

Rowing ACT COVID-19 Policy

(current as at **29 April 2020** and applicable until withdrawn by Rowing ACT)

CHANGE LOG

Updated 29/04/20: Update to Introduction (pages 1 and 2)
changes to Rowing ACT COVID-19 Policy (page 3)
changes to Boatshed Access (pages 3 and 4)
COVID-19 Diagnosis (page 5)

INTRODUCTION

Rowing ACT, as the peak body for the sport of rowing in the Australian Capital Territory, is committed to ensuring the rowing community in the Australian Capital Territory can operate safely. During these times of government-imposed restrictions that impact on our daily life, Rowing ACT also remains committed to ensuring the rowing community can row, when it is possible to do so, and train with minimal risk of infection both on and off the water.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused worldwide disruptions and poses an ongoing threat to people's health and well-being. Federal, State and Territory Governments have provided direction and guidance on Australia's response to COVID-19. Rowing Australia has provided COVID-19 advice and Rowing ACT has sought and received further advice from ACT Sport and Recreation. Rowing ACT has also sought and received advice from AON on insurance matters.

This Rowing ACT COVID-19 Policy has been developed after consultation with Rowing Australia and ACT Sport and Recreation and specifically considers the advice provided by Rowing Australia, the ACT Government and ACT Sport and Recreation. The Rowing ACT Board (Rowing ACT) has approved this policy and directed that it be issued. This revised policy takes effect from 29 April 2020 and remains applicable until modified or withdrawn by Rowing ACT.

On 23 March 2020 Rowing Australia advised that their National Training Centres had suspended operations. They also strongly advised rowing clubs around Australia to cease operations and seek alternative ways for members to remain active, whilst adhering to Government restrictions¹. This advice was confirmed for ACT Clubs and Schools by the CEO of Rowing Australia with advice that club closure is due to the challenges with implementing and monitoring suitable COVID-19 public health measures.² On 29 April 2020 Rowing Australia revised their guidance as a result of the progress around Australia in reducing the spread of COVID-19 throughout the community. Rowing Australia encourages rowing clubs to directly approach their

¹ Rowing Australia Media Release of 23 March 2020 (<https://rowingaustralia.com.au/2020/03/23/ra-immediately-suspends-operations-at-its-two-national-training-centres/>)

² CEO Rowing Australia brief to ACT Clubs and Schools of 7 April 2020 (<https://youtu.be/966E-LN4HdM>)

State/Territory Rowing Association for guidance on on-water rowing and restrictions that are in place within the State/Territory.³

Government restrictions include the closure of indoor and outdoor gymnasiums and play areas at recreation parks, as well as indoor sports facilities. Subsequent restrictions have been instigated around social isolation, social distancing, and meeting in groups.

The ACT Government has adopted COVID-19 measures that currently require the ACT community to:

- Practice social distancing – stay home unless you are shopping for essentials, receiving medical care, for compassionate reasons, exercising or for work or education that cannot be done remotely;
- Practice good hand hygiene;
- As a precaution, older Australians aged 70 years and over to stay home as much as possible to reduce the risk of infection; and
- Stay at home and avoid social gatherings if you are unwell.⁴

The measures, introduced by the Federal and ACT Governments, are to help slow the spread of the virus within the population and to allow the health system to respond within its capacity. The ACT Government has asked Canberra to help “stop the spread of COVID-19”.⁵ There are fines in place for those who are found to be in breach of government regulations around social distancing.

Rowing ACT has received advice from ACT Sport and Recreation⁶. As part of this advice Rowing ACT has been advised to consider additional appropriate measures that might need to be implemented by the rowing community to consider public health and safety.

ACT Sport and Recreation has provided updates to their advice⁷ and has also advised that privately-owned pairs/doubles can be rowed where the owners are from the same household.⁸

³ Rowing Australia Fact Sheet on Coronavirus update 29 April 2020 (<https://rowingaustralia.com.au/rowing-australia-fact-sheet-on-coronavirus/>)

⁴ ACT Health website (<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/home>)

⁵ ACT Government website (<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/home>)

⁶ ACT Sport and Recreation email of 7 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-recreation-advice-2-april-2020/>)

⁷ ACT Sport and Recreation COVID-19 FAQ 29 April 2020

(https://www.sport.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/1541260/FAQ-Coronavirus-29-April-2020.pdf)

⁸ ACT Sport and Recreation email of 29 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-and-recreation-advice-29-april-2020/>)

ROWING ACT COVID-19 POLICY

Rowing ACT advises that it is preferred that rowers privately store their boats to avoid shared facilities in clubhouses and reduce the risk of contamination through shared use of facilities and equipment.

In line with ACT Government restrictions on gatherings any rowing should be done in privately-owned singles, pairs or doubles, with only people from the same households in pairs or doubles.⁹

Rowing ACT recommends that clubs and boatsheds maintain strong hygiene practises at this time due to the challenges with implementing and monitoring suitable COVID-19 public health measures. Further to this, Rowing ACT is committed to ensuring the association, and its member clubs, are seen as responsible members of society. As such it encourages strict adherence to Federal and Territory Government direction and advice as well as advice from our National Sporting Organisation.

It is permissible, at this time, for privately-owned singles, pairs, and doubles to be out on the water. Crew members in pairs or doubles must be from the same household to be exempt from the mandatory 1.5m social distancing requirements.

Clubs should appoint a COVID-19 Safety Officer to help develop and maintain procedures to comply with COVID-19 measures and ACT Government requirements.

Should people choose to row their privately-owned singles, pairs or doubles they do so at their own risk. Individuals must ensure that they meet Rowing Australia's On-Water Safety Guidelines, particularly for rowing in cold conditions, and Member Protection Policy for the proper supervision of minors.

Private rowers must ensure:

- Any gathering of people does not have a density of more than one person per 4m²;
- People must not participate in groups greater than **two** individuals at any point in time (ie individual rowing only);
- Strict adherence to hygiene practices;
- They check the status of their personal insurance as they may not be covered by club insurance at this time;
- They have sufficient experience in a single scull given the cooler temperatures;
- They do not row or attend the boatshed if they are feeling unwell;
- They do not row if considered to be at-risk, or associating with people who are at-risk, from COVID-19; and
- For singles, in line with Rowing ACT advice on winter rowing, consider rowing with another single, while maintaining sufficient social distancing both on and off water.

⁹ ACT Sport and Recreation email of 29 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-and-recreation-advice-29-april-2020/>)

BOATSHED ACCESS

Boatsheds, and their surrounds, should not be used for ergometer or other land-based equipment training as per the Federal and ACT Governments closure of gymnasiums and indoor sports centres.

When making decisions around access to boatsheds, clubs and their committees should be cognisant of the safety of their members, the spirit of the restrictions announced by the Federal and ACT Governments, and how their actions would contribute to the reputation of both the club and the sport as a whole.

Clubs allowing access by private boat owners to their boatshed should apply the following risk mitigation measures:

- People must not attend the boatshed in groups greater than **two** individuals at any point in time;
- Staggered shed access times should be established;
- To meet social distancing requirements any gathering of people to access the boatshed facility should not have a density of more than one person per 4m²;
- Access to and use of showers and changerooms should be discouraged;
- Anyone attending the boatshed should follow strict adherence to hygiene practices, with special consideration to communal surfaces including tool-sheds, work benches, boat stretchers, boats and tinnies, buckets and sponges, rack and trolley handles, access doors, and bathrooms;
- Clear signage for participants outlining the COVID-19 measures that are in place (to be updated if measures change); and
- A sign in/sign out register is required for safety and to allow contact tracing if required;
- A COVID-19 Safety Officer should be appointed to monitor compliance and to manage staggered shed access times;
- It is recommended that anyone accessing the boatshed consider downloading the Federal Government's COVID-19 app;
- Ergs, weights and gym equipment should not be used;
- Members who are feeling unwell or have been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 should not attend the boatshed.

ACT Sport and Recreation has advised Rowing ACT to assess rowing-specific risks and apply additional suitable risk mitigation measures as deemed appropriate. The measures outlined above consider the advice provided by ACT Sport & Recreation.

The following participants should stay home, where possible, for their own protection:

- Those who are aged over 70;
- Those aged over 65 with pre-existing conditions; and
- Indigenous people aged over 50 with pre-existing conditions.

COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS

Should a rowing club member be diagnosed with or come into contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, the club should immediately cease operations and contact the ACT Health COVID-19 Helpline on (02) 6207 7244 for guidance on contact tracing and potential isolation. The club should also contact Rowing ACT to inform them of the diagnosis.

ACT Health will advise the measures required to be taken by the club. ACT Health must also provide clearance before a boatshed can be reopened.

INSURANCE

As per advice from Rowing Australia¹⁰, it is understood that there is no cover under personal accident policies for non-sanctioned club or state rowing activity. This includes, but is not limited to, all rowing of privately-owned boats until clubs and boatsheds are opened for club use. All clubs should confirm their insurance coverage for both on and off-water operations during this time with their respective insurers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Rowing ACT has a number of responsibilities that are applicable during the COVID-19 response, including (but are not limited to):

- It is a member organisation of Rowing Australia and is expected to follow advice and guidance from the National Sporting Organisation;
- It is the peak sporting body for rowing in the ACT and is expected to comply with ACT Government guidance and direction. There is a formal agreement between the ACT Government and Rowing ACT that addresses this requirement;
- ACT Sport and Recreation expects Rowing ACT to assess and review advice and guidance and apply suitable measures to be implemented within the ACT rowing community, particularly with regards to safety;
- Work Health and Safety and governance requirements are expected to be met in accordance with ACT legislation for a registered organisation in the ACT;
- Has the authority and responsibility to issue policies for the health and safety of its members; and
- Managing the reputation of rowing in the ACT community is considered critical to ensure ongoing support for the sport.

ACT Clubs and School are asked to (but are not limited to):

- Take advice from Rowing ACT on matters that pertain to the safe conduct of the sport of rowing;
- Clearly communicate Rowing ACT guidance and advice to their membership body, particularly advice that pertains to the safe conduct of the sport; and
- Contribute to the positive reputation of rowing in the ACT community.

¹⁰ Rowing Australia Media Release of 26 March 2020 (<https://rowingaustralia.com.au/2020/03/26/personal-accident-insurance/>)

COMMUNICATIONS

Rowing ACT will provide updates to the ACT rowing community when there are changes to the COVID-19 measures. Where updates necessitate a change to this policy, and the updates are likely to impact on club operations, Rowing ACT will, when time permits, provide advance notice to Club Presidents and School Rowing Masters. This may be waived where Rowing ACT deems it necessary to distribute information quickly.

Where possible, Rowing ACT will make available copies of advice from ACT Sport and Recreation. Rowing ACT will also maintain a section on the Rowing ACT website containing all COVID-19 advice relevant to the ACT rowing community.

Rowing ACT expects clubs and schools to provide Rowing ACT advice in full to their club members, particularly throughout the COVID-19 period, to ensure full visibility of all changes and updates.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as government advice changes.

ISSUED

This policy is issued by Rowing ACT and takes effect from **29 April 2020**. This policy remains applicable until withdrawn by Rowing ACT.

REFERENCES

The following information has been used to develop this policy:

- Federal Government COVID-19 directions and advice (<https://www.australia.gov.au/>)
- ACT Government COVID-19 directions and advice (<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/home>)
- ACT Sport and Recreation email to Rowing ACT of 7 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-recreation-advice-2-april-2020/>)
- Rowing Australia COVID-19 advice (<https://rowingaustralia.com.au/2020/03/23/ra-immediately-suspends-operations-at-its-two-national-training-centres/>)
- Rowing Australia advice on insurance (<https://rowingaustralia.com.au/2020/03/26/personal-accident-insurance/>)
- Rowing Australia CEOs and State Councillors meeting of 13 March 2020
- CEO Rowing Australia/Rowing ACT video conference with representatives of ACT Clubs and Schools conducted on 7 April 2020 (<https://youtu.be/966E-LN4HdM>)
- Rowing ACT update 23 March 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/rowing-act-covid-19-update-23-march-2020/>)
- ACT Sport and Recreation COVID-19 FAQ 29 April 2020 (https://www.sport.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/1541260/FAQ-Coronavirus-29-April-2020.pdf)
- ACT Sport and Recreation email of 29 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-and-recreation-advice-29-april-2020/>)
- ACT Sport and Recreation email of 29 April 2020 (<http://rowingact.org.au/covid-19-information/act-sport-and-recreation-advice-29-april-2020/>)