



# COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines

March 2020





## COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines for Continued Play

**Last updated 23 March 2020**

*This is a rapidly evolving issue, please refer to this page regularly for the latest advice and guidance on dealing with COVID-19.*

The Federal Government announcement from Sunday 22 March, said the **following facilities have been restricted from opening from midday local time 23 March 2020:**

- Pubs, registered and licenced clubs (excluding bottle shops attached to these venues), hotels (excluding accommodation)
- Gyms and indoor sporting venues
- Cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos, and night clubs
- Restaurants and cafes will be restricted to takeaway and/or home delivery
- Religious gatherings, places of worship or funerals (in enclosed spaces and other than very small groups and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies).

**The full statement from the PM can be read [here](#).**

We all know tennis is a unique sport with many benefits – the main one being health and wellbeing. The very nature of our game ensures there is a vital role our sport can continue to play for the benefit of the community as we endure the COVID-19 pandemic.

***For tennis to remain open, every one of us needs to play our part.***

The **COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines for Continued Play** provide details on how outdoor courts can remain open for use to help ensure people remain active, subject to strict social distancing and hygiene practices being implemented.

Tennis clubs, coaches and operators across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. They are also independent organisations and businesses. Making an assessment of whether a safe exercise environment can be provided also depends on a range of factors, which will apply differently at each venue – it is the responsibility of each coach, club and operator to make that assessment based on their local environment.



## COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines for Continued Play

We can all take a few steps to minimise the effects of COVID-19 while still enjoying our time on the court.

### **Before you play**

Stay at home if you:

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have flu-like symptoms
- Or are in a high risk health category, for example elderly or have a pre-existing medical condition.

### **Attending tennis activities**

- Only people core to playing should attend tennis activities such as players, participants, coaches and operational personnel
- Arrive and leave as close as possible to when you need to be there
- Only one parent/guardian should accompany younger children where possible.

### **Social distancing**

Tennis holds a unique advantage as a sport which requires no direct contact between players. You can also:

- Touch racquets instead of the regular pre or post match handshakes
- Keep 1.5 metres away from other people while watching or attending an outdoors tennis activity.

### **Behaviours**

To protect against infection, you should:

- Wash/sterilise your hands before and after you play and avoid touching your face while playing
- Not share water bottles and bring your own full bottle
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or hand-sanitiser when available, before and after eating, after going to the toilet, sneezing and coughing
- Cover your coughs and sneezes and dispose of any used tissue immediately
- Avoid touching your face
- Keep your distance from people who are obviously sick
- Be aware of what surfaces you touch.



## **Organising tennis activities**

- Limit community tennis activities to casual court hire, one-on-one coaching and small groups
- Shorten programs, booking times to create a buffer between sessions
- Limit the number of players per court to a maximum of 4 people
- Where practical use every second court
- Promote prevention techniques and lead by example
- Implement ways to minimise contact for both participants and staff
- Postpone any social gatherings
- Plan for increased levels of staff/volunteer absences
- Keep your team and your participants informed of the actions you're taking
- Keep records of who attends your activities and their contact details
- Payments to be made online or via EFTPOS – avoid handling cash
- Leave gates ajar during opening hours so players don't need to use handles to enter.

## **Coaching**

- Group coaching including holiday programs should be limited to small groups and programs shortened to ensure no cross over between sessions
- Limit the number of players to a maximum of 4 people per full-sized court
- Position the players at well-spaced stations
- Live ball drills and game based play is recommended over basket based
- Advise players to not change ends
- Maintain social distancing at all times including when giving feedback and while players are resting
- Where practical use every second court
- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as target cones
- Don't let students handle any coaching equipment - coach to pick up balls and feed drills
- Payments to be made online via EFTPOS – avoid handling cash.

## **Tennis equipment**

There is no specific evidence that balls can spread COVID-19. We do know that on hard surfaces contamination by respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive up to three days. Therefore, you should:

- Make sure you clean your hands before and after coming off the court
- Not touch your face after touching a ball, racquet or other tennis equipment
- Use new balls and racquet grips where possible
- Use fewer balls per session
- Replace all balls if someone with/suspected to have COVID-19 comes in contact with them
- Restrict balls to a particular group, court or day of the week. One idea is to label them with a permanent marker
- Clean all tennis gear with alcohol-based disinfectant including racquets, towels, coaching gear such target cones
- Don't use unnecessary equipment such as drop down lines.





## **Clean environment**

Providing a clean environment to play tennis in is important. Make sure you:

- Provide soap, hand-sanitiser or wipes at all main contact points like the desk and café
- Clean all surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and tables, at least once a day wearing disposable gloves
- Clean any surfaces which may have blood, body fluids and/or secretions or excretions on them
- Wear personal protection equipment including aprons, gloves and masks when handling food
- Regularly remind and encourage everyone, particularly juniors, of the need to wash hands regularly and adopt the other principles of a good hygiene strategy
- Display signage about handwashing and hygiene techniques at strategic points like all sinks, eating areas, drinking areas and on the side of court.

## **Indoor Spaces**

- All indoor tennis courts and gyms must close immediately
- Professionally managed centres that have full time staff can remain open at their discretion as long as they follow [Department of Health guidelines](#)
- Venues run by volunteers are recommended to close indoor spaces as necessary cleaning levels cannot be guaranteed. If toilets are not located in the clubhouses then toilets should be closed.
- Closure of café, canteen and bar facilities. Unless professionally operated in which case activities are to be restricted to take away service only – no cash payments.

## **Outdoor Spaces**

- Outdoors courts can remain open for use to help ensure people remain active; strict [social distancing measures](#) must be implemented.
- We recommend no more than 4 players per court (this includes a coach if coaching) and social distancing is applied. If not confident this can be applied, then play singles only.
- No change of ends between play
- If you touch the on court equipment such as net, net handle, hoses, and court bagger you must clean this before you leave.
- Keep gates open to avoid players having to touch handles, doorknobs.
- For clubs operating Book a Court, leave gate ajar, if not possible provide sanitising facilities at the gate for cleaning each time the pin pad and gate is used, and put a notice up to this effect.
- Implement a 15 minute buffer for casual court bookings and play, to ensure it allows enough time for equipment to be cleaned and players to leave the venue before next players arrive.
- Removal of all soft furnishings such as seat cushions.
- No operating of BBQ facilities
- We recommend that players bring a full drink bottle to avoid touching outside taps. If taps have to be used then please clean them.