



RETURN TO COMMUNITY NETBALL COVID IMPACTED COMPETITION RULES AND BY-LAWS

COVID will remain part of our daily lives and will be something we all must continue to manage. Netball Victoria and affiliated Associations and Leagues continues to work within the Directions provided by Victorian Government and public health advice to ensure our members stay safe and healthy. As the Government directions change and the circumstances of community sport evolve, we must adapt, introduce flexibility and ensure our competition rules reflect this very dynamic environment we operate within.

The following information provides a series of options for Associations and Leagues to consider when devising their competition rules or by-laws post two COVID disrupted seasons. These are not sample by-laws or recommended inclusions, only options or items for consideration. It is recommended Associations and Leagues review this information and then apply the detail suitable to your competition.

Vaccination Requirements

- The vaccination requirements of all League/Association members, volunteers and spectators will be determined by the direction of the Victorian Government Directions and advised by Netball Victoria's Return to Community Netball guidelines.

COVIDSafe Plans

- All clubs must complete a COVIDSafe Plan and review as required.
- A copy of the COVIDSafe Plan must be submitted to the League/Association.
- A copy of the COVIDSafe Plan must be available on the Club website.

COVID Marshall

- Where required, the club will appoint a COVID Marshall.

Reporting of positive COVID cases

- All clubs are responsible for notifying the League/Association if a club member tests positive to COVID. This notification must be made to the competition manager as soon as possible.
- The Club and the League/Association will follow the most up-to-date *Checklist for COVID Contacts* as determined by the Victorian Department of Health.
- The League/Association may apply a monetary fine should it become aware of a Club who has knowingly breached or disregarded this by-law.

First Aid

- Clubs shall be responsible for their own first aid through the home and away season and finals.
- Clubs must ensure COVID safe practices are followed at all times.
- The League/Association will supply hand sanitiser and it will be available at each court.
- Clubs must provide hand sanitiser and it must be available at each court.

Cancelled or Abandoned Matches

- In the event that a match is abandoned due to the direct impact of COVID, and the League/Association, and opposition Club is notified with sufficient notice prior to the match, a 0-0 score and four competition points shall be awarded to the non-offending team. Zero competition points will be awarded to the offending team.
- Failure by any club to notify the League/Association of their inability to play a fixtured match due to COVID related circumstances, shall render the club liable to a monetary fine or other penalty for the breach.
- Should circumstances occur in which an entire round is cancelled, the League/Association will abandon all matches for that round and award 0-0 score line to each match and award 0 competition points for each match.



- Should circumstances occur in which successive rounds need to be cancelled, the League/Association will consider the position and determine a suitable course of action.
- Where possible, the League/Association will communicate any changes to the scheduled fixture 24-hours prior to the commencement of the round. Where communication 24-hours prior is not possible, the League/Association will endeavour to provide information as soon as practicable.
- Where practicable, the League/Association will endeavour to re-fixture abandoned matches.

Player qualification

- Players shall only play in one age division per day/night.
- A player may be granted an exemption to play in multiple age divisions or grades in one day/night where it is deemed essential to facilitate the continuation of a match impacted as a direct result of COVID.
- Players must not fill-in for another team in the same grade or division without prior approval of the League/Association.
- Players must play a minimum of one-third of the team's fixtured matches throughout the competition to qualify to compete in the finals series.
- Players must play a minimum of [insert number] quarters for a team throughout the competition to qualify to compete in the finals.
- Players must play a minimum of [insert number] matches for a team throughout the competition to qualify to compete in the finals.
- Player qualification shall only be awarded to nominated players of the non-offending team. A total of twenty-eight qualifying quarters shall be allocated between up to 10 players of the non-offending team.
- A total of seven qualifying games shall be allocated to up to 10 players of the non-offending team.
- No qualifying quarters or games shall be awarded to players of the offending team.
- No financial penalty will be imposed on any team that forfeits due to the direct impact of COVID.

Ladders

- In the home and away matches, four points will be allotted for a win or a bye, two points for a draw and zero points for a loss.
- At the conclusion of each round, the League/Association will calculate a ladder for each grade.
- In competitions where there is an uneven number of byes, or an uneven number of matches played by each competing team, the League/Association may elect to apply a match ratio ladder which reflects the number of wins by each team against the number of matches played by each team.
- All decisions of the League in respect of the calculation of ladders, points and percentages shall be final and binding

Finals

- Matches shall be conducted for finals as for home and away matches. The starting times may vary, and clubs advised accordingly.
- Should a scheduled finals match be impacted in any way by COVID, and it is unable to be played at the scheduled date and time, every effort will be made to reschedule that finals match on a date and at a time and venue suitable for both teams.
- In the event of a team being unable to contest a final series match, the League/Association must be notified as soon as practical. Every effort will be made to reschedule that finals match on a date and at a time and venue suitable for both teams.
- The rescheduled finals match must be completed prior to the next scheduled round of finals.
- Where the finals match cannot be rescheduled, the non-offending team will have automatic entry to the next round of the finals series, and the finals series will proceed as per the fixtured arrangements.
- A team unable to contest one final will not be permitted to take part in subsequent finals matches.
- Teams found playing an ineligible player during finals will be considered to have lost that match and be subject to a fine set by the League/Association.



Coaches

- If an appointed coach is unavailable to attend a fixtured match due to the direct impact of COVID, a replacement coach may be appointed for that fixtured match only.

Scorers

- If an appointed scorer is unavailable to officiate a fixtured match due to the direct impact of COVID, the League/Association must be notified immediately, and a replacement scorer must be arranged for that fixtured match.

Umpires

- If an appointed umpire is unavailable to officiate a fixtured match due to the direct impact of COVID, the League/Association must be notified immediately, and a replacement umpire must be appointed for that fixtured match.
- Where it is the responsibility of the club to appoint an umpire and that umpire is unable to officiate a fixtured match due to the direct impact of COVID, all reasonable efforts must be made by the club to find a replacement umpire.
- No financial penalty will be imposed on any club or team that cannot appoint an umpire due to the direct impact of COVID.

Duty rosters

- Where the club is unable to fulfil the requirements of a duty roster due to the direct impact of COVID, all reasonable efforts must be made by the club to find a replacement.
- No financial penalty will be imposed on any club or team that cannot fulfil their duty role due to the direct impact of COVID.
- The League/Association may, at their discretion, rearrange the duty roster and reappoint the club to duty another date and time.

Uniform

- Where a breach of the uniform by-law is caused as a direct impact of COVID (uniform items held by a non-attending team member), no penalty will apply to the offending team.

Team withdrawal

- In the event a team must withdraw from the competition owing to a COVID related issue, the reimbursement of team entry fees paid will be negotiated with the competition manager.
- All and any outstanding fees must be paid to the competition manager.

Discretion

- The League/Association may apply its discretion in determining penalties where a breach of a by-law is confirmed to be a direct impact of COVID.
- The League/Association has the authority to apply its discretion to COVID related breaches and elect to enforce or not enforce penalties to ensure the integrity of the competition is maintained.
- Where a by-law is silent, a decision can be made that ensures the integrity of the competition is maintained.
- The penalty for any breach of a by-law which is a direct result of COVID will be determined by the League/Association.
- The League/Association will apply discretion to any breach of a by-law which is determined to be a direct result of COVID.
- The League/Association actively supports participation of all groups and in order to encourage and facilitate participation the League/Association may apply flexibility and allow for modifications of the by-laws where necessary, and appropriate, and where it can be applied fairly.