



COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines

March 2020





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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.

The **COVID-19 Community Tennis Guidelines for Continued Play** is an attempt to provide advice for all involved at the community level on the safest way to continue playing.

As long as we all abide by strict health and hygiene guidelines – coaches, volunteers, administrators, associations and tennis centres can continue to provide an outlet for physical and mental health through the sport of tennis.

Additional measures will be required but there is still plenty of opportunity for tennis to be played as long as hygiene guidelines are followed to help support the community's ability to stem the spread of COVID-19, whilst helping the health and wellbeing of many of us.

Due to the fast evolving nature of this pandemic, conditions beyond our sport and in this environment can change and we will continue to keep everyone updated.

These guidelines provide support for everyone involved at the grassroots level on the safest way to continue playing.



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 and avoid close contact by moving around indoors
- Only players, officials and essential staff should be allowed in changerooms and clubhouses.

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
- 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

- Promote prevention techniques and lead by example
- Implement ways to minimise contact for both participants and staff
- Minimise the amount of people around by limiting the amount of people on court and only allowing players, officials and essential staff in the clubhouse
- Postpone any large social gatherings
- Plan for increased levels of staff/volunteer absences
- Keep your team and your participants informed of the actions you're taking
- Leave gates ajar during opening hours so players don't need to use handles to enter.



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Coaching

- Where possible limit the number of players on each court
- Position the players at well-spaced stations
- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as target cones
- Don't let students handle any coaching equipment
- If you are running holiday programs, have smaller groups and make the programs shorter.

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
- 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 anti-bacterial disinfectant including racquets, towels, coaching gear such target cones
- Don't use unnecessary equipment such as drop down lines
- Use new balls and racquet grips where possible.

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.