



Hi all,

After many months of uncertainty brought upon by the Covid-19 pandemic, it's a welcome step for the greater basketball community to know we will see capacity stadiums, smiling faces and hear the sound of bouncing basketballs on our courts uninterrupted for the months and years to come.

The Eastern Districts Junior Basketball Association (EDJBA) along with most basketball and indoor sport operators have faced incredible, unprecedented challenges over the last 20 months and it has been refreshing to hear stories of our community rallying around each other during this difficult period.

As we return to our venues, brandishing our beloved uniforms with parents and grandparents in tow, it's important to recognise the ongoing health restrictions in place, designed by the State Government to ensure the safety of players, spectators and organisers.

Last Thursday, a raft of policies were introduced by the Health Department which directly affects the way we can operate our competitions.

I understand as well as anyone that members of our community were caught off guard by these changes, and we sincerely apologise to any families who were adversely impacted over the weekend.

Under the Open Premises Directions, attendees of EDJBA venues aged 12 years and 2 months+ are required to be fully vaccinated. This is in recognition of the two-thirds of our venues which currently meet this as a legislative requirement, and therefore we have implemented this association-wide as a fixturing necessity.

The EDJBA has consulted with all of our clubs to investigate the vaccination requirement status which is currently in place at their venues. We are working around the clock to take these requirements into consideration for our fixturing. This process takes time. We're seeking to implement these changes by 3rd December (if possible), but flexibility from teams will be required in this effort.

Sadly, disagreements with aspects of Phase D of Victoria's Roadmap has resulted in targeted harassment of members of the administrative team. Anger expressed towards administrators, operations staff, (this includes club staff and volunteers) is not only unwarranted and unacceptable, but entirely misdirected.



While the EDJBA is in a position to advocate and hear your community concerns, it's important to remember that the construction, and implementation, of the Open Premises rules is fundamentally a decision that is out of our hands.

This vaccination policy has been confirmed by Basketball Victoria, in consultation with venue operators, and there remains no indication of impending changes to these rules.

Accordingly, the consequence of our venues failing to comply with these directives has the potential to cause significant financial harm to the EDJBA and our wonderful venue teams.

While this has, at times, been an unenviable situation to find ourselves in as an association, we now have clarity over the environment in which we must operate in, that is a good thing – and efforts to challenge these rules should be directed towards appropriate decision makers, which is simply not us.

It's my belief that cool heads will prevail as we all do our very best to facilitate this sport we love, for the enjoyment of us as parents and guardians; but most importantly for our kids, who have suffered immeasurably during months of school closures and disruptions to their social connectivity.

As you know, basketball has the capacity to bring out the best in us, comradery, sportsmanship, cordial competitiveness, encouragement and teamwork. As members of the EDJBA community, I look forward to working hard with you all to continue elevating these important themes, together.

It's an exciting time for our sport. We all have an opportunity to help bring basketball back, bigger and better.

I hope you'll join us in that pursuit.

Sincerely,
John Morkham
EDJBA President