



Gaelic Football and Hurling Association of South Australia



Postal Address: GPO Box 21, Adelaide, South Australia 5001
Grounds: St. Mary's Park, Laura Ave, St. Mary's
Website: www.gaelicfootballsau.com.au

Hot Weather Policy

The health and safety of members and supporters, is of primary concern to the Gaelic Football and Hurling Association of South Australia.

Our Association acknowledges that skin cancer is a major public health problem in Australia, with two out of every three people requiring treatment for some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Also, that heat exhaustion and heat stroke can be particularly dangerous outcomes of playing sport in hot conditions.

Gaelic Football is a summer sport in South Australia, therefore duty of care for our members in these conditions, is part of our responsibility as an Association. We endeavour to promote our game in a way which allows all players and supporters to participate in the safest conditions possible, with minimum risks related to heat related injuries and illness.

While the GFHASA can promote a certain level of sun and heat protection, minimising the risk of sun and heat related injury and illness, is the combined responsibility of the individual and their teams, as well as the Association. Please familiarise yourself and your team with the guidelines below:

Responsibilities of Individuals:

- Ensure that you are in an appropriate physical state to compete i.e. well hydrated, rested, fed and unaffected by drugs or alcohol.
- Supply and administer the necessary medication to cater for your needs when appropriate and required e.g. ventolin puffer for asthmatics, epilepsy medication, etc.
- Be aware of the GFHASA Hot Weather policies and procedures.
- Communicate with your coach/team manager to keep informed about changes to playing times in hot weather.
- Practice sun-smart behaviour both on and off field e.g. wear appropriate sunscreen, hats (soft brimmed only for players), sunglasses, clothing, etc.

Responsibilities of Teams:

- Provide adequate water drinks for your team to use throughout the game.
- Use the interchange regularly to allow players to have sufficient rest breaks, to prevent heat-related illness or injury.
- Ensure you have sufficient players for the game, to allow for regular interchange and rest breaks.
- Negotiate modified game structure with the opposition team when necessary e.g. 4 x 12 min. quarters instead of 25 minute halves.
- Remain informed and aware of GFHASA Hot Weather Policy & Procedures in extreme weather i.e. deferred games/cancellations etc.
- Stay up to date with the recommendations and guidelines for competing in hot weather, provided by reputable Sport & Recreation Associations e.g. Office of Recreation & Sport, Sports Medicine Australia.
- Seek and use shade facilities during team breaks.
- Coaches and team managers need to exercise their duty of care related to their players who may be unfit, overweight and or physically impaired, when competing in high temperatures.

Responsibilities of the Association:

- Develop and implement hot weather policies and procedures to minimise and prevent heat related injury or illness.
- Stay up to date with the recommendations and guidelines for competing in hot weather, provided by reputable Sport & Recreation Associations eg: Office of Recreation & Sport, Sports Medicine Australia.
- Supply adequate shade for teams and participants, when necessary.
- Provide access to water facilities for teams to use.
- Supply SPF 30+ sunscreen for all members to access.
- Schedule games when possible to avoid the peak ultraviolet period i.e. 10am to 2pm (11am to 3pm daylight saving time) and outside of the hottest period of the day.
- Provide portable shade structures at competitions when needed.
- Encourage senior players, coaches, officials, members in prominent positions, and parents to be Sun Smart role models.
- Consider the reasons for and appropriateness of any rules that prevent the implementation of sun protection strategies.

Postponement/Cancellation/Modification of Games

- For all Gaelic 7's and State League games, when the forecast temperatures in the Advertiser or Sunday Mail is **31°C or above** (or by agreement of both team coaches and the referee if the forecast temperature is lower), games will be played as 4 x 12 min quarters. Alternatively (in the case of cooler night time conditions or a cool change), if agreed by both team coaches and the referee, then games do not need to be played as quarters.
- When **underage** games are scheduled and the temperature is **36°C** or more, games are to be **cancelled**.
- For Sunday games, when the forecast temperature in the Sunday Mail is **36°C or above**, the first scheduled game will be moved to the timeslot after the last game of the day*.
- For Sunday games, when the forecast temperature in the Sunday Mail is **40°C or above**, all games for that day will be **cancelled***. All teams affected will receive one premiership point each, and the scores will be recorded as 0-10 to both teams.
- In the case of extremely hot weather under any circumstances, after consulting with both team coaches, referees have the discretion to cancel games if they believe player's health and safety is at risk.

* Friday night and Gaelic 7's games start after 6:30pm, which means they avoid the hottest part of the day and the period of direct sunlight. For this reason, only Sunday games, where matches can start as early as 3:45pm, are subject to automatic rescheduling or cancellation. However, if prior to either a State League or Gaelic 7's match starting, after consulting with both team coaches, referees will have the discretion to cancel games if they believe players' health and safety is at risk.

This policy was compiled with the guidance of Sports Medicine Australia's Hot Weather Guidelines. For more information see <http://sma.org.au/resources/policies/hot-weather/>

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