

## BV State Director

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**From:** Peter J Betson (DEDJTR) <peter.betson@ecodev.vic.gov.au>  
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**Subject:** Stakeholder Update | Sport, Recreation & Racing | 28 March 2020

### Sport and recreation stakeholder update – coronavirus – 28 March 2020

As you will be aware, the [Premier has announced](#) stage two of the shutdown of non-essential activities in Victoria to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

On 28 March 2020, the [Premier and Minister for Police and Emergency Services announced](#) that Victoria Police now have the power to issue on the spot fines of up to \$1,652 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for businesses who don't follow the rules.

Police will be proactively patrolling places of mass gathering to ensure restrictions are being complied with, and the Government has indicated they will not hesitate to issue further legal directions if the warnings are not followed.

At this point in time our advice, based on the legal directions and social obligations we face, is that all social sporting-based activities must cease.

The [new restrictions](#) specify that the following sport and recreation centres must close:

- health clubs, fitness centres, yoga, barre and spin facilities
- social sporting-based activities
- swimming pools, both public and shared
- saunas, bathhouses and wellness centres
- community and recreation centres. These facilities may remain open for the purposes of hosting essential voluntary or public services, such as food banks or homeless services.

Boot camps and personal training services can continue only if they are outdoor with a maximum of 10 people at any one session, ensuring no more than 1 person for every 4 square metres of space.

Organisations that operate outdoors but are a social sporting-based activity must close.

For those few organisations that can still continue to operate under the current restrictions, you must adhere to the [latest physical distancing restrictions](#).

While these new restrictions may raise questions for some organisations regarding application to your particular circumstance (e.g. social sporting-based activity), please remember the [Premier's key message for Victorians](#) is that if you can stay home, you must stay home.

For the racing sector, race meetings are proceeding but without spectators. Racing clubs have implemented strict controls to monitor everyone entering race facilities.

You would have seen that [Racing Victoria](#) and [Harness Racing Victoria](#) made the decision to resume race meetings on Friday 27 March and Saturday 28 March. Racing activities can continue within an outdoor setting whilst complying with the restrictions in place and adherence to [latest physical distancing restrictions](#).

I acknowledge that this is an extremely challenging and difficult time for the sport and recreation sector. You've all played a huge role in slowing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) but unfortunately the next step to flattening the curve will likely involve more measures and restrictions in the coming days and weeks.

The Premier announced this morning further details of the [Victorian Government's \\$1.7 billion economic survival and jobs package](#), including \$10,000 grants for over 30,000 employers who don't pay payroll tax through the new Business Support Fund. I encourage you to [register your interest with Business Victoria](#) to receive more details.

The [Australian Government's \\$189 billion package](#) includes grants of up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium sized businesses, and not-for-profits (including charities) that employ people, with a minimum payment of \$20,000.

We understand this is a very difficult time for those who have lost their jobs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). The Government is encouraging these people to register interest in the [Working for Victoria Fund](#) to help them find new job opportunities.

If you have queries about the shutdowns or support available, please contact Business Victoria's dedicated hotline on 13 22 15 or speak with your relevant association or peak body for advice for your sport or sector.

While these are trying times, as a community we are contributing to the response to coronavirus (COVID-19) and supporting our health workers and people who are particularly vulnerable to the disease. Remember, the situation continues to rapidly change and we urge you to regularly check [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](#) for updates.

### **Common questions**

#### **Can our sporting or racing club and active recreation organisation still operate?**

The Victorian Government has ordered the closure of gyms and indoor sporting centres, as part of necessary physical distancing measures.

Community and recreation centres that must close are:

- health clubs, fitness centres, yoga, barre and spin facilities
- social sporting-based activities
- swimming pools, both public and shared
- saunas, bathhouses and wellness centres
- community and recreation centres. These facilities may remain open for the purposes of hosting essential voluntary or public services, such as food banks or homeless services.

Boot camps and personal training services can continue only if they are outdoor with a maximum of 10 people at any one session, ensuring no more than 1 person for every 4 square metres of space. View the current list of restrictions [here](#).

You need to carefully assess whether the new restrictions and physical distancing directions make it legal, viable and safe to continue for outdoor activities.

National Cabinet will consider further restrictions as part of the shutdown in the coming days.

For the racing sector, race meetings are proceeding but without spectators. Racing clubs have implemented strict controls to monitor everyone entering race facilities.

Racing Victoria and Harness Racing Victoria made the decision to resume race meetings on Friday 27 March and Saturday 28 March. Racing activities can continue within an outdoor setting whilst complying with the restrictions in place and adherence to [latest physical distancing restrictions](#).

For further information check out the appropriate racing body:

- <https://www.racingvictoria.com.au/>
- <https://www.thetrots.com.au/>
- <https://www.grv.org.au/>

For the latest information and guidelines visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](#)

**Under the new rule that outside training can continue but limited to groups of no more than 10 people, can outdoor social sporting-based activities that allow for adequate social distance between players still proceed?**

All social sporting-based activities must close as part of the current restrictions in place.

While these new restrictions may raise questions for some organisations regarding application to your particular circumstance (e.g. social sporting-based activity), please remember the [Premier's key message for Victorians](#) is that if you can stay home, you must stay home.

### **What are the rules and restrictions for public gatherings and physical distancing?**

The Victorian State of Emergency to combat coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in place and these further restrictions and guidelines will likely impact your club or organisation.

Victoria Police now have the power to issue on the spot fines of up to \$1,652 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for businesses who don't follow the rules.

Read [DHHS' latest advice on physical distancing](#) and how to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and reduce chances of infection.

For essential activities operating indoors, the 4 square metres (2m x 2m) per person rule applies.

In addition to this, the Government has advised the community to practice social distancing of 1.5 metres between people.

Venues must also provide hand hygiene products and suitable waste receptacles, with frequent cleaning and waste disposal.

There are restrictions on non-essential gatherings of 100 or more people indoors, or 500 outdoors. These are enforceable by law.

Fourteen days of self-isolation are now a requirement for anyone who has been overseas in the past two weeks, or anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) or who has been in close contact with a person known to have coronavirus.

The Premier [announced on 27 March 2020](#) that travellers who return to Australia from overseas after 11.59pm on Saturday 28 March 2020 are required to go into enforced quarantine.

### **How long will sport, recreation and racing be impacted?**

Currently the State of Emergency declared in Victoria has been set until midnight on 13 April 2020, but due to the evolving nature of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic this could be extended.

The Premier has indicated further restrictions will be implemented in coming days or weeks.

We are closely monitoring the [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au) for updates.

### **What financial support is available to my sporting, recreation or racing organisation?**

The Victorian Government has announced a \$1.7 billion economic and jobs package to help Victorian businesses and workers survive the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19).

From Monday, the first round of grants from the [Government's \\$500 million Business Support Fund](#) will be accessible with \$10,000 grants available for over 30,000 employers who don't pay payroll tax.

Read the [Premier's media release](#) for the full range of measures included in the package and [register with Business Victoria](#) to receive more details on the program.

The [Australian Government's package](#) includes grants of up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium sized businesses, and not-for-profits (including charities) that employ people, with a minimum payment of \$20,000.

For employees who might lose their jobs as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Victorian Government is establishing the [Working for Victoria Fund](#), to help them to find new job opportunities and play a vital contribution to our state's response to the pandemic.

If you or someone you know is in mandatory self-isolation and has no access to food or essential supplies, the Victorian Government is also providing emergency relief packages. These can be accessed by calling Victoria's dedicated coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398. The hotline can also refer people to other support services if needed.

If you have queries about the shutdowns or support available, please contact Business Victoria's dedicated hotline on 13 22 15 or speak with your relevant association or peak body for advice for your sport or sector.

### **Where do I get further information about my sport, active recreation or racing sector?**

The best source of specific information is your association or peak body, but please note the situation is constantly evolving.

If you are looking for health and physical distancing guidelines refer to the [DHHS coronavirus website](#) .

For further information on the bans and how they apply to indoor and outdoor mass gatherings, read the [Government's latest advice](#) that outlines and defines the bans.

### **I'm self-isolating or practising physical distancing – how can I still get active**

These are uncertain times, and we are all needing to adjust our lifestyles for the time being to help “flatten the curve” of coronavirus (COVID-19) and ease the impact on our health system.

If you feel sick, stay at home. Use the [self-assessment for risk of coronavirus tool](#) for guidance on what action you should take or phone the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 for advice. If you have serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing, call 000 and ask for an ambulance and tell the operator if you have recently returned from overseas.

[Assessment centres](#) have been established at 26 Victorian hospitals and patients who have symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19) may present to one of these centres. You do **NOT** need to phone ahead if you attend one of these clinics.

If you need to self-isolate, a [Home Isolation Guide](#) has been developed.

Pete

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