

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Resources
Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events



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PUBLIC HEALTH TOP PRIORITY AS OPEN CONFIRMED FOR FEBRUARY

The 2021 Australian Open will be played in February to maximise safety for players and the wider Victorian community – and the prestigious grand slam event has been secured at Melbourne Park until 2039.

Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Jaclyn Symes confirmed the Australian Open would be played from 8-21 February with the world's best tennis players to serve 14-day quarantine periods in Victoria before embarking on their campaigns for the first grand slam of the year.

Quarantine plans have been endorsed by the Chief Health Officer and the Andrews Labor Government will work with Tennis Australia to finalise a COVIDSafe Plan that ensures the safety of all parties. Rigorous infection prevention and control measures will be central to these arrangements.

Tennis Australia has extended its Australian Open commitment to Melbourne and Victoria by three years, guaranteeing that the Open will remain a summer fixture in the nation's sporting capital for at least another 19 years.

The partnership ensures Tennis Australia's continued support of sub-professional tournaments and regional and community tennis events in Victoria, as well as enhanced exposure for Victoria during the tournament.

It is anticipated that players will arrive in Melbourne from mid-January, undertaking a mandatory two-week quarantine period that permits them to train for a maximum of five hours per day at a secure facility.

Players and their support teams will be tested prior to departing for Australia and then a minimum of five times during their quarantine period. If they test positive, they will be subject to standard quarantine arrangements until being cleared by public health officials.

The Australian Open attracts thousands of visitors to Melbourne and in 2020 contributed more than \$380 million to the Victorian economy. Crowd details for February will be confirmed in due course.

The Labor Government has locked in the nation's biggest sporting events on long-term deals.

In addition to the decades-long contract for the Open, arrangements are in place for the AFL Grand Final to be played at the MCG until 2058 while an agreement between the Melbourne Cricket Club and Cricket Australia covers the next three Boxing Day Test matches at the MCG, starting with this summer's Australia v India blockbuster.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Jaclyn Symes

"Melbourne is the home of the biggest sporting events and it's fantastic that arrangements have been settled for Melbourne Park in February."

"The 2021 Open will look a bit different and that's necessary to ensure the safety of everyone, from players, ballkids and the wider community."