**EMAIL FROM AFL GIPPSLAND 17/03/20**

**CLARIFICATION**

1. The YELLOW highlighted information relates to the dates that AFL Gippsland are implementing for AFL Gippsland **football and netball** competitions effective immediately.
2. We acknowledge that the YELLOW highlighted information is slightly **different** to the AFL position however the YELLOW highlighted information is in line with the outcomes of discussions had with AFL Gippsland League Presidents, Club Presidents, AFL Gippsland League Managers.

Dear League and Club Presidents & Secretaries,

The AFL has released a statement (see below) to all AFL and AFL State associations managed or operated leagues and NAB AFL Auskick Centres programs and have **advised** a postponement of all activities until 31May 2020. Due to the increasing threat of coronavirus (COVID-19) to the broader AFL Gippsland community, and after extensive discussion with AFL Gippsland League Presidents, Club Presidents, AFL Gippsland League Managers, the following will be implemented  -

All Senior leagues operating in AFL Gippsland                                                   -              Season will not commence before Saturday 2nd May 2020 with this date to be reviewed on or before 12th April

All Junior leagues operating in AFL Gippsland                                                    -              Season will not commence before Saturday 2nd May 2020 with this date to be reviewed on or before 12th April

All Auskick Centres operating in AFL Gippsland                                                  -              Season will not commence before Saturday 31st May 2020 with this date to be reviewed on or before 12th May

All Hawthorn NGA Academy programs operating in AFL Gippsland              -              Programs will recess until 31st May 2020 with this date to be reviewed on or before 12th May

For Senior and Junior leagues, this includes all practice matches and scheduled home and away games. It is our strongest advice that this also include any scheduled training sessions. If a club chooses to schedule training sessions, the advice issued by AFL Victoria on 12/03/20 is repeated below.

**Regional Administration Centre**

The following processes are now in place for all AFL Gippsland staff -

* All AFL Gippsland staff based at the Regional Administration Centre in Morwell have been instructed to work from home and can be contacted via their mobile phones or email.
* The RAC landline will be diverted to staff mobile numbers.
* All “in person” external meetings or events have been cancelled. Where applicable, it is our intention to reschedule as many of these meetings and events as possible via phone and or video hook up, the details of which will be communicated to you by the meeting owner.
* The RAC office at the Morwell Recreational Reserve will be closed until further notice.

**COVID-19**

The AFL Gippsland Commission and Administration understand the serious nature of this matter and are looking to lead and support our clubs and community with considered decision making. We ask that clubs report confirmed COVID-19 cases for their players, administrators and volunteers to richard.black@aflgippsland.com.au  Details to include club, gender and age. If supplied, additional details will be kept in the strictest confidence. This information will assist us in planning best practice processes for our community.

**AFL Victoria advice re: club training sessions - 12/03/20 – Repeated**

1. Covid-19 or not, communal use of water bottles should be avoided at all times
2. In the short term it would be prudent to have all players be in possession of their own drink bottle.
3. Place hand sanitisers around the change room and encourage players to use them
4. Anyone associated with a Club if feeling unwell should refrain from club activities immediately, seek medical advice and where appropriate, advise the Club of their absence

Should you require any further information it can be sourced here: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>

**AFL Statement**

A note to the AFL football community,

The health and well-being of fans, players, umpires, officials, partners, volunteers and communities has been our number one priority.

We are determined to be part of the whole of community response to slow this COVID-19 virus down – and in doing so, help the broader community and our health systems to cope.

Following a series of meetings over the last number of days involving the AFL and all State and Territory CEOs, recommendations have been made in relation to Community football.

Consistent with the decision yesterday in relation to State League football and the national and state talent programs, all AFL and AFL State association managed or operated leagues along with the NAB AFL Auskick Centres programs currently operating or set to begin, will be postponed until 31st May 2020.

The AFL is also strongly recommending that independently governed junior and senior leagues and associations postpone the commencement and/or operation of their leagues/associations until the same date.

This decision and recommendation covers AFL community matches, AFL community training sessions and face to face AFL, WAFC and SANFL education courses.

Given the current climate of uncertainty and complexity, we felt it was best for our AFL community to take decisive action now.

The recommendation was collectively agreed upon based on the nature of shared public facilities across community football clubs and the health and safety of our volunteer network.

The AFL and AFL State and Territory Associations are committed to supporting community football during this time.

We are a game, but we are not the main game.

The main game is looking after the community and that is the clear priority for everyone at the moment. For football families like all families.

It is paramount that support and engagement in community football continues during these times. It is vital players, coaches, administrators, supporters, sponsors, volunteers and kids retain close links to their local clubs, Auskick Centres and wider league network.

The AFL will continue to meet with state and territory associations in relation to community football and will continually review this decision based on the changing circumstances and advice from government and relevant health departments and medical experts. We will communicate any updates and provide advice in a timely manner.

Football has had many challenges and despite the size of this one, football will find a way through.

-ends-

**Closing**

We are entering a phase in community football that is unprecedented in our time. Decisions that are made are made for the broader good and we acknowledge that they may not always be popular however they are made with the best interests of our community in mind. I will update this information as is required. Please adhere to the advice of our health and medical experts and look after yourselves and your families.