, by the bowlers who have used the mats and jacks.
- Water bubblers are not to be used.
- Do not share personal equipment such as cleaning cloths, towels and drink bottles. Please do not pick up any bowls but your own.
- Communal facilities such as changerooms may be used, subject to appropriate cleaning protocols being in place. Clubs which are attached to sporting clubs or community clubs may not have access to toilets.

Managing numbers and keeping records

- In order to implement these measures effectively, clubs should put in place arrangements for bowlers to book times in advance so that they only come to a club when certain that a rink will be available. The booking sheet should record details of all persons on a rink, and arrival and departure times of each person, to assist with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 positive result within a club. Bowlers should sign the booking sheet (using their own pen) to indicate that they understand the club requirements to play. A copy of the requirements should be kept with the booking sheets.
- A separate sheet is to be kept for parents and carers entering a club, recording their details, arrival and departure times and who they are accompanying. They should also sign the sheet to indicate that they understand the club requirements.
- It is recommended that clubs allow 15-20 mins between timeslots to ensure that bowlers have time to leave the venue prior to bowlers for the next timeslot arriving. This will also allow time to clean equipment in between uses.
- If a club is prepared to allow bowlers from other clubs to have access to its greens, those bowlers are to comply with the same requirements as the club's own bowlers.
- According to their circumstances, clubs will need to arrange for staff or volunteers to supervise sessions. Clubs should take appropriate action if a member fails to meet the requirements for participating in a session.

Communication

- Clubs should ensure that their frameworks are circulated to all members and displayed prominently at club premises. Frameworks should also be available on club websites. This Framework will be available on the Bowls ACT website.

Review

- Bowls ACT will keep its Framework under review to ensure that it complies with the current requirements laid down by the ACT Government. Clubs should keep their frameworks under review.