

Hockey Australia COVID-19 Statement

Following the ongoing developments and latest government announcements regarding COVID-19, Hockey Australia (HA) wishes to provide the following update.

As with many other organisations, Hockey Australia takes guidance from Government Agencies in relation to actions and decisions concerning COVID-19. HA continues to monitor the coronavirus situation daily and receive regular updates from AIS and AOC Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr David Hughes, in conjunction with the Federal Department of Health.

There is a [link](#) on the AIS website under Health & Wellbeing which is updated daily with information in relation to high performance recommendations. While the information provides advice with High Performance programs in mind, there is general information that remains relevant to the wider hockey community. The Hockey Australia Guidelines for Healthy Travel can also be found [here](#).

Based on recent advice, and in consultation with our key stakeholders, Hockey Australia is seeking to cancel some upcoming events. We will also keep a watching brief on all future events with a view to making decisions at a later stage to either proceed, cancel or postpone.

HA has an important responsibility to assist with reducing the risk of infection. We continue to regard the health and wellbeing of players, officials and staff at all levels as our highest priority. In consultation with the State and Territory Hockey Associations, we have undertaken a number of measures in relation to COVID-19 for the immediate future and recognise that we also need to continue to monitor the situation and be prepared to adjust our approach if required.

Cancelled Events

2020 Under 15 and Under 18 National Hockey Championships

HA has made the decision to cancel the upcoming Australian Under 15 and Under 18 Championships. This year's National U15 Championships were scheduled to be held from 17-23 April in Bathurst, NSW, while the U18 Championships were set to take place in Launceston, Tasmania on 16-24 April.

The Federal Government's directive prohibiting gatherings of 500 people or more would have been relevant to these championships and after consultation with all Member Associations, the decision was made to cancel the two tournaments for 2020.

While we recognise that this is extremely disruptive and unfortunate for the players who have been impacted, we consider this to be a responsible and sensible position to take at the current time.

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Due to the already crowded nature of this year's hockey calendar, together with the timeframe unpredictability around the coronavirus, it was determined there was not a suitable window to reschedule these championships.

HA understands the impact and effect this decision has on not only teams and competitors but a range of stakeholders, particularly in regards to travel. Discussions, while preliminary, are already underway regarding what will be put into place for these championships in 2021.

Suspended Events

FIH Pro League 2020

Following the latest information and recommendations from the World Health Organization and the decisions taken by a number of governments and local authorities around the world regarding the current COVID-19 outbreak, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and all participating National Associations (NAs) have decided to put all FIH Hockey Pro League matches currently scheduled until 15 April on hold, with immediate effect.

International travel

HA has suspended international travel for all Hockey Australia national teams including the Hockeyroos and Kookaburras, Country, Masters and Junior touring teams.

Postponed Events

Masters Hockey National Hockey Championships

The Australian Masters Hockey Championships scheduled to be held in June and July will now be postponed to a later date. HA will work with the HA Masters Committee and stakeholders to identify a suitable option for these matches to be played.

Monitoring

Under 21 National Championships and Country Championships

At this stage no decision has been made on the other national championships scheduled for later in the year, which includes Under 21s in June and July, the Country Championships scheduled for August and the Under 13 Championships in October. These events will be closely monitored in coming weeks.

Community Hockey

Local state based competitions and leagues are the domain of the Member Associations and individual states. Any decisions regarding these competitions fall under the jurisdiction of the respective MAs who will act on the advice and direction from their State Governments.

HA strongly endorses that clubs, players and officials exercise the appropriate hygiene measures and implement self-exclusion if displaying flu-like symptoms. Any member with flu-like symptoms should self-exclude from playing, training and spectating at the first sign of the symptoms and seek medical advice.

Competitions have already commenced in some states, so for the latest information and updates please contact your relevant [Member Association](#).

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Continue to practice good hygiene

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Catch it, bin it, kill it.
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Athletes and runners are entitled, should they wish, not to shake hands or have any other form of physical contact with their opponents or officials.

HA acknowledges the uncertainty of the current situation and that this advice can rapidly change as the situation evolves. As such, HA will continue to monitor, and act accordingly, in response to statements and policies enacted by both Federal and State Health authorities. Further advice on the Coronavirus COVID-19 can be found from the Australian Government Department of Health (www.health.gov.au) or for general advice regarding COVID-19, call the Australian Government's Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080.

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