



# Swimming Northern Territory

## Sun and Heat Protection Policy

Version	Reviewed by	Board Approval Date	Next Review Date
2	SNT Board	15 February 2024	15 Feb 2026
1	SNT Board	17 July 2020	17 July 2022

Document No.: SNT-POL-025



## 1. Introduction

The following policy is in place to help Swimming Northern Territory (SNT) minimise the risks of overexposure to UV and the chance of heat stroke for our swimmers, coaches, technical officials and volunteers.

## 2. Scope

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, SNT has a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants, volunteers, and staff, at its swimming events. In doing so, risks that may affect participants must be identified, assessed and eliminated or, if this is not possible, controlled. Information to prevent Sun burn, heat illness or any form of skin cancers from affecting anyone working outdoors in hot weather can be found at NT WorkSafe and SunSmart.

These guidelines should apply at all SNT events where participants, volunteers or staff are working outdoors in hot weather or where heat is generated as part of work.

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1 Heat Stroke/Illness

Heat stroke is one of the most serious heat-related illnesses and occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature due to prolonged exposure to heat or physical exertion in high temperatures.

Signs and symptoms of heat illness include feeling sick, nauseous, dizzy or weak. Clumsiness, collapse and convulsions may also be experienced as a result of heat illness. Workers with these signs or symptoms need to seek immediate medical attention. Work health and safety laws require the working environment to be safe and without risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable. This applies to any risk to health and safety, including illness from working in heat.

### 3.2 Sun burn/Skin Cancers

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer, with over 80% of all new cancer diagnoses in Australia. The Northern Territory currently has the lowest rate of skin cancer in Australia. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. UV damage also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage.

Sunburn and other UV damage is common while playing or watching sport, working in the sun and heat and when people are exposed to the sun's UV radiation for long periods of time.

Sporting clubs and organisations have a responsibility under health and safety legislation to provide and maintain a safe working environment for staff, volunteers, players and spectators. By minimising UV harms, you will help to fulfil this obligation and duty of care.



## 4. Sun and Heat Protection Guidelines

### 4.1 Events

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

Cancellation of training, events or competition occurs (according to the rules of Swimming Australia, when high risk conditions are forecast.

Where it is not possible to avoid peak UV and heat periods, the following interim steps are taken to minimise the risk of overexposure to UV and heat illness:

- Warm-up activities are limited in duration and intensity.
- The duration of the activity is reduced.
- Activities start earlier in the morning or later in the evening.
- Rest breaks and opportunities to seek shade and rehydrate are increased.
- Officials rotate out of the sun more frequently than usual.
- Player interchange and substitution is used more frequently than usual.
- Activity is held at an alternative venue (e.g. training at a covered pool).
- Officials, coaches and senior members act as role models by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats, applying sunscreen and seeking shade wherever.

### 4.2 Clothing

Even when working in shade, people still need suitable clothing and sunscreen to protect them from UVR scattered in the atmosphere or reflected off water, sand, concrete, grass or any pool deck surface. Both the design and the type of fabric used in the garment are important in maximising the sun protection it offers.

Tops/jerseys should be made of close woven fabric and be loose-fitting and lightweight. Consideration for purpose-made protective clothing to include ultraviolet Protective factor of 50+, have long sleeves and a collar should be made if necessary.

Where the competition uniform does not provide adequate sun protection, participants are reminded to apply SPF30+ (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed skin and wear covering clothing whilst not in the pool.

### 4.3 Sunscreen

SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is promoted and/or provided to participants.

Participants are encouraged to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before training or playing and to reapply every two hours or immediately after sweating, swimming or towelling dry.

Sunscreen is stored below 30°C and replaced once it is past the use-by date.

Participants are encouraged to apply a generous amount of sunscreen (the equivalent of one teaspoon per limb).

The first aid kit includes a supply of SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.



#### 4.4 Hats

Wide-brimmed or bucket hats are included as part of the on and off-field uniform (even if they can't be worn in actual play).

Caps and visors do not provide adequate sun protection to the face, ears and neck and are not recommended for extended sun protection but may be used, in combination with sunscreen on parts of skin not covered, as an interim measure for on-field play or training.

#### 4.5 Shade

An assessment of existing shade has been conducted at commonly used outdoor venues. When not actively playing or between individual events, participants are able to rest in shaded areas.

Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants are notified to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).

Shade from buildings, trees and other structures is used where possible (e.g. for player interchange, marshalling areas, spectator areas).

Marshalling, interchange and presentation ceremony areas are protected by shade. Participants and officials rotate to cooler, shaded areas.

#### 4.6 Sunglasses

Non-swimming participants are advised to wear sunglasses that meet the Australian standard (AS/NZS 1067:2016).

#### 4.7 Education and Information

The times when sun protection is required (as determined by SunSmart's daily local sun protection times) are communicated to participants and spectators.

### 5. **Policy Promotion**

This policy will be made available to all members via the Swimming NT website. This policy will be communicated to all staff members, board members, committee members and regional committees as required.

### 6. **Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Swimming Northern Territory every 2 years from the date of approval by the SNT Board.

### 7. **Additions Or Amendments**

In addition to the scheduled review of this policy recommended changes to the policy may be submitted to the Board of Swimming Northern Territory for consideration, at any time. In the event that the changes are accepted, the policy will be updated, dated and circulated to all relevant stakeholders.



**8. Relevant Documents and links**

[Sunsmart.com.au](http://Sunsmart.com.au)

[UV Widget – Sun Smart](#)

[Australian regulatory guidelines for sunscreens](#)

[ARPANSA Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation \(2006\)](#)

[Safe Work Australia Guidance Note – Sun protection for outdoor workers \(2016\)](#)

[NT WorkSafe – Working in Heat](#)

[Code of Practice - Managing the work environment and facilities](#)

[Guide for managing the risks of working in heat](#)

[Heat stress \(NT Health\)](#)

[SNT Risk Management Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)