

## COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT FOOTBALL ACTIVITIES



Pace FC and Pace Youth FC are committed to grassroots football in our community. We have produced this risk assessment to bring back training and matches to all our teams in line with the most up to date guidance issued by The FA to restart grassroots football.

As the weeks progress, Government restrictions and advice from The FA may or may not be eased further. If they are, we'll update our guidance accordingly. It's essential everyone is clear about the restrictions and works together to manage social distancing and strong hand hygiene.

Our risk assessment has been produced in line with the current Government roadmap for the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. The roadmap sets out that outdoor organised sports may return from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

The return of grassroots football is something that we know many are keen to see, but this must be done with careful consideration for everyone's safety, especially vulnerable people.

The latest guidance from the Government is that competitive grassroots football may re-start from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021 provided all the Government and FA guidance is followed, and each club/facility has their bespoke Covid-19 risk assessment. Step Three of the roadmap is to commence from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May and sees the relaxation of spectators at football activities on public and private land.

All latest documents for The FA Guidance can be accessed from our County FA website here (website accessed 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021):

<https://www.hampshirefa.com/news/2021/may/11/update-non-elite-football>

The key change to the guidance from previous versions is the restriction on spectators at grassroots football. Spectators are permitted at outdoor grassroots football and are permitted to gather in groups of up to 30 persons providing social distancing is adhered to. Multiple groups of 30 people are permitted provided social distancing and gathering rules are followed.

On the following pages are copies of the checklist provided by Hampshire FA to assist clubs and coaches in returning to competitive football. All Pace Youth club coaches and officials use these as their guidance along with this risk assessment to ensure they conduct training and matchdays in an appropriate manner.

Please note Pace and Pace Youth are an affiliated Charter Standard club with Hampshire FA (Affiliation numbers W-HAM6671 and W-HAM6004 respectively). We hold in-date Public Liability and Personal Accident insurances with Bluefin Sport.

The club only use Testwood School, Totton for their training activities and (home) matches as this is a safe and controlled environment for all of our participants.

In line with the latest FA guidance Pace have assigned Ian Lewis (Club Secretary) as the club's nominated COVID-19 Lead. The club are following the UK Government advice on NHS Test and Trace by recording details of persons attending all training sessions and matches. These details will be kept for 21 days and then destroyed in accordance with the club's GDPR policy, available on our club website [www.pacefc.co.uk](http://www.pacefc.co.uk).

Prior to commencing any and every training session or match team managers/coaches conduct self-checks on themselves and their players, and any persons in their households, for symptoms of COVID-19. If any of these persons have symptoms they do not attend the session/match and put themselves into isolation and request a test in accordance with NHS guidelines. All players parents are requested to confirm that they are attending prior to training/match and that they accept their child taking part in the football activities.

Documents appended to this Risk Assessment, others available from Hampshire FA website:

1. The FA COVID-19 Football activity guidance for providers of football activities – 11<sup>th</sup> May

**COVID-19 MATCHPLAY SAFETY BRIEFING**  
**(FA Code of Behaviour)**

UPDATED: 12TH APRIL 2021

ALL THOSE RETURNING TO COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL MUST ADOPT THE FOLLOWING CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

- **BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN PERSONAL HEALTH:** If you show any of the COVID-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- **BE RESPONSIBLE:** Read the guidance provided by The FA and by your club so that you are aware of the changes to the game and what is expected of you. This will include things like being prepared to wash your own kit, bringing your own labelled water bottle and being aware of changes to meet-up times.
- **PRACTISE GOOD HYGIENE:** Wash your hands regularly and before, during and after a game.
- **MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING:** This won't always be possible in a competitive match environment (for example when tackling an opponent) and that is acceptable. However, before, and after a game you should maintain social distancing.
- **FACE COVERINGS:** Unless you have an exemption, face coverings are mandatory in any indoor spaces for staff and visitors.
- **SUPPORT NHS TEST AND TRACE:** You're likely to be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate.
- **DO NOT SPIT:** Spitting and the rinsing out of mouths is now a recognised risk to health and must not be done. Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other players.
- **AFTER THE GAME:** Be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities. Changing rooms and showers are likely to be closed and any socialising must follow the Government's guidance on social distancing.
- **CLUB/VENUE GUIDANCE:** Insert any specific guidance for your club/venues to be followed by players, coaches, match officials and spectators

## COVID-19 RETURN TO FOOTBALL CHECKLIST: MANAGERS & COACHES

UPDATED: 12TH APRIL 2021

- Review [FA GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL](#) in full
- Review club/venue COVID-19 Risk Assessment (and contribute where required)
- Share any venue specific COVID-19 safety information with opposition coaches and parents/coaches as appropriate
- Adhere to [GOVERNMENT SAFER TRAVEL GUIDANCE](#)
- Ensure every parent/player has provided consent to participate
- Complete self-assessment before attending every training session/matchday
- Ensure every parent/player confirms the following prior to each matchday:
  1. Who is attending (including parent/carer)
  2. Self-assessment completed and clear (including parent/carer)
- Collect self-assessment and test and trace information from match official prior to kick-off (if MO under 18 collect from parent/carer)
- Practice social distancing - pre/post match, during warm-ups and cool downs, at half-time and on the sidelines (coaches and substitutes)
- Ensure no handshakes, huddles or goal celebrations that involve more than one player
- Maintain clean equipment and avoid sharing between players
- Disinfect goalposts/corner flags pre/post match and at half-time and footballs during breaks in play (ensure only players retrieve match balls and that they use their feet to do so)
- Deliver a safety briefing to your team prior to kick-off to ensure everyone adheres to the FA Code of Behaviour ([FA GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL; P16](#))
- Allow parents/carers to attend to their players' injuries unless life/limb threatening - refer to [FA FIRST AID GUIDANCE](#) for details
- Advise parents/carers to practice social distancing at all times
- Provide regular breaks for players to wash their hands using their own hand sanitiser
- Encourage players to take quick set plays to avoid prolonged close marking and defensive walls
- No spitting at all on site and no shouting in close proximity to others



## COVID-19 RETURN TO FOOTBALL CHECKLIST: YOUTH PLAYERS & PARENTS/CARERS

UPDATED: 12TH APRIL 2021

- Adhere to [GOVERNMENT SAFER TRAVEL GUIDANCE](#)
- Adhere to any additional requirements put in place by training/playing venue
- Ensure player arrives appropriately dressed and ready to play (including laces tied!)
- Ensure player has their own labelled drinks bottle, hand sanitiser and kit/equipment/medication
- Ensure you have confirmed consent for your player to participate ahead of initial return to play
- Upon arrival to each matchday provide/confirm the following information:
  1. Who is attending (including parent/carer)
  2. Self-assessment completed and clear (including parent/carer)
- Players - practice social distancing pre/post match, during warm-ups and cool downs, at half-time and on the sidelines
- Parents/Carers - practice social distancing at all times
- Adhere to FA Code of Behaviour ([FA GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL; P16](#)) and any additional guidelines highlighted in the club safety briefing
- Parents/carers to attend to their players' injuries (coaches/managers will only intervene if life/limb threatening) - refer to [FA FIRST AID GUIDANCE](#) for details
- Encourage hand sanitising pre/post game and during breaks in play - ensure players have their own hand sanitiser
- Ensure only players retrieve the footballs when they leave the field of play and that they use their feet to do so
- Support coaches with additional duties, eg. Data collection, disinfecting goalposts/corner flags pre/post match and at half-time, etc.
- No spitting at all on site and no shouting in close proximity to others
- If a player or parent/carer falls ill showing COVID-19 symptoms contact NHS Test and Trace
- Unless you have an exemption, adhere to government guidance on face coverings in indoor spaces




## COVID-19 MATCHPLAY SAFETY BRIEFING (FA Code of Behaviour)

UPDATED: 12TH APRIL 2021

ALL THOSE RETURNING TO COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL MUST ADOPT THE FOLLOWING CODE OF BEHAVIOUR:

- **BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN PERSONAL HEALTH:** If you show any of the COVID-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- **BE RESPONSIBLE:** Read the guidance provided by The FA and by your club so that you are aware of the changes to the game and what is expected of you. This will include things like being prepared to wash your own kit, bringing your own labelled water bottle and being aware of changes to meet-up times.
- **PRACTISE GOOD HYGIENE:** Wash your hands regularly and before, during and after a game.
- **MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING:** This won't always be possible in a competitive match environment (for example when tackling an opponent) and that is acceptable. However, before, and after a game you should maintain social distancing.
- **FACE COVERINGS:** Unless you have an exemption, face coverings are mandatory in any indoor spaces for staff and visitors.
- **SUPPORT NHS TEST AND TRACE:** You're likely to be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate.
- **DO NOT SPIT:** Spitting and the rinsing out of mouths is now a recognised risk to health and must not be done. Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other players.
- **AFTER THE GAME:** Be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities. Changing rooms and showers are likely to be closed and any socialising must follow the Government's guidance on social distancing.
- **CLUB/VENUE GUIDANCE:** Insert any specific guidance for your club/venues to be followed by players, coaches, match officials and spectators



1: Risk Assessment Details – COVID 19 Grassroots Football			
Revision	8	Sign Off Date	15/05/2021
Initial Date Risk Assessment Created		26 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	
Date of Risk Assessment Review		15th May 2021	
Date of Next Review		June 2021 (or earlier if guidance changes)	
Name of Risk Assessor		Ian Lewis (Pace Club Secretary)	
Signature of risk assessor			
Key Legislation		UK Government Guidelines on COVID-19 The English FA Guidelines on COVID-19	
Residual risk evaluation Severity		4 Life Threatening	
Residual risk evaluation Probability		2 Rare	
Residual risk evaluation Score		4 Rather Small	

2: Risk Assessment	
Name of Risk Assessment	Coronavirus (Covid-19) Risk Assessment

Introductory Notes / Description
<p>The information for this risk assessment has been prepared by a non-medically trained volunteer for Pace Football Club and is based on the information publicly available.</p> <p>The risk assessment is subject to regular updating.</p> <p>Risk assessment is to be read in conjunction with The FA Guidance for providers of outdoor football facility; FA Guidance for Players; FA Guidance for Coaches; FA Guidance for Parents and Carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus which is classified as an airborne High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID)</li> <li>• COVID-19 is most likely to be transmitted from person to person. It is probable that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.</li> <li>• The incubation period of COVID-19 is thought to be between 2 to 14 days but can be up to 24 days. However, if you remain well for 14 days after contact with someone with COVID-19, you are unlikely to have contracted the virus.</li> </ul> <p>Symptoms of COVID-19 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised temperature</li> <li>• New, continuous / persistent cough</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste</li> </ul> <p>The symptoms are like other common illnesses such as cold and flu therefore having these symptoms does not mean you have the virus, but you should take action as below if you have these symptoms as a precautionary measure.</p> <p>COVID-19 can cause (in rare cases) severe symptoms such as pneumonia. People with underlying</p>

health conditions such as diabetes, cancer and other chronic conditions, people with a weakened immune system and older people, the symptoms can be more severe. In extreme cases, the virus is fatal, however this is very rare.

In the majority of cases, the body's immune system responds effectively to the virus. Once the body has killed the virus, it is not thought that you can be re-infected with the same coronavirus. There are currently two vaccines being used in the UK with more coming on stream. The order in which people will be offered the vaccine is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). It is important to note there is a chance you might still get or spread coronavirus even if you have the vaccine. Further information can be found on <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

If you have any concerns or require further advice, contact NHS online in the first instance at: <https://111.nhs.uk/> If you think you have contracted COVID-19, do not visit your GP or come to training. Instead, use the NHS online services. Use a mobile or landline telephone to contact the football club secretary and other members of your family or close friends. Remember to always keep calm. In an emergency, call 999.

#### Self-Isolation

Anyone who meets one or more of the following criteria should not come to the site:

- Has a high temperature, a new persistent cough or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - follow the guidance on self-isolation
- Is a vulnerable person (by virtue of their age, underlying health condition, clinical condition or are pregnant)
- Is within 14 days of the day when the first member of their household showed symptoms of Coronavirus

Anyone who is living with someone who is shielding from Coronavirus should stringently follow guidance on social distancing and minimise contact outside the home.

What are the hazards?	Control Measures
Coaches / Players becoming infected with COVID-19	<p>Maintaining good personal hygiene is the first line of defence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wash hands thoroughly paying attention to around and under nails, the backs of hands and between fingers. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds using the approved 20-second rule.</li> <li>● Wash hands on arriving to training.</li> <li>● Washing hands for 20 seconds with soap and running water is preferable to hand sanitiser. However, hand sanitiser is a good alternative when soap and water is not available. Hand sanitisers of 60% alcohol or more are most effective. Disinfectant wipes are also an alternative to hand washing and hand-sanitiser. Coaches</li> </ul>

	<p>should remind all players and parents where these facilities are.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use a disinfectant wipe or spray to clean all equipment that is going to be used in the training session or match before commencement. The coach should also clean all equipment again after training or match.</li> <li>● The amount of equipment used is to be as limited as possible. All equipment is to be cleaned before and after a training session.</li> <li>● All open wounds(cuts), no matter how small is suitable dressed (plaster)</li> <li>● All coaches/players will not shake hands.</li> </ul>
--	--

What are the hazards?	Control Measures
<p>Arrivals and Departures – How can we promote social distancing to ensure a safe entrance to the training/match pitch.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To assist with social distancing and safety while arriving and departing the Testwood School site, guidance to be provided by the club to participants on parking so that groups can enter/exit the school without excessive contact with others.</li> <li>● Guidance will be provided to all for entry/exit lanes for the field to assist with social distancing.</li> <li>● Coaches to lead players and parents (parents will need to be present for first aid) to designated zone. Spectators to carry out social distancing whilst in attendance and keep within the government guidelines.</li> <li>● On entering the pitch a hand sanitiser station should be provided for use by players / coaches. These shall be used during breaks in-play, and on completion of the training/matches.</li> <li>● On departure, coaches/Players/Parents are to use the one-way system back to the parking areas.</li> </ul>

What are the hazards?	Control Measures
<p>In session – alongside FA guidance, how can we provide a safe training session/matchday.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pace FC will only permit a maximum of 30 persons (including coaches) to take part in a training session. There will be numerous teams training at the same time and these will be separated by a significant distance to prevent interaction.</li> <li>● In accordance with FA Safeguarding at all times two persons that hold FA accepted DBS CRC shall be in attendance at each training session and match.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During training each team will stay in their own zone for the duration of the session.</li> <li>● The coach will mark with cones a social distancing area for each player. The only person to enter this zone will be the player and they are to keep their drinks and kit in this zone only. Drinks breaks for players will be taken in their area.</li> <li>● Parents must be in attendance in the event of first aid being required and as per FA guidance on child welfare.</li> <li>● Parents to either have their own socially distant area or share their child's.</li> <li>● In line with guidance, spectators are permitted at football activities but must not gather in socially distanced groups of more than 30 persons.</li> <li>● Goals – these may be used however only coaches to move roller goals, or pop-up goals used. Posts (and crossbar where possible) are to be cleaned before/after use.</li> <li>● Any players acting as a goalkeeper must wear and shall only use their own goalkeeping gloves, gloves shall not be shared with others.</li> <li>● Where possible stagger start and finish times to minimise numbers entering and leaving at same time.</li> <li>● Players advised not to touch any equipment (cones, kit bag etc)</li> </ul>
--	---

What are the hazards?	Control Measures
Emergency Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If your child gets injured, a member of their household can aid them but others will still need to socially distance unless a life or limb-threatening injury necessitates breaking guidelines to provide.</li> <li>● First-aider or other medical personnel present, they should be equipped with the appropriate PPE to protect themselves and others if they need to break social-distancing guidelines to provide medical assistance.</li> <li>● All coaches to ensure they have appropriate PPE in accordance with current FA guidance (refer to latest FA guidance attached) and as a minimum; gloves and a mask to carry out any emergency care.</li> <li>● Appropriate wipes, sanitiser, disinfectant spray to be provided by the teams and available during training sessions and matches.</li> </ul>

3: Facilities and other considerations
<p>Promote social distancing as highlighted in the risk assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Pace FC hut will remain closed for the time being but can be accessed should the defibrillator be required .</li> <li>● Signs / Visual Information to remind / reinforce social distancing &amp; to prevent touching fences or surfaces.</li> <li>● Being outside reduces capability of transmission</li> </ul>



- Grass pitch use at Testwood School is restricted due to the inability for spectators to adequately social distance when Pitches 2 (9v9) and 3 (11v11) are in use simultaneously. To enable the pitches to be used simultaneously, Pitch 3 should primarily be set up as a 9v9 pitch, which will provide adequate social distancing space between the spectators. As an added requirement the spectators for Pitch 2 and Pitch 3 shall ensure they face in opposite directions, ie. towards the pitches that they are spectating. Where Pitches 2 and 3 do have to be used in manner that does not permit social distancing of spectators, the coaching areas and spectator areas are to be amended accordingly.

Toilets: Handwash to be provided in toilets. Toilet facilities at Testwood School will be available, these are cleaned regularly by school staff. The number of people permitted at any time will be limited.

Pre-training education – document to be produced to all parents prior to training and matches.

NHS Test and Trace is fully supported and coaches are documenting attendees at all training and matches. These details are passed on to the COVID-19 Lead who maintains the record for 21 days and then destroys the information in accordance with GDPR.

All persons attending Testwood School are requested to download the NHS COVID-19 APP for Test and Trace. Testwood School have provided posters with the relevant QR code to scan. Should anyone not be able to use the APP they must have their details recorded and passed to the Covid Lead.

### Quantitative Risk Evaluation System


		Severity				
		Minor injury/ negligible 1	Moderate injury/ harmful 2	Non-fatal injury 3	Life threatening 4	Fatal injury 5
P R O B A B I L I T Y	Rare 1	Extremely Small 1	Very Small 2	Very Small 3	Rather Small 4	Moderate 5
	Unlikely 2	Very Small 2	Rather Small 2	Rather Small 3	Moderate 4	High 5
	Possibly 3	Rather Small 3	Rather Small 6	Moderate 9	High 12	Very High 15
	Likely 4	Moderate 4	Moderate 8	High 12	Very High 16	Extremely High 20
	Almost certain 5	Moderate 5	High 10	Very High 15	Extremely High 20	Extremely High 25

1 – 3	Low-risk activity
4 – 9	Medium-risk activity
10 – 25	High-risk activity

P R O B A B I L I T Y	Rare 1	May only occur in exceptional circumstances	< 3%
	Unlikely 2	Could occur sometimes	3 – 10%
	Possibly 3	Might occur sometimes	11- 50%
	Likely 4	Will probably occur in most circumstances	51- 90%
	Almost certain 5	Is expected to occur in most circumstances	> 90%

S E V E R I T Y	Minor injury/ negligible 1	Hazard may cause minor injury, illness, first aid treatment. Employee can continue to work	E.g., small cuts, local burns, headaches
	Moderate injury/ harmful 2	Hazard may cause an accident that causes an employee to be absent for 1 – 14 days	E.g., twisted ankle, moderate bruising
	Non-fatal injury 3	Hazard may cause an accident that causes an employee to be absent for 15 consecutive days till recovery. No permanent damage	E.g., broken leg
	Life threatening 4	Hazard may cause severe injury illness or permanent partial loss of one or more bodily functions or loss of production capability. Irreparable permanent damage	E.g., loss of leg, organ damage
	Fatal injury 5	Hazard may cause death	E.g., death, cancer



# COVID-19: STEP THREE GUIDANCE ON THE RETURN OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

Version: 1.8

Published: MAY 11 2021

**FOR** PROVIDERS OF INDOOR AND  
OUTDOOR FOOTBALL FACILITIES



# COVID-19: STEP THREE GUIDANCE ON THE RETURN OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

**THIS GUIDANCE FOR STEP THREE COMES INTO EFFECT ON MONDAY 17TH MAY. UNTIL THEN PLEASE FOLLOW FA GUIDANCE FOR STEP TWO, WHICH CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).**

**IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT CLUBS, PLAYERS, COACHES, MATCH OFFICIALS, LEAGUE OFFICIALS, VOLUNTEERS, PARENTS, CARERS, AND FACILITY PROVIDERS CONTINUE TO STRICTLY FOLLOW BOTH THE UK GOVERNMENT'S LATEST [GUIDANCE ON COVID-19](#) AND RESPECTIVE BESPOKE GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS FROM THE FA. ANY INCIDENTS OF NON-COMPLIANCE SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE LOCAL COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION.**

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT STEP THREE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN

On Monday 17th May, as part of the next step of the Government's roadmap out of national lockdown, there will be further changes to the restrictions on grassroots football.

The key changes to be aware of are:

1. Indoor football for adults will be permitted;
2. Indoor hospitality will be permitted, following all government rules on hospitality;
3. Spectators are permitted, following all government rules on legal gathering limits.

**This guidance document applies to all youth and adult football and futsal, including all formats of the game.**

## TRAVEL

As organised sport can resume, all participants may travel to games but should avoid travel at the busiest times and routes, as well as minimising any unnecessary journeys where possible. All participants must follow the Government's guidance on [safer travel](#). Participants should note that this guidance will be updated as we move through the different steps of the Government's roadmap. All participants should therefore regularly review this guidance to make sure they are following up to date information.

## CHANGING ROOMS

Changing rooms can be used as part of step three of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown. However, participants should minimise their use of changing facilities where possible. Toilets are permitted to open but must follow all Covid-19 protocols, which you can find [here](#).

## SPECTATORS

Spectators will be permitted to view events on both public and private land in step three but need to adhere to social distancing rules and social gathering limits (groups of 30 outdoors and six people/two households indoors).

Spectators are allowed indoors, but the total number of all participants, coaches, officials and spectators must be aligned with the ventilation rates permitted by the particular venue. You can find more information about this [here](#). During step three, there should not be more than 1,000 spectators indoors at any venue.

At larger events, capacity limits for spectators set by the Government will apply. For indoor events this is 1,000 or 50% of capacity and for outdoor events this is 4,000 or 50% of capacity (whichever is lower in both cases). Participants at all events must observe social distancing.

## PARENTS/CARERS

Where clubs and facilities can accommodate this safely, parents and carers are permitted to be present at football activities, although they must observe the relevant Government Covid-19 guidance, including those on social gathering limits for spectators.

## INDOOR FOOTBALL

From step three, indoor gatherings of either six people (the 'rule of six') or two households can take place. This means that organised indoor adult and children football can return.

For organised indoor sport and physical activity, there's no limit on group numbers so long as people adhere to capacity restrictions on indoor facilities. The maximum occupancy of each indoor facility should be limited by providing a minimum of 100 square ft per person.

All participants should wear a face covering in indoor settings, unless exempt. You can find out more [here](#).

# COVID-19: STEP THREE GUIDANCE ON THE RETURN OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL (CONTINUED)

---

## OUTDOOR HOSPITALITY

As part of step three of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown, both outdoor and indoor hospitality at grassroots football is permitted.

All participants must follow [Government guidance on hospitality settings](#) and [specific advice for sport facility operators](#) available on the Government's website. People using clubhouses and hospitality facilities must adhere to legal gathering limits and wider government guidance.

---

The guidance you are reading is FOR ALL – players, coaches, club officials, club welfare officers, match officials, league officials, first-aiders, volunteers, parents/carers, spectators. It is also for clubs and football facility providers and should be read in conjunction with the updated additional guidance for providers of indoor and outdoor football facilities, which is available on TheFA.com.

Please remember anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the

Government's specific guidance, only returning to football when it's right for them to do so. There is no pressure to return. Everyone's health, wellbeing and safety are the priorities.

Please also bear in mind the Public Health England (PHE) report published [here](#), which has highlighted a greater risk from Covid-19 to people from BAME communities.

Before re-starting playing/training, clubs must carry out a risk assessment and record the procedures and

checks put in place. It's essential everyone is clear about the restrictions and works together to manage social distancing, strict hand hygiene and the other protocols set out in this document.

Clubs should also update their medical emergency action plan around player care and strictly follow the first-aid guidance document published by The FA, without exception. This is both to protect players and any club member who is trying to aid the player if an emergency arises.

The FA is working with its recently-appointed official hygiene partner, Dettol, to support the return of the grassroots game.

Whenever this document refers to finding further information on TheFA.com, you'll find it [here](#).

**AS WE MOVE THROUGH EACH NEW STEP OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ROADMAP, THE FA WILL UPDATE OUR GUIDANCE ACCORDINGLY. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS GUIDANCE IS BASED ON THE INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO DATE AND WILL BE UPDATED FOLLOWING ANY FURTHER UPDATES.**

# THE RETURN OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN

The Government has published a roadmap setting out four steps for the easing of national lockdown restrictions in England. The FA's guidance will continue to strictly follow all Government guidance, as we have throughout the pandemic. The FA's guidance will be updated at each step to provide participants with the information needed to facilitate the safe return of the game. This guidance refers to step two of the Government's roadmap.

The Government has been clear that the easing of restrictions set out in the roadmap is subject to review and could change if we see another surge in hospitalisations, if a new variant of concern is found or if there are any issues with the roll-out of the vaccination programme. As such we cannot confirm with certainty what the next steps for the return of football will look like over the coming months. We can instead point to what is in the Government's roadmap as an indication for what this return could look like. Please note that where there are any amendments to the Government's roadmap, The FA guidance will be updated accordingly. The latest position from the Government is summarised below:

		STEP 1		STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
		8 <sup>th</sup> March	29 <sup>th</sup> March	12 <sup>th</sup> April	No earlier than 17 <sup>th</sup> May	No earlier than 21 <sup>st</sup> June
UPDATE		Schools return, including play for school-age children as part of educational provision and wraparound care – following DfE guidance.	Outdoor grassroots football returns – following all FA guidance.  Follow Government advice on spectators which can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  No changing rooms.  No hospitality.	Indoor football for under 18s returns – subject to Government guidance.  Follow Government advice on spectators which can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  Changing rooms can be used – following strict Covid-19 protocols.  Outdoor hospitality is permitted in groups of up to six or two households and in accordance with the <a href="#">Government guidelines on catering and hospitality</a> .	Indoor football for adults returns – subject to Government approval.  Follow Government advice on spectators which can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  Changing rooms can be used – following strict Covid-19 protocols.  Indoor hospitality is permitted in groups of up to six or two households and in accordance with the <a href="#">Government guidelines on catering and hospitality</a> .	No legal limits on gathering.  Larger events allowed.

# PLAN AND PREPARE

---

There are many reasons why you should start to plan and prepare for the safe re-opening of your facility. Whenever you choose to re-open, getting ready now gives you time to plan carefully and give due consideration to the requirements of opening day.

It also enables you the time to put in place any required actions. For example, you may need to make repairs, order equipment, deep-clean the clubhouse, or hire an outside contractor to get your pitch ready. The earlier you plan, the better.

All facility providers must identify a Covid-19 officer who will be responsible for developing a Covid-19 plan and risk assessment prior to the restart of any activity. The Covid-19 officer may wish to consider establishing a Covid-19 group to be responsible for producing and implementing the Covid-19 risk assessment and to oversee the safe return to play.

The Covid-19 officer should continually monitor how compliance is being observed within the club or facility.

It is the responsibility of the facility's Health & Safety Director and/or Board to implement these changes, even if a team of people are co-opted into a Covid-19 group.

In respect of participants using your facility, please remember that In line with the Equality Act, 2010, you are responsible for ensuring that your facilities are accessible and for considering any reasonable adjustments In line with this.



# 'ON THE PITCH'

---

Getting your pitches ready for use is an important task and pitch maintenance activity can now take place if social-distancing and hygiene measures are implemented and observed. You can get all the advice and guidance you need by joining the Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community [here](#).

If your artificial grass pitch is used for match-play, ensure that its test certificate is still valid so it remains on the 3G pitch register for the forthcoming season. The FA has allowed all pitches whose test reports have expired over summer 2020 a period of grace to complete the testing process. Please check with your County FA if this applies to your facility. You can find the contact details of your County FA [here](#).

## PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE

Provide hand sanitisers at the entrance and exit of your pitch/sports hall and advise users to bring their own hand sanitiser, marked with their own name. Provide additional waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection.

If maintenance equipment or machinery is used by multiple operators/personnel you will need to ensure that thorough cleaning procedures are in place after use.

If external contractors are used, you should ensure they are fully briefed on your Covid-19 risk assessment and they agree to observe these along with their own company guidelines.

## AVOIDING CONGESTION

If your pitches have peak-use times, review your programme to stagger activities throughout the week to avoid congestion as much as possible.

Programme all activities with sufficient space (e.g. a minimum 10-minute window) in between bookings to avoid clustering of groups on pitch-side or in the car park before/after sessions. All users should be encouraged to arrive and leave punctually. This is especially important for indoor environments such as sports halls.

This must include weekend use. You should speak to your local leagues about applying flexible kick-off times to accommodate this.

If your new programme of use requires longer operating hours, timings must still fall within those permitted by your Local Planning Authority.





# 'OFF THE PITCH'

---

There are a number of things you can do to help minimise risks, avoid accidental gatherings and achieve a safe re-opening. For example:

## **PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE**

Your clubhouse should create an environment that encourages and allows all users to maintain good levels of hygiene through handwashing, sanitisation facilities and toilets. Consider what steps you will need to take to educate users to be responsible for their own hygiene and to ensure you minimise the chance of transmission of Covid-19 within your facility.

Consideration should be given to:

- Additional hand sanitisers throughout the clubhouse and facility;
- Signs clearly directing people to where they can wash their hands;
- Ensuring all handwashing stations are in good working order and provide soap, hot water and hand sanitiser;
- Providing hygiene standards' promotional posters and signage throughout the clubhouse;
- Supplying disposable paper towels in handwashing facilities;
- Minimising the use of portable toilets;
- Carrying out 'trial runs' to test and adapt your plans.

## **KEEPING YOUR CLUBHOUSE AND EQUIPMENT CLEAN**

Keeping your clubhouse clean will reduce the risk of passing the infection onto other people. To achieve this, your cleaning procedures should be thorough and rigorous.

Depending on the scale of your facility, you may consider having a dedicated cleaning team, so that the cleaning is done by a small group of trained people.

A cleaning schedule could include:

- Daily cleaning throughout the clubhouse and facility;
- Identifying high-contact touch points for more regular cleaning (e.g. door handles, grab rails, vending machines);
- Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between use;

- Cleaning of shared training equipment after each individual use;
- Having waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection;
- Removing any non-essential items that may be difficult to clean.

If a Covid-19 case is reported in your facility, you should follow the Public Health England guidance to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

You should also have a designated person who is responsible for checking that all the cleaning has taken place as planned.

## **MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING AND AVOIDING CONGESTION**

Adapting your clubhouse and facility will help maintain social distancing and avoid congestion. Achieving this may require some creative thinking. Please consider:

- Clear signage so people can find their destination quickly;
- Reviewing how people walk through your facility and adjust if necessary to reduce congestion and contact between users;
- Regulating entry to your facility to avoid overcrowding;
- Applying floor markings in accordance with Government social distancing measures where necessary to manage queues, e.g. outside the entrance/toilets/ catering facility;
- One-way arrow markings to help footflow management;
- Single-use doorways to avoid congestion i.e. one-way only entrances/exits;
- Single or limited use of toilet facilities to avoid congestion in confined spaces;
- Using outside areas for queueing;
- Carrying out 'trial runs' to test and adapt your plans.

# 'OFF THE PITCH' (CONTINUED)

---

## RE-OPENING BARS AND CATERING

Indoor hospitality is permitted to open on **Monday 17th May**. All bars and catering services must follow [Government guidance](#).

Catering facilities commonly have high levels of usage and contact between workers and users. Therefore, extra consideration must be given to ensure that social distancing remains in place. For example:

- Utilise serving hatches, where they exist, to minimise customers entering the building;
- Where serving hatches do not exist, consider using screening to limiting user contact with workers;
- At till points, encourage the use of contactless payments to avoid handling cash;
- Applying floor markings in accordance with Government social-distancing measures to ensure social distancing when queueing;
- Use outside areas for queueing;
- Clean vending machines regularly as they are a high touch point area;
- Use disposable utensils to help minimise the risk of infection, but ensure appropriate bin locations and regular collections.
- High ventilation in indoor facilities is paramount to reducing transmission of Covid-19; indoor facilities such as clubhouses and hospitality facilities should be well ventilated, for example by having doors open and opening windows where appropriate.

## CHANGING ROOMS

Changing rooms are an area of increased transmission risk.

Changing rooms can be used as part of step two of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown. However, participants should minimise their use of changing facilities where possible. When using changing rooms you must take additional measures to reduce the risk of transmission and minimise social contact. This includes:

- Taking all necessary precautions to ensure appropriate distancing can be maintained within the changing room – e.g. tape markings on changing benches, toilets and sinks to separate spaces with safe distances.
- Encouraging all users to minimise the time they spend in the changing area.
- Introducing enhanced cleaning of all facilities regularly throughout during the day and at the end of the day.
- Providing cleaning materials and hand sanitiser for customer use at touch points.
- Providing additional signposting in these areas to maintain social distancing and adhere to the relevant gathering limit.
- Supervision checks should be made to ensure compliance with your rules.
- Access must be maintained where safety and safeguarding measures require their use, e.g. supporting customers with disabilities, allowing children to change clothes.

Above all, when you do choose to re-open your changing rooms, all considerations and mitigations must be in line with current Government guidance and be captured within your risk assessment and compliance must be monitored on an ongoing basis.

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

---

## VENTILATION MEASURES

Ventilation is an important part of mitigating against the transmission of Covid-19. Ventilation into your building should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided to all areas of the facility and increased wherever possible. Particular attention should be given to areas where high-intensity exercise activity takes place, such as sports halls.

Ventilation systems should provide 100% fresh air and not re-circulate air from one space to another.

You should consider:

- Increasing the existing ventilation rate by fully opening dampers and running fans on full speed;
- Operating the ventilation system 24 hours a day;
- Increase the frequency of filter changes.

## FACE COVERINGS

Current Government guidelines must be followed.

## COMMUNICATING CLEARLY AND REGULARLY

Before you re-open, provide clear communications with all user groups – before they attend your facility – about the steps you have taken to make your facility safe. This will allow them to familiarise themselves with the procedures before entering the facility. This could also include your expectation of users when they arrive. To avoid confusion, also highlight key dates, opening times and any other important changes to the way your facility will operate.

While users are at your facility, use posters and signage throughout all areas to promote your new protocols. For example:

- Social distancing (appropriate spacing);
- Hygiene (hand washing/sanitiser);
- Traffic flow (entrance/exits);
- Restricted areas.

## INSPECTING THE EXISTING CONDITION OF YOUR FACILITY

Your facility may have been unused for some time, so a thorough building inspection and walk-round will allow you to identify any issues and damage. This will help you plan what work needs to be carried out prior to re-opening your facility and should include water quality (e.g. for Legionella and other contaminants), drains, gas services, ventilation, alarms/safety systems and pest control.

## MAINTAINING THE WELLBEING AND SAFETY OF WORKERS AND CUSTOMERS

The wellbeing and safety of your workers and customers is crucial. If anyone shows/has any signs of Covid-19, they must be sent home to act in accordance with Government guidance. Government cleaning protocols should then be put in place to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

## MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF USERS

Consideration must be given to the management and supervision of facility users and their compliance with Government guidance. These preparations should be made prior to re-opening, including extra supervision in the early stages to help users to adapt to your new protocols.

Positive encouragement and reinforcement is welcomed, but repeat offenders and those who totally disregard Government guidance should be requested to leave the premises. If required, report serious offenders to the police, who have been given powers to enforce Government measures.

It is also important to ensure that your workforce is on board with everything you've done. This may include making staff or volunteers fully aware of the changes to your protocols so they are clear about any additional expectations you have of them.

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (CONTINUED)

---

## SUPPORTING NHS TEST AND TRACE

You **must** now comply with the NHS Test and Trace system. This includes collecting name and address information for all visitors/users of your venue.

You must register for an official NHS QR code and display the official NHS QR poster.

In addition, there is an NHS Covid-19 app, which has a feature that allows users to quickly and easily 'check in' to your venue by scanning the code. The information stays on the user's phone. In England, you do not have to ask people who choose to 'check in' using the official NHS QR code to provide their contact details. If there is an outbreak associated with a venue, a message will be sent to the relevant app users with the necessary public health advice.

For those who do not have a smart phone, a manual process should be used to collect information.

This information should be collected, processed and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR principles for 21 days in line with the Government Recreational Team Sport Framework then deleted. It should be used only for the purpose of NHS Test and Trace and, where requested, to share with the NHS for Test and Trace purposes, the shared information should relate only to the match or training in which the player or supporter tested positive.

Posters should be printed and displayed multiple times to avoid queuing and congestion when visitors are registering their visit.

In certain venues, such as open-access public park pitches, it maybe more effective for user clubs to register visitors. In such cases, each club must provide you with a copy of their Covid-19 risk-assessment (including its track and trace measures).

## TEST AND LEARN

Consider a phased re-opening of your facility to provide you with an opportunity to test your new protocols in a controlled way. For example, you could limit your initial re-opening to a reduced number of timeslots or by user groups. This approach would allow you time to test, learn and adapt your new approaches to ensure they are effective and successful before re-opening to more users.

## TAKING BOOKINGS AND PAYMENTS

If your facility has multiple user groups, all bookings and payments should be made in advance and via an online system or over the phone, where possible. If this is not feasible, consider contactless-only payments to avoid handling cash.

## ADMINISTERING FIRST AID

First-aiders should be equipped with the appropriate PPE (including face coverings) to protect themselves and others if they need to compromise social-distancing guidelines to provide medical assistance. After contact with an injured participant, the person who has administered first aid should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or the minimum two-metre social distancing was maintained. The first aider should also avoid touching their own mouth, eyes and nose.

First-aiders, or their equivalent, should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with for NHS Test and Trace purposes.

If a participant becomes symptomatic during the session, they should immediately remove themselves from the session and return home as soon as possible. NHS guidance on further management of symptoms should be followed.

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS (CONTINUED)

---

## ENSURING YOU HAVE THE CORRECT PERMISSIONS TO RE-OPEN

If you have a landlord (e.g. a Local Council), you must check with them to ensure you have the necessary permission to re-open.

Before you commence re-opening, check with your insurer to ensure that your personal accident and public liability insurance is still valid and adequate in light of the pandemic. Be clear on any obligations you may be required to fulfil under your insurance policies and raise any queries with your insurer.

## 1. COVID-19 RISK ASSESSMENT EXAMPLE

As a facility provider, you should complete **your own** Covid-19 risk assessment.

We have provided an example risk assessment overleaf, which is for illustrative purposes only, and included some examples of things to consider. Consider how this will apply to each aspect of your operation and identify the controls you require to **meet Government guidance regarding health, social distancing and hygiene.**



# SUPPORT TOOLS

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Date completed
<p><b>Spread of Covid-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users</li> <li>• Workers</li> <li>• Cleaners</li> <li>• Pitch contractors</li> </ul>	<p><b>PROMOTING GOOD HYGIENE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional hand sanitisers throughout the clubhouse.</li> <li>• Clearly direct people to where they can wash their hands.</li> <li>• Ensure all handwashing stations are in good working order and provide soap, water and hand sanitiser.</li> <li>• Provide hygiene standards promotional poster and signage throughout the clubhouse.</li> <li>• Use disposable paper towels in handwashing facilities.</li> </ul> <p><b>KEEP FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT CLEAN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily cleaning throughout the clubhouse.</li> <li>• Identify high-contact touch points for more regular cleaning (e.g. door handles, grab rails, vending machines).</li> <li>• Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between use.</li> <li>• Provide more waste facilities.</li> <li>• Remove any non-essential items that may be difficult to clean.</li> <li>• Follow Public Health England guidance if a Covid-19 case is reported at the facility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hourly check process (sanitiser, soap and paper towels and handwashing stations).</li> <li>• Daily stock check (sanitiser, soap and paper towels).</li> <li>• Daily check (promotion posters and signage).</li> <li>• Train all workers on new protocols and the important of good hygiene.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A responsible person to check cleaning has taken place as planned.</li> <li>• Weekly stock check (cleaning products).</li> <li>• Empty waste facilities regularly.</li> <li>• Train all workers on Public Health England guidance for reported Covid-19 cases.</li> </ul>			

# SUPPORT TOOLS (CONTINUED)

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls required	Additional controls	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Date completed
<p><b>Spread of Covid-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users</li> <li>• Workers</li> <li>• Cleaners</li> <li>• Pitch contractors</li> </ul>	<p><b>MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING AND AVOIDING CONGESTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide signage so people can find their destination quickly.</li> <li>• Review how people walk through the clubhouse and adjust this to reduce congestion and contact between users.</li> <li>• Regulate the entry to the clubhouse to avoid overcrowding.</li> <li>• Apply two-metre markings to the clubhouse entrance/ toilets/and the queue to the café serving hatch.</li> <li>• One-way arrow markings to help foot traffic flow management.</li> <li>• Single-use doorways to avoid congestion i.e. one-way only entrances/exits.</li> <li>• Single/limited use of toilet facilities to avoid congestion in confined spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor effectiveness, especially at peak times.</li> <li>• Train workers to promote compliance to facility users.</li> <li>• Train workers to report/deal with issues of non-compliance.</li> <li>• Daily check (promotional posters and signage).</li> </ul>			

# SUPPORT TOOLS (CONTINUED)

---

## COMMUNICATIONS

The FA has produced downloadable posters and other communication tools on hygiene and social distancing. You can find them at the foot of the page [here](#).

Sport England and Public Health England (PHE) are producing a series of useful communication tools to help you promote social distancing and good hygiene. You'll find these at the foot of the page [here](#).

## FINALLY...

---

We want to thank you in advance for playing your vital part in helping our great game get going again. By observing Government guidance and the football-specific protocols, let's work together to ensure the transition back to enjoying football is as smooth and safe as possible.

But everyone's circumstances are different, and if you don't feel ready to re-open, there's no pressure. Everyone's health, wellbeing and safety are the priorities.





**DISCLAIMER:**

This guidance is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice, nor it is a replacement for such, nor does it replace any Government or PHE advice; nor does it provide any specific commentary or advice on health-related issues. Affected organisations should therefore ensure that they seek independent advice from medical practitioners, or healthcare providers, prior to implementing any re-opening plan, as required. Independent legal advice should be sought, as required and depending on your, or relevant circumstances.

While efforts have been taken to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of publication, the reader is reminded to check the Government website to obtain the most up-to-date information regarding social distancing and any other Government measures.



**FOR ALL**

The Football Association  
Wembley Stadium  
London HA9 0WS  
**T:** +44 (0)800 169 1863  
**F:** +44 (0)800 169 1864  
**W:** TheFA.com