



Toowoomba AFC Sun/UV protection policy

Background

When training, participating in, or watching sports, people often spend extended times outdoors during peak UV periods and are exposed to intense levels of direct and indirect ultraviolet (UV) radiation. This places them at higher risk of UV damage, including sunburn and skin cancer. UV exposure may also increase the risk of eye diseases. Every sporting club has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for their staff, officials, volunteers, members and participants. Identifying hazards and risk management strategies are key to providing a safe sporting environment. This includes ultraviolet (UV) radiation and sun protection.

Implementation of Sun Safety Measures

Schedules

Where possible, training, events and competitions are scheduled to minimise exposure to UV.

Strategies include:

- Optimising use of shaded or indoor venues.
- Scheduling activities outside peak UV periods i.e., earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon.
- Reducing duration of warm-up activities and play with additional shaded break times.
- Frequently rotating player interchange and substitution.

Shade

- An assessment of existing shade is conducted at commonly used outdoor venues.
- Shade from buildings, trees and other structures is used where possible (e.g. for player interchange, marshalling areas, spectator areas, coach talks, presentation ceremonies).
- When not actively playing or between individual events, participants are encouraged to rest in shaded areas.
- Staff, officials and volunteers rotate to shaded areas and are encouraged to take breaks in the shade.
- Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants and spectators are encouraged to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).
- Clubs should provide shade for Football Officials participating at training sessions and matches. Additional shade structures on the benches for matches should also be considered when matches are played when high UV levels are 3 or greater.

Uniform/dress code (clothing, hats, sunglasses)

Uniform / dress code choices should be safe and inclusive, maximising equitable participation and optimal performance.



When competing, participants wear:

- Cool, well-ventilated clothing that covers as much skin as practicable prioritising coverage of the chest, shoulders and arms (with long sleeves preferred) and leg cover to at least the mid-thigh.
- Clothing (at any price point) that is made from densely woven fabric. Where possible, consider clothing made from UPF50+ fabric preferably with cooling or moisture-wicking properties.
- Head protection. As sun protective hats/caps are not practical in competition, sunscreen is to be applied to the face, neck and ears.

When not competing, participants wear:

- Cool, well-ventilated clothing that covers as much skin as possible.
- Clothing (at any price point) that is made from densely woven fabric.
- Hats that shade the head, face, neck and ears (i.e., wide-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket style).
- Close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

For sports with extended competition and periods of UV exposure, practical sun protective clothing is a priority.

Club and Person responsibility

a) Club Officers should download the SunSmart Mobile Application to assist with monitoring of daily UV levels.

(b) At times when Players and Football Officials have an increased risk of sun exposure, the following additional measures should be employed:

(i) SPF 50+ water-resistant sunscreen should be available at all outdoor training sessions and matches when the UV levels are (or are expected to be) greater than 3. Expired sunscreen should not be used.

(ii) Players and Football Officials should be educated by Clubs to apply a generous amount of sunscreen to all exposed skin at least 30 minutes before sun exposure and sweating occurs and reapplied every 2 hours.

(iii) Zinc based sunscreens can be used as an alternative and applied to high exposure areas such as the face.

(iv) Where possible, long-sleeved clothing, with Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) should be worn. A UPF rating above 15 is suitable however the AFL recommends a 50+ UPF rating.

(v) Players and Football Officials should wear a hat and sunglasses for outdoor training sessions where practical.

(c) Players and Football Officials should perform regular self-examination of their skin and consult a doctor if they become aware of any changes. These might include new freckles or moles or a change in size, colour or shape.