

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

Some 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 shielding are permitted to undertake activities providing strict physical distancing is adhered to.

People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days; household members for 14 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility/activity.

SGBs, clubs and participants should be aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities/venues will open immediately. Owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities/venues 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 venue operators.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. The club committee or venue operator should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined herein. Venue operators are advised to take time to ensure they reopen safely.
2. It is the responsibility of each venue operator, club committee and deliverer 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.
3. Only outdoor sport and physical activity should be undertaken at this time with all indoor exercise and changing areas remaining closed.
4. Indoor and outdoor hospitality, including club houses which provide catering and bar services, can reopen providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance. (Indoor hospitality only from 15 July.)
5. Club committees, venue operators and deliverers should check with their insurance company that correct and full insurance cover is in place and valid before any activity takes place.
6. At all times clubs, venue operators and deliverers should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines in force at the time.
7. Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others: Travel](#)
8. Furloughed staff
 - 8.1 It is for each venue/club employer to decide when it is the appropriate time to return staff to work from the [Coronavirus Government Job Retention \('furlough'\) scheme](#).
 - 8.2 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.
9. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 routemap. Current information is available at [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#) .

FACILITY / VENUE GUIDANCE

10. **sportscotland** has produced the [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) guidance to help venue operators of sports facilities as they prepare for when sport/activity resumes. The guidance is applicable to all phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 route map and can be adapted to support other planning-based work being undertaken by sports, clubs and community organisations.
11. Indoor facilities including changing/locker rooms, meeting rooms, storage and activity areas should remain closed to the public.
12. Clubhouses can re-open to provide indoor bar and restaurant services if following SG guidance. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Tourism and Hospitality Guidance](#) .
13. Sports venue operators and clubs may open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#) .
 - 13.1 Public toilets are defined as any toilets accessible to the public. The opening of toilets should be accompanied by local risk assessment, and control measures should be proactively monitored by clubs and venue operators.
 - 13.2 All appropriate cleaning procedures and equipment/disinfectant should be provided as per Health Protection Scotland guidance.
14. Retail units operated by clubs and venue 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](#) .
15. No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Physical distancing guidance should always be followed.
16. Limits on the number of participants accessing facilities should be risk assessed to ensure physical distancing can be maintained. This should take into consideration that at phase 3 you can meet with up to four other households (or extended households) at a time outdoors, and no more than 15 people in total at any time.
17. Outdoor Sports Courts & Pitches
 - 17.1 Clubs and venue operators may re-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. Indoor exercise areas remain closed.

- 17.2 Please refer to additional guidance produced by **sportscotland** at: [Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) .
 - 17.3 Activity or exercise undertaken in sports areas, courts and pitches must fully comply with Scottish Government household and physical distancing guidance with appropriate hygiene and safety measures also in place.
18. Organised Outdoor Sport for Children
- 18.1 Organised outdoor sport specific activity can be undertaken by children and young people from the 13 July, with a phased implementation, subject to SGBs agreeing guidance with **sportscotland** covering the following;
 - 18.2 All sports organisations providing children’s activity must abide by relevant SGB guidance and have a named ‘Covid Officer’ who will complete documented risk assessments and ensure all appropriate mitigations are put in place by the sports organisation before any children’s outdoor activity is undertaken.
 - 18.3 Physical distancing;
 - 18.3.1 Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance, as set out in Scottish Government guidance. This extends to organised sports activity and the field of play.
 - 18.3.2 For older children aged 12-17 a ‘field of play bubble’ can be created during organised sports activity that allows contact whilst the 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.
 - 18.3.3 Coaches and other adults 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 club ‘Covid Officer’ should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment.
 - 18.3.4 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.
 - 18.3.5 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 Govt: Covid-19](#)

- 18.3.6 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.
- 18.4 Health, safety & hygiene measures for children's activity should be in line with guidance provided within this document.
- 18.4.1 In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognised that a suitably qualified coach/supervising adult may require to attend to a child. The sports organisation 'Covid Officer' should consider processes for managing this as part of the 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
- 18.5 Participant numbers and duration of organised activity;
- 18.5.1 Where there is likely to be close contact between children in an organised sporting activity mitigation should be put in place to minimise risk and keep participants safe.
- 18.5.2 SGB guidance should therefore consider limiting the numbers taking part and the required duration of the activity.
- 18.5.3 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.
- 18.5.4 The focus of activity at this stage should be non-competitive, essentially a return to training. No competition, matches or other activity between sporting clubs/organisations should be arranged.
- 18.5.5 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. These bodies may wish to use relevant SGB guidance but if not applicable, Scottish Government household, physical distancing and group size limits should be applied.

18.6 Adult involvement and ratios;

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

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

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

19. Health, Safety & Hygiene

19.1 Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained. Where equipment is stored indoors please ensure public access to enclosed indoor areas is restricted as much as possible with hygiene and safety protocols reviewed as part of the risk assessment.

19.2 Please ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.

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

19.4 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.

19.5 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.

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

19.7 Further 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](#)

20. Maintaining physical distancing

- 20.1 At all times, clubs and venue operators should ensure participants adhere to the current Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines including before, during and after the activity or when taking breaks.
- 20.2 Please ensure to follow guidance from your sport's governing body, club or venue operator on maximum numbers able to take part in the activity.
- 20.3 Access through an indoor area can be provided if suitable risk assessments and safety measures are put in place. These should include restricting access as much as possible, ideally one person at a time and with a one-way system in operation where possible. Persons moving through an area should not stop or congregate at any time.
- 20.4 A checklist for physical distancing considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)
- 20.5 Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#).

21. Equipment provision and use

- 21.1 Clubs and venue operators should, where possible, remove equipment including benches, scoreboards, tables and any other objects that are not essential for participation purposes.
- 21.2 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.
- 21.3 Bins may be provided but should be regularly checked, cleaned/sanitised, emptied and disposed of using appropriate personal protective equipment.
- 21.4 All fixed equipment should be checked prior to use to avoid participants having to adjust or touch it.
- 21.5 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.
- 21.6 No personal equipment should be left at a facility by a participant once the activity has ended.
- 21.7 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.

22. Competitions

- 22.1 Competitions or events where groups of more than 5 households (or extended households) (maximum of 15 people) congregate at any one time are not permitted.
- 22.2 Competitions should only be undertaken locally and informally at your own club/venue where household, physical distancing and hygiene measures are in place.
- 22.3 Travel to a competition out with your normal club/venue of play is not permitted.

23. Bookings and payment

- 23.1 Online bookings should be taken if possible. If not, alternative measures should be put in place including phone bookings.
- 23.2 Where possible and in line with Data Protection regulations, a register of users should be kept in case there is a need to track and trace.
- 23.3 Consider introducing buffer periods between sessions to stagger start times so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
- 23.4 Where possible use online or contactless payment options and avoid handling cash.

24. Communication with members/customers

- 24.1 Clubs and venue 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.
- 24.2 Make them aware in advance of measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
- 24.3 Ideally clubs and venue operators should publish an action plan detailing their plans to re-open safely.
- 24.4 Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.
- 24.5 It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and clubs/venue operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.
- 24.6 Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.

25. Workforce

Clubs and venue 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.

26. Coaching and Instructing

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

27. Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#) .

28. Facility re-instatement advice & support

sportscotland has produced the [Getting your facilities fit for sport](#) document to provide support to owners and operators of sports facilities to help them plan and prepare for when sport can resume.

This guidance document includes a four-stage best practice plan that we recommend owners and operators follow to ensure the health and safety of participants is protected.

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.

29. Stay up to date

29.1 Scottish Government information is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#) .

29.2 Be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of guidelines for your activity.

30. Travelling to and from an activity/venue

30.1 Please check before you leave that toilet facilities will be available at the venue.

30.2 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](#)

- 30.3 Where possible avoid using public transport and adhere to Scottish Government physical distancing and travel guidelines.
 - 30.4 Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be at the venue/facility and allow others to leave before you enter. If you need to wait, then do so away from the facility and clear of the gates.
 - 30.5 Take your own hand sanitiser to the venue and use regularly throughout the activity.
 - 30.6 Take your own hydration / food to the venue.
 - 30.7 If driving, park your car in such a way as to facilitate physical distancing.
 - 30.8 Avoid touching fixed equipment including gates, fences or benches.
 - 30.9 After completing your exercise/activity return directly to your car (if appropriate) and leave.
31. Health & Hygiene
- 31.1 If you 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.
 - 31.2 Avoid touching your face and ensure to clean your hands with at least 60% alcohol gel when you finish participating.
32. Maintaining physical distancing
- 32.1 At all times, participants should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines including before, during and after the activity or when taking breaks.
 - 32.2 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 any specific club/venue guidelines.
 - 32.3 Please ensure to follow guidance from your sport's governing body, club or venue operator on maximum numbers able to take part in the activity.
 - 32.4 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.
 - 32.5 Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#).

33. If you have children with you;
 - 33.1 You can exercise with members of your household, including children, or with members from up to 4 other households (or extended households), with a maximum of 15 people participating in total.
34. Spectators
 - 34.1 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.
35. Clinically vulnerable people
 - 35.1 The advice for clinically vulnerable groups has been updated.
 - 35.2 People who are shielding can now undertake outdoor exercise activities. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Staying safe outdoors](#) .
 - 35.3 People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.
36. Be aware guidance can change and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of your governing body Covid-19 guidance.
37. Participant Bookings
 - 37.1 Where a venue operator allows, book in advance and made payment online.
 - 37.2 Exercise and physical activity can only take place outdoors with all indoor exercise facilities remaining closed.
38. Competitions
 - 38.1 Competitions or events where groups of more than 5 households (or extended households) (maximum of 15 people) congregate at any one time are not permitted.
 - 38.2 Competitions should only be undertaken locally at your own club/venue where household, physical distancing and hygiene measures are in place.
 - 38.3 Travel to a competition out with your normal club/venue of play is not permitted.

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 Bring a full water bottle, and do not share food or drink with others.
- 39.5 Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of the session and do not leave or store anything at the venue/facility.
- 39.6 Be aware that most onsite indoor facilities will be closed.