

Non-protected

Phase 3: return to sport and physical activity

Guidance for Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs) in developing sport specific guidance for Local Authorities/ Trusts, clubs and others, on the phased return of sport and physical activity in Scotland.

Sport for life

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the national agency for sport

INTRODUCTION

Sporting activities can now be undertaken, providing all activity is consistent with current Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene – you will also need to make sure that your club, facility and participants are made aware and can adapt to changes in guidance at short notice. Information on Scottish Governments approach to managing COVID-19 is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#) .

People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 10 days and household members for 14 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

To manage a safe return to sport and leisure activities it is a mandatory requirement that all clubs, facility operators and deliverers put in place comprehensive Test & Protect procedures to help break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is available within this guidance and at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#).

SGBs, clubs and participants should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will open immediately. Clubs, owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities and put plans in place to re-engage staff and to set up operations that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers. This is a difficult time for everyone so please be patient.

The information outlined below is generic and should be used to inform the development of suitable sport specific guidance which can be shared with participants, clubs, local authorities/trusts, third sector and other sports facility operators.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. The nominated club committee, appointed [COVID-19 officer](#) or sports facility operator (herein referred to as the COVID officer) should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined herein. An e-learning module for COVID officers is available at [here](#).

2. From the 24 August 2020 additional sport and leisure activities will be permitted if appropriate guidance and risk assessments are implemented.
 - 2.1 Adult outdoor contact sports training and competition in an organised setting can resume ideally with a maximum of 30 people taking part in any one session. Maximum numbers must be agreed by Scottish Governing Body of sport (SGB) and **sportscotland**.
 - 2.1.1 SGBs and clubs should consider introducing a period of contact training to familiarise participants with guidelines before undertaking competition.
 - 2.2 Outdoor group coaching for organised sports and leisure activities including aerobics and fitness classes can take place for a maximum of 30 people at any one time.

3. From the 31 August 2020 indoor sport and leisure facilities are able to open if Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented:
 - 3.1 this includes the provision of indoor non-contact and contact sport training and competition activities for children up to and including 11 years of age and;
 - 3.2 indoor non-contact sport training and competition for those 12 years of age and over where physical distancing can be maintained.

4. Outdoor sporting events or activities involving more than 30 people should not take place at this time unless following SGB specific guidance which has been approved by **sportscotland**.

5. An indicative date of 14 September 2020 has been identified by Scottish Government for further changes to sport and leisure activity including:
 - 5.1 Limited spectator access to sports stadia.
 - 5.2 Resumption of indoor contact sports and competition for those 12 years of age and older.

6. Track and Protect measures should be implemented for all activities to assist NHS Scotland in the event of a virus outbreak.
7. It is the responsibility of each sports facility operator, club committee and/or deliverer (herein referred to as sport facility operator) to undertake documented risk assessment, based on their local circumstances, prior to activity taking place. Consider safety first, particularly focusing on minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are always protected.
8. Sports facility operators should check with their insurance company that correct and full insurance cover is in place and valid before any activity takes place.
9. Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Further information is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Phase 3: Staying safe and protecting others](#).
10. Furloughed staff
 - 10.1 It is for each sports activity and/or facility employer to decide when it is the appropriate time to return staff to work from the [Coronavirus Government Job Retention \('furlough'\) scheme](#).
 - 10.2 A furloughed employee can take part in volunteer work if they do not provide services to or generate revenue for, or on behalf of, your organisation or a linked or associated organisation.
 - 10.3 Changes to the furlough scheme took effect from 1 August 2020. Further information is available at [UK Govt: Job Retention Scheme Changes](#).
11. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 routemap. Current updates from the 20 August 2020 are available at [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#).

SPORTS FACILITY & OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

12. Indoor sport and leisure facilities can reopen from the 31 August 2020 subject to Scottish Government guidance being followed as outlined at [Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#).

13. **sportscotland** has also produced [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) resource to help sport facility operators prepare for reopening. The resource supports Scottish Government guidance by providing further detailed checklists for the reopening of a range of sport specific facilities.

14. Test and Protect

14.1 [Test and Protect](#), is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.

14.2 Containing outbreaks early is crucial to reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect the NHS and save lives, and avoid the reintroduction of social and economic lockdown. This will support the country to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life.

14.3 Maintaining customer records

14.3.1 It is a mandatory requirement that sport facility operators collect the name, contact number, date of visit, time of arrival, and where possible the departure time of all those attending facilities or activities. Where attending as a small household group, the contact details for one member – a 'lead member' – will be sufficient.

14.3.2 Sports facility operators should store information for 21 days and share it when requested to do so by public health officers.

14.4 A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#).

14.5 Registration with the Information Commissioner's Office

14.5.1 In order to gather and store customer information securely, sports facility operators may need to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This will be the case if you are using an electronic system to gather and store data.

14.5.2 If you are unsure whether you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113, or visit www.ico.org.uk.

15. Changing rooms, showers and toilets

15.1 Use of changing rooms and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although from the 31 August 2020 they may be made available for participants with disabilities or special needs or where required after an activity such as swimming.

15.2 Sports facility operators may open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).

15.3 For detailed facility guidance including a checklist that covers use of changing rooms, showers and toilets visit Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#).

16. Locker Rooms

16.1 From the 31 August 2020 access to indoor locker rooms and storage areas is permitted for the dropping off and collection of sports equipment or clothing. The sports facility operator should ensure mitigating actions are put in place to minimise the risk of virus transmission including physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning measures.

17. Meeting Rooms

17.1 Working from home and working flexibly, where possible, remain the default. The [Scottish Government's Route map](#) states that the date that non-essential offices and call centres can re-open is still under review. Although we appreciate gym and leisure facilities are able to reopen on 31 August, we would encourage providers to consider whether internal meetings and training must be completed in person. Or whether these can be completed online or via telephone.

17.2 If it is essential that meetings and training takes place in person, [Scottish Government guidance for general workplaces](#) must be followed and a risk assessment should be completed.

18. Indoor and outdoor hospitality, including clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance which is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).

19. Retail units operated by sports facility operators may reopen provided all specific Scottish Government guidance for retailers is in place and adhered to. Further information from the Scottish Government is available at [Retail Sector Guidance](#).

20. No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Physical distancing guidance should always be followed.

21. Limits on the number of participants accessing sports facilities should be risk assessed to ensure physical distancing can be maintained. This should take into consideration Scottish Government guidance on physical distancing and

any exceptions highlighted within this document where sporting ‘bubbles’ are created for the duration of an activity.

22. Outdoor Sports Courts & Pitches

22.1 Facility operators may open all outdoor sports areas, courts and pitches if documented risk assessments are undertaken and all appropriate measures are put in place to ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.

22.2 Please refer to additional guidance produced by **sportscotland** at: [Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#).

23. Organised Sporting Activity for Children and Adults

23.1 Organised indoor and outdoor sporting activity/competition for children and adults may be undertaken as outlined below and where appropriate SGB guidance has been approved by **sportscotland**.

23.2 All sport facility operators providing organised competitions must abide by relevant SGB guidance and have a named ‘Covid Officer’ who will be responsible for completing documented risk assessments and ensuring all appropriate mitigations are put in place.

23.3 Definitions - for the purposes of this guidance;

23.3.1 contact sport or activity is defined as “a sport or activity in which the participants necessarily come into bodily contact with one another”.

23.3.2 non-contact sport or activity is defined as “a sport or activity in which the participants are physically separated by playing rules such as to make it difficult for them to make physical contact during the course of an activity. Examples include Tennis, Cricket, Bowls and Curling.

23.3.3 Non-contact sports where participants would normally encroach within 2m should put in place measures to limit this risk. For instance, training only or competition with altered rules to maintain physical distancing.

23.3.4 Sports competition refers to where participants or teams compete against different opponents as part of an organised league or competition.

23.4 Children and Young People

23.4.1 Outdoor contact and non-contact sport and competition can be undertaken by children and young people.

23.4.2 From the 31 August 2020 this will be extended to include all forms of indoor sports training, activity and competition for children up to and including the age of 11 years.

23.5 Adults

23.5.1 Outdoor non-contact sporting activity and competition may be undertaken.

23.5.2 From the 24 August 2020 outdoor contact sport training, activity and competition in an organised setting may resume with a maximum of 30 people taking part in any one session. This may, in exceptional circumstances, be increased to include for example officials, coaches and support staff (medical etc) if agreed with **sportscotland**.

23.5.3 From the 31 August 2020 adult indoor non-contact sports training, leisure activity and competition may resume subject to appropriate physical distancing measures being put in place to limit the risk of participants encroaching within 2m.

23.5.4 No adult indoor contact sport should be undertaken at this time.

23.6 All sports facility operators providing sport specific activities must abide by relevant SGB guidance and have an appointed 'Covid Officer' who will complete documented risk assessments and ensure appropriate mitigations are put in place before any sporting activity is undertaken.

23.7 Physical Distancing

23.7.1 Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance at any time, as set out in Scottish Government guidance.

23.7.2 For those over 12 years of age taking part in an organised outdoor activity, a 'field of play bubble' can be created whilst a sporting activity is taking place, in effect suspending physical distancing guidelines for the duration of the activity. Normal physical distancing guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place.

23.7.3 For those over 12 years of age taking part in indoor sporting or leisure activity normal physical distancing rules should be followed. Risk assessments should, where possible, consider mitigating actions to reduce the likelihood of participants encroaching within 2m of each other. For instance, SGBs and sports facility operators may consider, where appropriate, different formats of competition, zoned participation areas or staggered starts.

- 23.7.4 No formal presentation ceremonies should take place during or after an activity or competition and the focus should be on reducing numbers in attendance at any one time.
 - 23.7.5 Coaches and others supporting organised activity should attempt to keep physically distant where possible, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible. In such circumstances the responsible 'Covid Officer' should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment.
 - 23.7.6 Specific consideration should be given to supervision of children under the age of 5 years as it is not appropriate for young children to maintain the models of physical distancing that are suitable for older children, either practically or in terms of child development. You may, for instance, ask a parent to be present.
 - 23.7.7 Where an employee is providing an activity, relevant work placed risk assessments and consultation should take place in advance of any activity being undertaken. See the Businesses, workplaces and self-employed people section at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).
 - 23.7.8 Parents/guardians who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.
- 23.8 Participant numbers and duration of organised activity;
- 23.8.1 A 'field of play bubble' can be created whilst a sporting activity is taking place, in effect suspending Scottish Government household number guidelines for the duration of the activity, if appropriate guidance is agreed with **sportscotland** as highlighted herein. Normal household guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place for those aged 12 years and over.
 - 23.8.2 Where there is likely to be close contact between participants in an organised sporting activity, mitigation should be put in place to minimise risk and keep participants safe.
 - 23.8.3 SGB guidance should therefore consider limiting the numbers taking part and the required duration of the activity.
 - 23.8.4 The focus should be on delivering the organised activity with as few participants as possible interacting with each other and for the minimum amount of time, whilst still allowing the activity to be run effectively.

23.8.5 Holiday camps or extended sports activity which would not normally come under the jurisdiction of an SGB should refer to the appropriate local authority, umbrella body or care commission guidance. Organisers of these activities may alternatively wish to use Scottish Government household, physical distancing and group size limits should be applied.

24. Adult involvement and ratios;

24.1 All adults involved in coaching / actively engaging with children or vulnerable adults in an organised environment should have undertaken appropriate SGB safeguarding and, where available, Covid-19 training.

24.2 Sports organisations should always ensure appropriate ratios of coach/adult to child/vulnerable adult as per SGB guidance and follow all related safeguarding advice.

24.3 Health, safety and welfare policies should always be risk assessed and implemented.

25. Health, Safety & Hygiene

25.1 Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained.

25.2 Ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.

25.2.1 In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognised that a suitably qualified person, coach or supervising adult may require to attend to the injured participant. The 'Covid Officer' should consider processes for managing this as part of their risk assessment. This could include but not be limited to;

- Provision of suitable PPE
- Training of coaches/supervising adults
- Presence of one parent/guardian being required at the activity for children/vulnerable adults.

25.3 Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these.

25.4 Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. For instance, common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) should where possible be left open but if not possible, regular cleaning with disposable gloves should be undertaken.

25.5 Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use in bar and restaurant areas and at the entrance/exit to the venue/facility where this is possible. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.

25.6 A checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)

25.7 Face Coverings

25.7.1 Sports facility operators should ensure participants and visitors wear face coverings, if indoors, before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas. This is a mandatory requirement.

25.7.2 Face coverings may not be required when using hospitality services such as café's, bars and restaurants. For further information refer to Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).

25.8 Further health, safety and hygiene guidance is available at;

[Health Protection Scotland: General guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)

[Health Protection Scotland: Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting](#)

[Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)

[St. John's Ambulance: Covid-19 advice for first aiders](#)

[HSE: First Aid during the coronavirus](#)

26. Equipment provision and use

26.1 Sports facility operators should, where possible, remove equipment including benches, scoreboards, tables and any other objects that are not essential for participation purposes.

26.2 Where the above is not possible appropriate cleaning measures, including provision of sanitiser and disposable gloves, should be put in place to reduce the risk of contamination.

26.3 Bins may be provided but should be regularly checked, cleaned/sanitised, emptied and disposed of using appropriate personal protective equipment.

26.4 All fixed equipment should be checked prior to use to avoid participants having to adjust or touch it.

26.5 Where shared equipment is necessary for an activity appropriate hygiene measures must be put in place to ensure the equipment is thoroughly cleaned before, during and after use.

26.6 Where balls are used in sports areas, courts and pitches a risk assessment should be undertaken to ensure measures are put in place to minimise uncovered body contact. Appropriate hygiene protocols should be undertaken including hand hygiene and regular cleaning of balls before, during and after exercise.

27. Bookings and payment

- 27.1 Online bookings should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place including phone bookings.
- 27.2 Consider introducing buffer periods between sessions to stagger start times so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
- 27.3 Where possible use online or contactless payment options and avoid handling cash.

28. Communication with members/customers

- 28.1 Sports facility operators should communicate clearly and regularly with members and participants setting out what they are doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after visits to the venue/activity.
- 28.2 Make them aware in advance of measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
- 28.3 Ideally sports facility operators should publish an action plan detailing their plans to re-open safely.
- 28.4 Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.
- 28.5 It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.
- 28.6 Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.

29. Workforce

Sports facility operators must ensure that relevant workplace guidance is followed for contractors and staff and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment.

30. Coaching and Instructing

Guidance for coaches, leaders, personal trainers, and instructors (herein referred to as coaches) is available at [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#).

- 30.1 From the 3rd August 2020 restrictions were lifted on the number of households (or extended households) that can be coached per day.
- 30.2 From the 24th August 2020 coaches can take organised outdoor group training sessions with a maximum of 30 people involved at any one time.

- 30.3 During outdoor group training sessions appropriate risk assessed physical distancing and hygiene measures should be put in place to protect participants.
31. Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

Guidance for participants

The following guidance can be used to support participants. Consider using it in the context of before, during and after the activity.

32. Stay up to date
 - 32.1 Scottish Government information is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#) .
 - 32.2 Be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of guidelines for your activity.
33. Travelling to and from an activity/sports facility
 - 32.1 Please check before you leave that toilet facilities will be available at the sports facility.
 - 32.2 Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving home. Information on hand hygiene is available at: [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#) .
 - 32.3 Where possible avoid using public transport and adhere to Scottish Government physical distancing and travel guidelines.
 - 32.4 Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be at the venue/sports facility and allow others to leave before you enter. If you need to wait, then do so away from the facility and clear of any entrances or exits.
 - 32.5 Take your own hand sanitiser to the sports facility and use regularly throughout the activity.
 - 32.6 If driving, park your car in such a way as to facilitate physical distancing.
 - 32.7 Avoid touching fixed equipment including gates, fences or benches.
 - 32.8 After completing your exercise/activity return directly to your car (if appropriate) and leave.

33.1 [Test and Protect](#), is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.

33.2 The gathering of contact information from anyone attending sport/leisure activities or facilities in a secure and safe manner, will assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service to identify any clusters of cases, contact those who may have been exposed to the virus, and request them to take appropriate steps to prevent potential onward spread.

33.3 Maintaining customer records

33.3.1 In order to support Test and Protect sports facility operators are required to collect the name, contact number, date of visit, time of arrival, and where possible the departure time of all those attending facilities or activities. Where attending as a small household group, the contact details for one member – a 'lead member' – will be sufficient.

33.3.2 It is important that sport facility operators and customers cooperate, as it will be crucial to national efforts to suppress the virus.

33.3.3 Sports facility operators will store information for 21 days and share it with public health officers when requested.

33.4 A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#).

34 Health, Safety & Hygiene

34.1 Face coverings

34.1.1 Participants and visitors to indoor sports facilities should wear face coverings before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility (e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas).

34.1.2 Face coverings do not need to be worn when undertaking physical activity, exercise or showering/changing.

34.1.3 Face coverings do not need to be worn in a sports facility hospitality environment i.e. café, restaurant or bar.

34.2 If you are not wearing face coverings and need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue into an appropriate bin supplied at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for 20 seconds.

34.3 Avoid touching your face and ensure to clean your hands with at least 60% alcohol gel when you finish participating.

35 Physical distancing and participation numbers

35.1 Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance at any time, as set out in Scottish Government guidance.

35.2 For those 12 years of age and over taking part in sport or leisure activity, normal Scottish Government physical distancing and household number guidelines should be followed unless otherwise advised by your relevant Sports Governing Body, Club or facility operator, as certain activities have exemptions.

35.3 Normal physical distancing and household number guidelines will however be applicable before and after the sporting activity or when taking breaks.

35.4 Coaches, officials, parents and guardians should continue to observe physical distancing when involved in children's activity as a coach, official or spectator. Please refer to specific club or facility guidelines.

35.5 Where access through an indoor space is provided it should be for one person at a time, ideally with a one-way system in operation. Participants should ensure not to make contact with hard surfaces such as door handles and move through the area without stopping or congregating at any time.

35.6 Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#).

36 Spectators

36.1 No spectating should take place other than where a parent/guardian is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. In all cases physical distancing should always be followed.

37 Be aware guidance can change and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of your governing body Covid-19 guidance.

38 Participant Bookings

38.1 Where a venue operator allows, book in advance and made payment online.

38.2 Exercise and physical activity can only take place outdoors with all indoor exercise facilities remaining closed.

39 Equipment & Facilities

39.1 Where possible take your own equipment with you.

39.2 Only take the minimum amount of equipment that you need to participate.

- 39.3 Clean and wipe down your equipment, including water bottles before and after use.
- 39.4 Do not share food or drink with others.