



MEDIA RELEASE: CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

EMBARGOED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Hello everyone.

On behalf of the Deaf Poker Australia Board of Directors, we would like to thank you all for joining us for this announcement, no matter where you may be watching - Australia, New Zealand or around the world.

As we're sure you are aware, the situation regarding the coronavirus pandemic has been constantly changing and evolving quickly.

All around the world, more and more countries are now implementing travel restrictions, self-isolation protocols and either postponing or cancelling major sporting and cultural events in order to mitigate the rising risk of infection from COVID-19 and to aid in slowing down the spread of the virus so that health systems are not overwhelmed.

The DPA Board of Directors have been closely monitoring this situation, taking in recommendations from credible information sources such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and consulting with poker industry experts.

We have since had an in-depth discussion both amongst ourselves and other members of state Deaf poker leagues before addressing you today.

After careful consideration, we advise of the following action being taken by DPA and the Melbourne Kings Deaf Poker Committee:

1. The Melbourne Kings have voted in favour of cancelling the 2020 Victorian Deaf Poker Championship, which was due to take place at the Hays Paddock Pavilion in Kew on Saturday, March 28. The DPA Board of Directors has expressed its full support of the Committee's decision and will work with them any way we can to assist further.
2. Corresponding to the most recent announcement from organisers of the Australian Poker Tour, the Sydney Auslan Poker Open, due to take place on Thursday, April 1 at Bankstown Sports, has also been cancelled.
3. Finally, while DPA is regarded as the de facto governing body of Deaf poker in this country, we have always maintained a supporting role with our state Deaf poker Affiliates.

However, in the face of what is a very serious situation not just for ourselves as a community, but for the entire planet, we strongly recommend that all our Affiliate leagues:

- The Sydney Deaf Poker League;
- The Northern Rivers Outcasts;
- Queensland Deaf Poker;
- RAdelaide Deaf Poker;
- Melbourne Kings Deaf Poker, and;
- The Western Deaf Poker League

Implement the following one of two recommendations, effective immediately.

FIRST RECOMMENDATION

The DPA Board of Directors strongly recommends suspending any and all Deaf poker tournaments, including home games, regular tournament series and state Deaf poker championships, for a period of 60 days.

Assuming that the full term is required, Deaf poker tournaments would be wholly suspended throughout Australia until 11:59pm local time on Tuesday, the 12th of May 2020.

To be clear, we have stated *local time*, meaning that every state is subject to waiting until the clock strikes 11:59pm and not according to Australian Eastern Standard time.

This period of suspension may be reduced or increased based on updated information from the WHO and relevant state and federal government authorities.

SECOND RECOMMENDATION

Should an Affiliate League wish to proceed in hosting games, we then recommend the following procedures be put in place.

This is included, but not limited to:

- (a) Considering reducing the number of games scheduled over 60-day suspension period, reducing the starting stacks, reducing the length of blind levels, and/or changing the format of tournaments to make them short-handed (i.e. six-handed or fewer);
- (b) Thoroughly clean and disinfect chips, cards, tables and other equipment prior to the start of each tournament and change decks regularly during the game;
- (c) Provide complimentary hand sanitiser and anti-bacterial wipes for players and staff so they can ensure cleanliness of their hands, portable devices (e.g. mobile phones and tablets) and playing surfaces;
- (d) Prohibit the consumption of food and beverages at the tables and extend regular breaks to allow players to step away and enjoy their meals;

(e) Post notifications throughout the premises encouraging everyone to wash their hands, especially after eating food, smoking or going to the bathroom;

(f) Enforce regulations that anyone presenting with poor personal hygiene and/or displaying symptoms of any illness - especially sneezing, coughing or difficulty breathing - will be fully refunded and must leave the premises immediately to seek medical attention.

Players who leave under these conditions will not be allowed to participate until they have been given medical clearance by a health care professional and must present documentation before returning.

Any players who do not accept these conditions should be given prolonged or indefinite bans by their state Deaf poker group, which would then be extended nationwide by DPA.

The top priority in the decision-making process: by DPA, our Affiliate leagues, our players, staff and supporters - must be for the best interests of everyone's health and safety.

Recently, the Federal Government, in consultation with Australia's Chief Medical Officer, announced a ban mass gatherings of more than 500 people. We take this professional advice seriously and we should all avoid risk of spreading the virus.

Most Deaf poker tournaments have small numbers in attendance, this is true, however, prolonged person-to-person exposure in an environment such as a poker room presents a greater risk of contracting disease.

We strongly believe this global pandemic should not be taken lightly. It is important, now more than ever, that we support one another in this significant moment in human history.

Although many of us, including members of the Board, are now choosing to self-isolate in accordance with WHO recommendations, we will all be readily available to answer your questions and offer support remotely via email, SMS and other messaging services and video calls.

Once we have been given the all-clear and things return to normal, we will all be stronger for it, but for now, it is imperative that we do everything within our power to help "flatten the curve".

For more information and latest updates, please visit the World Health Organisation Website: who.int and Australian Government Department of Health website: health.gov.au.

The full press release will also be made available to view and download on our website: deafpoker.com.au and we will continue to provide regular updates here on our Facebook page.

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding. Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones and we'll see you all again very soon. Thank you.

ENDS.