



Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd
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Dear Clubs,

Firstly, I hope that everyone is staying safe and sane as we all grapple with the impact COVID-19 is having on our health as well as the social and financial issues it is creating.

As you will have seen from Football Federation Australia last night, **the temporary suspension of all grassroots football activities has been extended until at least 31 May 2020**. This is in line with the Federal Government's recent tightening of measures around social distancing and gatherings and is consistent across all levels of football.

These are truly tough times and the unity we have shown as a football community has been tremendous to this point and will be what decides how well we come out of the COVID-19 challenge.

Football

From a **football** perspective, we are still working towards the resumption of an abbreviated 2020 football season with the clear intention of now trying to get as many games played as possible for our 18,000 players- We continue to be strong in our belief that grassroots football and sport in general will play a huge role in dragging us out of this unprecedented disruption to life.

We are working with Northern Beaches Council and Mosman Council to see if the traditional handover of fields from the winter codes to the summer codes can be shifted back to ensure both summer and winter codes share in the disruption that sport is going to suffer because of COVID-19. Both Councils have been tremendously supportive to this point and we have no reason to doubt that won't continue.

FFA and Football NSW

As with the vast majority of the community, we are making necessary and drastic changes to prepare ourselves to come out of this unprecedented event with all levels of the game ready to resume stronger than ever. In recent days both Football Federation Australia and Football NSW have made some very tough decisions around cost-cutting and staff measures to ensure they can get through the 2020 season amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

This has also come with a significant decrease to the traditional way we pass on the portion of registration fees attributable to Football NSW and the FFA. Following a series of meetings with Football NSW, we have been asked to start by releasing just 6% of the budgeted fees owed to them, as opposed to traditional 60% payment. There is no doubt we will need to pay further amounts to FNSW and FFA, but this is a clear sign that all levels of the game are working together to ensure we all get through 2020 with our sport intact.

Government assistance

Importantly, the FFA and Football NSW continue to work with the Federal and State Governments on rescue packages for grassroots sport. These possible packages centre of the need to assist the grassroots. Football NSW has been in discussions with the NSW Government in relation to the Active Kids Vouchers money that is currently sitting with clubs with a view to that money not being refunded to the Government, which the Government has inferred



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will be the case. Importantly, it should be noted that this money it is not able to be refunded to the players/parents but are looking to see how these funds can support the broader football community.

MWFA

MWFA has also streamlined our cost base while ensuring we are able to kickstart the competition when the restrictions allow. The Federal Government's recent announcement regarding the Jobkeeper scheme will be part of our final position in relation to staff, albeit some short terms measures have already been put in place.

We have started modelling football matches and competitions, as well as the financial implications around a season that could resume from early June 2020 to late as possible that will allow us play a decent number of games.

Registration Fees

This latest direction by the Federal Government and FFA to suspend the competition and restrict the ability to play football matches has further eaten into our "traditional season" and we are addressing what this means for **registration fees**.

We are all aware that there have been costs incurred at every level of the game to prepare for the season before a ball is kicked and with the cuts at FFA, Football NSW and MWFA, we are to all trying to minimise any future costs while being ready to recommence football whenever that time comes. With each week missed, there is also a drop in the cost of running competitions (referee fees, lighting, field hire etc) and this will also be reflected in the outcome, as will any possible benefits from Government funding packages.

If the disruption continues beyond 31 May, of course we will need to place a sharper focus on the exact extent of discounts on the 2021 football season or refunds that will be offered, but until we know the full extent of the impact it is very difficult to have definite answers. It is also unfair to the broader football community to start offering refunds now as the true impact is unknown and refunds now will impact on the players who stay and play in the 2020 season when it starts.

So, we are asking for all clubs, players, parents, referees and volunteers to be patient and consider the broader interests of the game we all love.

We are also preparing a briefer note to go to all registered 2020 season players and will update the FAQ document on the website.

Regards

David Mason
MWFA CEO