



ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

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ADVERSE WEATHER POLICY

Rationale

The policy is to ensure that Frankston District Netball Association (FDNA) provides effective management guidelines in the event of the need to delay, cancel and/or alter game times and breaks due to dangerous weather.

FDNA Staff & Board of Management have a duty of care to ensure the courts are safe for play. FDNA is responsible for providing a safe environment for players, coaches, umpires, and spectators, meeting legal duties of care, and reducing potential injuries.

While it is preferable not to cancel games, the safety of members is paramount. Effective risk management must be maintained at all times, prioritising the safety and welfare of all participants and considering the age and skill level of players.

Purpose

The Adverse Weather Policy aims to ensure the safety of participants and the integrity of netball matches during adverse weather conditions. This policy outlines guidelines for managing game cancellations, delays, and rescheduling due to weather-related concerns.

This policy and any adverse weather decisions are made in accordance with the following Netball Victoria Policies and Guidelines:

- Wet Weather Policy
- Lightning Guidelines
- Hot Weather Guidelines

Authority

The decision to cancel, delay, or reschedule games due to adverse weather conditions rests with FDNA Competition Staff and/or any Management on duty

Decision-making follows the guidelines set forth by Netball Victoria for wet weather, lightning, and hot weather conditions.

Adverse Weather Conditions

Adverse weather conditions include but are not limited to:

- Lightning
- Heavy rain causing unsafe court conditions
- Extreme heat
- Other severe weather events deemed unsafe by FDNA officials

Lightning Policy

- **Suspension of Play:** Outdoor play will be suspended immediately if lightning is observed, or thunder is heard.
- **Return to Play:** Outdoor play may resume 30 minutes after the last observed lightning strike or thunderclap.
- **Safety Protocol:** Participants and spectators must seek shelter indoors or in vehicles until the all-clear signal is given.

Heavy Rain or Unsafe Court Conditions

- **Court Inspection:** FDNA officials will inspect courts to assess their suitability for play in case of heavy rain or other unsafe conditions.
- **Decision Making:** A decision to cancel or delay games due to unsafe court conditions will be communicated as early as possible via official communication channels (e.g., Netball Connect, social media, email).
- **Rescheduling:** Postponed games will be rescheduled by the FDNA Competition Staff in consultation with affected teams and officials.

Extreme Heat Policy

- **Heat Guidelines:** Games may be postponed or rescheduled if the predicted temperature reaches a level deemed unsafe by FDNA officials.
- **Hydration and Breaks:** During extreme heat, regular breaks and increased access to water will be provided to participants.
- **Player Safety:** Participants are encouraged to take personal precautions such as wearing sunscreen, hats, and appropriate clothing when playing outdoors.

Heat Exhaustion:

- **Symptoms:** Heavy sweating, weakness, pale and clammy skin, fast and weak pulse, nausea or vomiting, fainting, dizziness, headache, and muscle cramps.
- **When to Seek Medical Attention:** Seek immediate medical attention if symptoms worsen, last longer than an hour, or if the person is unable to drink water, shows confusion, or loses consciousness
- **Resources:**
 - **SMA Extreme Heat Policy:** <https://sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/SMA-Extreme-Heat-Policy-2021-Final-1.pdf>
 - **SMA Extreme Heat Assessment Tool:** <https://sma-heat-policy.sydney.edu.au/>

Communication

Notification: The decision to cancel, delay, or reschedule games will be communicated promptly to coaches, and club officials via official FDNA communication channels, including the Netball Connect, social media platforms, and email.

Procedure

Competition staff will complete a risk assessment of the courts before games commence (NV Match Checklist) and will communicate with Management as required. In wet weather (for outdoor matches) a determination between unsafe and unpleasant conditions shall be made. Inclement weather may make conditions uncomfortable, and members may choose not to play in unpleasant conditions. Consideration will be given to Netball Victoria's weather guidelines: [Weather Guidelines - Netball VIC](#)

- If heavy rain and/or strong winds are forecast (level 11-14 rain, strong wind warning), the Competition staff and/or Manager may:
 - A. Abandon all outdoor games for the day.**
 - B. Decide timeslot by timeslot.**
 - **A) Abandonment:** The decision will be made within the hour preceding the first match. Club Secretaries will be notified by telephone immediately.
 - **B) Timeslot Decision:** If the Supervisor deems it suitable for a game to commence, any decision to abandon or forfeit a game is at the discretion of the coaches. At halftime, the Competition Supervisor may decide to abandon all games (scores stand). Further decisions will be made by the Coaches or the Umpires if play resumes.
- If weather conditions are forecast to be inclement the Competition Supervisor and/or Board of Management representative will review the Bureau of Meteorology forecast prior to competition. Attention will be paid to any wind warnings as well as the rainfall radar.
- Consideration will be given to the specifications provided on the Bureau website (www.bom.gov.au) with regard to wind & rain.
- Consideration should be given to the age & ability of players. It should be acknowledged that, generally, older & more experienced players are more able to adjust their play to suit the weather conditions.

The Competition staff reserve the right to abandon any match at any time if conditions change from those in which the match commenced. An Umpire may request to call off a match if they believe it has become too dangerous to continue. A decision will be made after consulting with the Umpire Coordinator and both teams' Coaches.

Once Staff have abandoned a game, only the Competitions Supervisor can authorise the game to recommence.

Policy Notes

- **Forfeit:** If one team elects not to play and concedes four points to the opposition, this team will pay courts fees for both teams
- **Abandon:** If both teams agree not to continue play and take two points each, they will each pay court fees. If this occurs prior to half time teams will be awarded 2 points each. If after half time scores will stand.
- **Rollers** are available if teams want to quickly clear water from their court after rain (located in the Club Storeroom)
- Advice from ProSport Courts (provider of surface) is that the courts are designed to handle water and the drainage allows water to run off quickly. The surface is slip resistant even when damp.
- **Dangerous conditions** = thunder/lightning, extreme wind (gale force = more than 63kmh)
- Where finals are final ladder standings may be impacted by adverse weather conditions, matches may be rescheduled as determined by the Association.
- Games are considered abandoned due to adverse weather conditions if play ceases prior to half time. Games abandoned due to adverse weather conditions after half time are deemed played and scores will stand.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Athlete preparation for wet or cold conditions

- avoid standing exposed for long periods;
- wear appropriate clothing for expected conditions;
- Change wet clothes as soon as practicable;
- bring a change of clothes in a waterproof bag for immediate change after the game.

Athlete preparation for hot weather conditions

- avoid standing exposed for long periods;
- wear appropriate clothing for expected conditions; including a soft brimmed hat, if possible
- apply sunscreen at frequent intervals
- consume sufficient water before, during and after activity to remain hydrated