



SDS Return to Sport and Physical Activity Guidance Paper (updated 17 December 2021)

The First Minister provided a Covid-19 update on 14 December 2021, outlining the increased challenge posed by the Omicron variant, the priority being placed on the continued emphasis on supporting the vaccine and booster programme, and the need for businesses to strengthen compliance with current protection measures.

Businesses and service providers are now legally required to take reasonably practical measures to minimise spread of coronavirus on their premises, taking into consideration Scottish Government guidance available at [Scottish Government: Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#).

All of Scotland continues to be 'Beyond Level 0', but the Scottish Government retain the option of putting in place local measures and travel restrictions to manage any future virus outbreaks. A summary of guidance relating to 'Beyond Level 0' is available in **Appendix 1**.

People who are symptomatic or identified as close contacts should follow Scottish Government and NHS guidance on self-isolation available at Scottish Government: Test & Protect . No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

Where protection levels are applicable organised sporting activities can 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 of, and can adapt to, changes in guidance at short notice. This is particularly important where changes to travel, physical distancing or local area protection level restrictions are made by Scottish Government at short notice. Information on Scottish Government's approach to managing COVID-19 is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).

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](#). From 9 August 2021 close contacts of those testing positive for Covid-19 who have symptoms or test positive will still be required to self-isolate. However close contacts aged 18 years or older who have been double vaccinated, for 14 days or more, and with no symptoms will be able get a PCR test and end self-isolation if the result is negative.

- Those aged 5-17 years of age will also be able to take a PCR test and end self-isolation (without being double vaccinated) if the test result is negative.
- This approach will be encouraged but not required for children under 5 years.

Further information on protection levels that apply in each local authority area are available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): allocation of protection levels](#). A local post code checker is also available at [COVID restrictions by protection level in areas of Scotland](#).

The free NHS Scotland Protect Scotland app has been designed to help us protect each other, reduce the spread of coronavirus and avoid further lockdowns. By using the app and following current public health measures we can all stay safe when we meet up, socialise, work or travel. To find out more and download the app please visit [protect.scot](#).

What should someone do if they have coronavirus symptoms?

If a person has a continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change in taste or smell, they should self-isolate and request a coronavirus test right away. Further information is available at [NHS inform: Get a Test](#) or by calling **0800 028 2816** if they cannot get online.

SGBs, clubs and participants should be aware of their local area protection level and associated restrictions which may be in place and should consider this as part of risk assessment planning. Broad guidance for sporting activity which should be followed within each Level is set out in Table A below.

Further information on protection levels that apply in each local authority area are available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): allocation of protection levels](#). A local post code checker is also available at [COVID restrictions by protection level in areas of Scotland](#).

Table A: Sport & Physical Activity Protection Levels

		Beyond Level 0	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
OUTDOOR SPORT Organised outdoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview	<p>No field of play bubble restrictions apply beyond Level 0, although limits on participation numbers at competition and events are applicable.</p> <p>For Levels 0-4 outdoor sporting 'field of play bubbles' apply for organised sport as noted below. At Levels 0-2 figures exclude coaches and support staff*. Multiple bubbles can be used for training, events, and competition if appropriate guidance, set out within this document, is followed. Indoor and outdoor stadium, or equivalent events/competitions, involving spectators are subject to relevant Scottish Government guidance.</p>					<p>Local training / competition only.</p> <p>U12s: max 30 including coaches.</p> <p>Over 12s / adults: max 15 including coaches.</p>
		<p>No bubble restrictions</p> <p>Total Daily Limit: As agreed with Local Authority</p>	<p>Maximum bubble size: 500 participants*</p> <p>Total Daily Limit: 5000 participants</p>	<p>Maximum bubble size: 100 participants*</p> <p>Total Daily Limit: 1000 participants</p>	<p>Maximum bubble size: 50 participants*</p> <p>Total Daily Limit: 500 participants</p>	<p>Maximum bubble size: 30 participants</p> <p>Total Daily Limit: 200 participants</p>	
	Children & Young people (u18 years)	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	
Adults (18+ years)	Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited						Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited
INDOOR SPORT Organised indoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview	<p>Organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government Covid-19: sport and leisure facilities and sport specific SGB Guidance.</p> <p>'Group' activity refers to adults, who take part in organised sport or physical activity, where the number of participants is larger than allowed under normal household rules. 'Individual exercise' refers to organised sport or physical activity which takes place within household rules i.e. 1:1 coaching. For further information see definitions within this guidance.</p>					
	Children & Young	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Indoor sport & PA prohibited:

	people (u18 years)						Leisure Centres, gyms and other indoor sports facilities closed.
	Adults (18+ years)			Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited	Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited	Indoor <u>individual exercise only</u> No contact or non-contact group activity	
COACHING	General guidance is available within this document for coaches, leaders, personal trainers, deliverers, and instructors, <i>herein referred to as coach/es</i> . In addition, Getting Coaches Ready for Sport provides a 4-stage approach/checklist to further support coaches to plan and deliver safe sessions.						
	The local protection Level in place for sport and physical activity will dictate what activity can be coached, indoors and outdoors and to whom in that area. Coaches can take multiple sessions per day, however the numbers allowed in each session will depend upon the protection Level in place.						
PERFORMANCE SPORT	Elite sports with Resumption of Performance Sport guidance in place and approved by Scottish Government or sportscotland is permitted at all Levels.						
TRAVEL	For further information please refer to Travel Guidance within this document.						
HOSPITALITY & RETAIL	Clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance. Further information is available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector guidance . 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 .						
TOILETS, CHANGING & SHOWER ROOMS	Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available at Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport This is applicable at all levels where facilities remain open.					Indoor sports facilities closed. Changing rooms closed.	
	Operators may open public toilets if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website Opening Public Toilets Guidelines					Public Toilets open.	
INDOOR FACILITIES (can open up to Level 3)	Overview	Specific information relating to indoor sports facility guidance is available at Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport . Below is a summary of overarching guidance for operators regarding occupancy limits, physical distancing, and appropriate ventilation / CO2 levels (ppm) which should be monitored. Test & Protect procedures should continue in all indoor settings.					
		Beyond Level 0	Level 0			Levels 1 – 3	

	<p>Return to <u>normal facility occupancy levels</u> but focus on good ventilation and ‘Give people space’ messaging.</p> <p><u>Ventilation</u>: Monitor to maintain levels at 800-1000ppm.</p> <p>No physical distancing required.</p> <p>Face coverings must be worn out with activity.</p> <p>Maintain hygiene and surface cleaning measures.</p>	<p>Restrict <u>maximum occupancy in buildings to 7sqm per person</u> to achieve enhanced ventilation (equivalent to 15 l/s/p).</p> <p><u>Ventilation</u>: Monitor to maintain levels at 800-1000ppm.</p> <p>1m physical distancing out with activity.</p> <p>Face coverings must be worn out with activity.</p>	<p>Restrict <u>maximum occupancy in buildings to 9sqm per person</u> to achieve enhanced ventilation (equivalent to 20 l/s/p).</p> <p><u>Ventilation</u>: Monitor to maintain levels at <1000ppm.</p> <p>1m physical distancing out with activity.</p> <p>Face coverings must be worn out with activity.</p>
WORKFORCE	<p>Sports facility operators must ensure that Scottish Government guidance on workforce planning in sport & leisure facilities 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.</p> <p>Although gym and leisure facilities can open to Level 3, we would encourage providers to consider whether meetings and training must be completed in person or whether these can be completed online or via telephone. 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.</p>		

Where a participant with a disability requires functional support to enable their participation in physical activity and sport this can be provided without maintaining physical distancing. This support can be provided by a coach or other individual. In such circumstance the responsible ‘Covid Officer’ should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment in consultation with the participant. This process is reflective of making “reasonable adjustment,” in line with the Equality Act 2010.

“Reasonable adjustment” ensures the meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities within physical activity and sport by meeting individual needs.

For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in close proximity, or a combination of actions.

Further information on supporting the inclusion of participants with a disability can be found [here](#).

Equality & Inclusion

Covid-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to Covid-19:

- Older people

- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities
- Women
- People from deprived communities

It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include;

Communication – Digital exclusion is a key issue. With so many services and so much information moving online it risks worsening the health impacts of the pandemic. We have to think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people about sport and physical activity.

Accessibility – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and leisure centres re-open it's important to build understanding of people's specific accessibility needs around things like hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings so we can provide the best possible support to people to take part in sport and physical activity.

Anxiety, mental health and wellbeing – The pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health for people who share all characteristics. We know that sport and physical activity can have significant benefits for people's mental health so it's vital that we continue to promote those benefits, so people are encouraged to get involved.

Confidence - Confidence to return to sport is a big issue across all groups. We know that some groups are at higher risk from Covid-19 than others (including some ethnic minorities, disabled people and households experiencing poverty). These groups may be even more nervous about returning to sport or starting to participate. They are also less likely to participate in sport in the first place, so we'll need to give extra attention to their needs to help build their confidence.

Guidance – From 9 August 2021

Following the First Minister's update, the latest Return to Sport & Physical Activity Guidance will be effective from 9 August 2021.

Travel Guidance

Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on travel and transport](#).

Information for each local government area, including their level is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#) including a post code checker.

Car Sharing

You should avoid car sharing with anyone from another household unless you deem it to be necessary. If individuals or groups do car share then they should follow [Transport Scotland: advice on how to travel safely and put in place appropriate risk assessment and mitigations](#).

Sport & Physical Activity Participation

Participants can take part in organised sport and physical activity as detailed in **Table A**. Activity is subject to exemption from household rules as detailed within this guidance. When a participant travels out with their local government area, they should follow the travel guidance detailed below. No domestic travel restrictions apply to local areas 'Beyond Level 0'.

Children & Young People (17 years or under)

People can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas to facilitate or take part in organised sport, training, and competition which is for persons under 18 years of age.

Children and young people can also travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is outside their own local government area. This flexibility is to allow children and young people to take part in sport or organised activity, but they should travel no further than they need to. If attending a sport/activity in a Level 3 area or below, Level 4 guidance will apply to the whole activity e.g. 12 to 17-year-old outdoor activity should be restricted to non-contact and include a maximum of 15 participants.

Children and young people living in a Level 2, 3 or 4 area can also travel out with their local government area to take part in informal exercise such as walking, running or cycling. Such activity should follow [Scottish Government 'local protection levels' guidance](#).

Adults (18 years or over)

- Participants aged **18 years or over** can travel to and from a Level 0, 1 and 2 area to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training, and competition. However, to help suppress the spread of the virus, it is advised that people should not utilise facilities or take part in activities that are not allowed in their home local area protection Level. Participants should not travel to a Level 3 or 4 area to take part in organised sport or physical activity.
- Adults living in a Level 3 or 4 area should only travel locally (within their local government area) to take part in organised sport or physical activity as outlined in **Table A**.
- Adults living in a Level 3 or Level 4 area can also travel up to 5 miles out with their local government area to take part in informal exercise or recreation such as walking, cycling, golf or running that starts and finishes in the same place. Such activity should follow [Scottish Government 'local protection levels' guidance](#).

Travel Summary (Organised sport and physical activity)

Age Group	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
U18s	No Restrictions	✓	✓	✓	✓
18+ (Adults)		✓	✓	Local Travel Only	Local Travel Only

Definitions - for the purposes of this guidance

'Organised sporting or physical activity' refers to activities which are undertaken in a structured and managed way following specific rules and guidance of relevant SGBs, local authorities or businesses who in turn have fully applied related Scottish Government and **sportscotland** guidance. All organised activity should be overseen by a Covid Officer with documented risk assessments undertaken and mitigating actions put in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants, coaches and officials.

Contact sport or activity is defined as “a sport or activity in which the participants necessarily come into bodily contact or as a matter of course encroach within 2m (1m from 19th July 2021) of one another”.

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 an activity. Examples include Tennis, Cricket, Boccia and Curling.

Sports competition is defined as “any amateur participation sport, contest or race involving individual participants or teams who regularly compete against opponents as part of an organised SGB, league, local authority or club activity.”

Sports event is defined as “an organised gathering or activity of limited duration that brings people together for the primary purpose of participating in the one-off sporting activity such as a marathon, triathlon etc.” For the benefit of this guidance professional sport with spectators is regarded as a sports event not competition.

Adult ‘group’ sport or activity refers to adults, who take part in organised sport or physical activity, where the number of participants is larger than allowed under normal household rules.

Indoor individual exercise refers to non-contact recreational sport or physical activity which follows household rule numbers. This includes gym use, 1:1 personal training, swimming, ice skating and indoor snowsports activity where physical distancing can be maintained.

Permitted Sport and Leisure Activities

Participants and operators should follow guidance based on the area protection level in which the sporting activity is to take place. A summary of what sporting activity can be undertaken at each protection level is available in **Table A** and should be read in conjunction with the rest of this document.

Subject to the protection level guidance within this document, organised sporting or physical activity can take place indoors or outdoors, in effect suspending physical distancing and household guidelines, for the duration of the activity.

Where there is likely to be close proximity or contact between participants involved in a sporting activity, mitigating actions should be considered to minimise risk and keep participants safe. For instance:

- Guidance should focus on providing sporting activity involving as few participants as possible, for the minimum amount of time, whilst still allowing the activity to run effectively. This may also require a change to game formats, numbers and/or rules to minimise risk to participants.

- As soon as a participant has completed training, a competition or event, they should leave the field of play/venue unless other Scottish Government guidance allows e.g. use of venue hospitality services.

When a local area is operating 'Beyond Level 0' it is recommended that '**Give people space**' messaging is promoted.

Formal presentation ceremonies, both indoor and outdoor, should only take place during or after a sporting activity or competition where Scottish Government household rules on gatherings allow. The emphasis should be on reducing risk.

Holiday camps, extended sports activity or events which would not normally come under the jurisdiction of an SGB should refer to the appropriate local authority or other relevant Scottish Government guidance.

For instance, services which provide regulated childcare (registered by the Care Inspectorate in Scotland) should follow the guidance for [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for school age childcare services](#).

Outdoor Sport & Physical Activity

'Beyond Level 0' normal facility occupancy levels apply but operators are encouraged to focus on '**Give people space**' messaging and continue to maintain hygiene protocols.

Where local restrictions or Levels apply, operators may open outdoor sports areas, courts, and pitches if documented risk assessments are undertaken, and appropriate measures are put in place to ensure the safety of participants, staff, and volunteers and where activity is undertaken in line with protection level guidance. Please also refer to guidance produced by **sportscotland** at: [Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#).

Information relating to outdoor sport and physical activity that can be undertaken by protection level and age group is available in **Table A**.

Outdoor sporting bubbles for training, competition, or small-scale participation events (Levels 0-3)

An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble', including multiple bubbles, can be used for organised training, competition, or participation events up to the limits noted below. Coaches, officials, and other volunteers are not included in Level 0 to Level 2 bubble/participation numbers but are at Level 3. Support staff numbers should be limited to those that are required to ensure a safe, well run activity:

- Level 3 – Bubbles of up to 30 with a maximum of 200 participants per day
- Level 2 – Bubbles of up to 50 with a maximum of 500 participants per day

- Level 1 – Bubbles of up to 100 with a maximum of 1000 participants per day
- Level 0 – Bubbles of up to 500 with no participant limit per day
- Beyond Level 0 – No bubble restrictions, but organisers should continue to consult with and obtain agreement from those bodies that they would normally require agreement from.

Total participant numbers taking part in training, competition, or events, other than detailed below, should not exceed maximum daily numbers.

Permanent outdoor sport, leisure and club facilities which are accessed on a regular basis by the general public and/or club members and have in place a designated COVID officer and appropriate risk assessments may exceed the daily participation limit if managed in line with Scottish Government guidance on [the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#). This may, for instance, include operating separate activity zones, implementing staggered time slots and putting in place other measures to ensure participation bubbles remain separate including consideration of parking and access/egress.

Where a person requires the support of a carer to undertake sport or physical activity safely, the carer will not be counted in the bubble total. In such circumstances the Covid Officer should risk assess and where required take additional precautions to minimise risk. For instance, the carers may wear, if appropriate, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks during the activity.

Any further exemptions or variation to training, competition, or event participant numbers, including the addition of spectators, must be agreed directly with Scottish Government and may be subject to other relevant Scottish Government guidance.

Operators and organisers should note that the situation around COVID-19 is fluid and activities may need to be cancelled at short notice should there be a change in local or national restrictions. In such circumstance's plans should be in place to notify participants of event cancellation and to ensure they do not attend the venue.

SGBs and operators should introduce a period of training to familiarise participants with guidelines before running competitions.

Outdoor group coaching for organised sport and physical activity including aerobics and fitness classes can take place if physical distancing is maintained with bubble/participation numbers as identified in **Table A**.

Indoor Sport & Physical Activity

Indoor sport and leisure facilities can open if Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented.

Appropriate risk assessments and mitigating measures should be put in place to reduce risk and protect participants. For instance, where local restrictions apply, consider physically distanced training, reducing numbers taking part and changing game formats or rules.

Participants should not congregate before or after an activity. Operators must ensure comprehensive mitigating actions are put in place and documented in their risk assessment to stop this happening. Consider staggering start/arrival times and any other relevant additional measures.

The number of participants allowed to take part in indoor sport or physical activity must be risk assessed by the operator and follow Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): sport and leisure facilities](#) and sport specific [SGB Guidance](#).

Information relating to indoor sport and physical activity that can be undertaken is available in **Table A**.

Sports Events

Sport Competition

Organised sport competition can take place if guidance within this document is followed and subject to appropriate risk assessment and oversight by the designated Covid Officer.

The maximum number of participants allowed to take part in a sport competition should be no more than:

- Outdoors: Agreed bubble/daily participation numbers, by Level, as outlined in [Table A](#).
- Indoors: Risk assessed maximum numbers following Scottish Government guidance on [the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#)

Operators and organisers should where relevant, as part of their risk assessment, consult with and obtain agreement from those bodies that they would normally require agreement from to run the competition. Where the competition would require a licence from the local authority under existing Civic Government legislation, this must include agreement from local Environmental Health Officers. Other bodies depending on the type, location, and scale of the event, may include the landowner, Community Council, the transport police, or other body responsible for the safety of the public.

Spectators are permitted under the following circumstances:

- 'Beyond Level 0' there are no limits on spectator numbers, subject to organisers obtaining relevant permissions, where they normally would be required to do so. However, operators/ organisers should follow Scottish Government's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Certification Scheme - Information for Businesses and Event Organisers](#) where attendance thresholds are met. A COVID vaccine certificate or a record of a recent negative COVID-19 test result (from either a Lateral Flow Device or PCR) is needed for:
 - indoor events (unseated) with 500 or more people
 - outdoor events (unseated) with 4,000 or more people
 - any event with 10,000 or more people
- where a competition or event is organised and takes place at premises whose entrances and exits are controlled (indoors and outdoors) for the purpose of crowd and capacity management in line with Scottish Government [\(COVID-19\): events sector guidance](#) and [\(COVID-19\): calculating physical distancing capacity in public settings](#).
- It is recognised that it may not always be possible to prevent people from spectating [at a competition or event] in a public space such as a park. In such circumstances organisers should consider mitigating measures as part of their risk assessment with an emphasis on keeping people safe. Any such measures should be clearly communicated by the organiser prior to the competition which may include, amongst other things, the displaying of notices around the venue to remind the public to follow Scottish Government guidance.
- For clarity, where informal spectating does take place organisers are not expected to enforce government guidance on members of the public in places not under their control.

Sports Events & Competitions

Sports events, including spectator events, can take place subject to appropriate Scottish Government guidance being followed. Further information is available on the [sportsScotland](#) website here: [Return to Competition & Events: sport events](#).

Coaching

The guidance below is to support coaches, leaders, personal trainers, deliverers, and instructors, *herein referred to as coach/es*. In addition, please see [Getting Coaches Ready for Sport](#) which provides a 4-stage approach/checklist to help coaches get ready for delivering sport and physical activity. It can be used as it is or amended to reflect the sport or delivery activity.

Coaches operating within clubs and facilities should liaise with the relevant COVID Officer before undertaking coaching and all sporting or physical activity must adhere to operator and relevant [SGB Guidance](#).

Coaches and others supporting organised sporting or physical activity should if possible, keep physically distant, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible to ensure the safety of participants. In such circumstances the responsible 'Covid Officer' should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment.

Coaches should be aware that local restrictions may be in place for sport and physical activity and this should be considered as part of risk assessment planning and will dictate what activity can be coached, indoors and outdoors and to whom. See **Table A** for further information about protection levels.

Up to date information on the latest travel regulations is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): travel and transport](#)**Coaching (Levels 0-3)**

Coaches can run organised outdoor group training sessions in protection Levels 0-3 in line with maximum bubble sizes outlined in [Table A](#) or as agreed through approved [SGB Guidance](#) and [Scottish Government \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#). They should also ensure to follow specific guidance on [sporting bubbles](#) within this document.

Coaching (Level 4)

Coaches can run organised outdoor non-contact group training sessions in protection Level 4 for a maximum of 15 people aged 12 years or over (including the coach/es)

Coaches can run organised outdoor contact and non-contact training sessions for up to 30 children (including the coach/es) aged u12 years.

Coaches can take multiple indoor sessions (where protection levels allow) per day, however the number of participants allowed in each session will depend upon the protection Level restrictions in place in the given location.

Face coverings must be worn by coaches when indoors, except where an exemption applies. For instance: where an individual has a health condition or is disabled, including hidden disabilities, for example, autism, dementia or a learning disability.

- or if there is a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering such as:

- where there is difficulty in communicating with participants who may not be close by and safety is an issue i.e. in a swimming lesson. In such cases alternative measures should be considered such as use of a face visor.
- being physically active or exercising as part of the coached session.

The priority should be on ensuring the safety of the coach and participants and minimising the risk of virus transmission before, during and after activity.

At all times coaches should:

- plan and risk assess appropriately for the session in advance, be aware of responsibilities, be clear on expectations with participants and build in a review period to reflect on effectiveness and safety of the session.
- ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.
- check, in advance of delivery, that appropriate insurance policies are in place for all coached activities and that their insurance is valid for the activities they plan to deliver.
- find out about their direct and surrounding delivery environment in advance of the session and contact the facility operator, where relevant, to confirm any changes in processes and procedure.
- consider the needs of participants returning after recovering from COVID-19. Participants should be able to confidentially disclose this, in a similar way to any other personal matter relevant to coached activity, so the coach can make suitable adjustments and allowances to the planned activity for the individual and check that input from a medical professional has been sought where appropriate.
- Coaches working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

Additional support tools are available for coaches and volunteers at the [Getting Coaches Ready for Sport](#) section of the **sportscotland** website including [mental health and wellbeing awareness training](#).

Toilets, Changing and Locker Rooms

Access to, and use, of changing rooms and showering facilities is permitted (other than in Level 4 areas where indoor facilities should remain closed) if appropriate risk assessment and hygiene measures have been put in place. However, the safety of participants is the priority and facility operators should consider whether use of the areas is necessary.

Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available at [Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#).

Operators may open public toilets if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).

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

Equipment Provision and Use

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

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.

All fixed equipment should be checked prior to use to avoid participants having to adjust or touch it or alternatively appropriate cleaning regimes should be in place.

Where shared equipment is necessary for an activity appropriate hygiene measures must be put in place before, during and after use.

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.

Health, Safety & Hygiene

As restrictions are eased, the emphasis will continue to be on personal responsibility, good practice and informed judgement. The latest information on Coronavirus in Scotland can be accessed on the Scottish Government website at Coronavirus in Scotland. Operators and participants should however continue to:

- maintain and promote good ventilation. Further information is available at Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19): ventilation guidance
- wear face coverings in indoor sport and leisure facilities when not taking part in physical activity.
- use good hand and respiratory hygiene and surface cleaning
- stay at home and book a test if you develop coronavirus symptoms
- work from home where possible and appropriate
- apply and adhere to 'give people space' messaging

Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained. Ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.

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
- A parent or carer being present with children or vulnerable adults.

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

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

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.

Be aware that disabled people may face greater challenges implementing regular handwashing because of additional support needs. Some disabled people may need to use touch to help them get information from their environment and physical support. It is important they are not prevented from doing this, but operators should be aware that this increases the likelihood of virus transmission.

Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport provides a checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions.

Local restrictions

Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, not all of the changes above will apply. Details of local restrictions are available [here](#).

Boccia

There will be no organised boccia activity under Level 4 restrictions. However, under other levels there is the ability to return depending on the readiness of facility providers to open to clubs and sessions for training purposes only.

Competition will be considered in the future. SDS will publish further updates and guidance as and when competition is allowed to return.

SDS has published a separate Return to Boccia Guidance Paper. To access this guidance please follow this link: [Return to Boccia](#)

Travel guidance can be found in Table A on page 3.

General Guidance

To prevent spread of the virus, please follow the **FACTS**:

Face coverings

Avoid crowded places

Clean hands regularly

Two metre distance

Self-isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

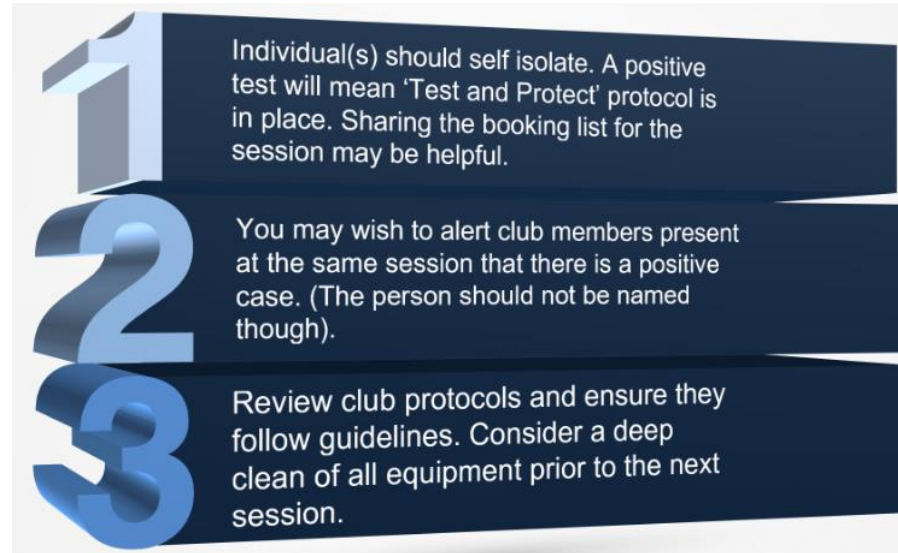
Please Note that FACTS guidance including physical distancing is expected to change from 19th July 2021.

IMPORTANT:

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

Shielding has currently ceased and it is the individuals responsibility to decide when it is safe for their return to sport. The advice is highlighted in [here](#). The advice to people is to continue to strictly follow the guidelines on physical distancing, handwashing, surface cleaning and respiratory hygiene guidance on the [NHS Inform website](#).

What to do if someone in the club or session has Covid-19



Local Outbreaks or Clusters of Coronavirus Cases

Scottish Government travel advice and guidance relating to local outbreaks or clusters of coronavirus cases is available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): local advice and measures. 94. Where a local outbreak has been reported, sports facility operators and deliverers within this locality should review Scottish Government 'local measures' guidance, their facility/operational risk assessment and consider if additional mitigating actions should be put in place to reduce risk. This may, for example, include; suspending activity, enhancing hygiene and physical distancing measures or introducing additional activity restrictions.

SDS key messages

- This guidance relates only to sport and physical activity in Scotland.
- Further guidance will be available from your mainstream Scottish Governing Body to advise you on the implications for your individual sport. Click [here](#)

- It is the responsibility of the relevant facility operator / COVID officer to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any sport or leisure activity takes place and to check if the activity is in an area which is subject to additional Scottish Government localised measures and restrictions.
- Guidance for coaches, leaders, personal trainers, and instructors (herein referred to as coaches) is available at [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#).
- During outdoor group training sessions appropriate risk assessed physical distancing and hygiene measures should be put in place to protect participants.
- Face coverings: Mandatory (with limited exceptions) on public transport and in shops
- Be kind, friendly and considerate to everyone you meet
- Follow Public Health guidelines for hygiene
- Any branch or club activity must be in accordance with the guidelines provided
- Exercise well within your capabilities

Our priority remains to protect the health of our coaches, volunteers, athletes, participant, staff and the wider community and help to suppress the spread of the Covid-19 virus. We should all continue to follow the government's and public health guidelines.

Appendix 1

'Beyond Level 0' Guidance

Introduction

To ensure that it is safe to progress 'Beyond Level 0', guidance is being linked to the 'Gateway condition'. This relates the amount of vaccine coverage to the Scottish Government's new strategic intent to 'suppress the virus at a level consistent with alleviating its harms'.

Most legal restrictions relating to Covid-19 will be lifted on the 9th August 2021 when Scotland moves to 'Beyond Level 0'. This includes restrictions on physical distancing and the size of social gatherings. Additionally, no businesses will have to legally remain closed.

However, as of 17th December 2021, businesses and service providers are now legally required to take reasonably practical measures to minimise spread of coronavirus on their premises, for example measures which limit close face-to-face interaction, such as supporting working from home, making adjustments to the premises and putting in place protective measures such as signage, screens and other mitigations.

In determining these measures, consideration must be given to the Scottish Government guidance available at [Scottish Government: Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#)

Covid-19 is a disease that will need to be managed for the foreseeable future and to maintain progress in returning to more normality, it is important that people continue to abide by a set of baseline measures covered by Scottish Government guidance and where relevant legislation. This includes:

- Good hand hygiene and surface cleaning.
- Continued promotion of good ventilation.
- Requirement for face coverings in certain settings (e.g., public transport, retail).
- Continued compliance with Test and Protect, including self-isolation when necessary.
- Ongoing need for outbreak management capability, including active surveillance.

- Continue to encourage a greater degree of working from home than pre-COVID-19. Where this is possible and appropriate, it will not only assist with controlling transmission of the virus, but also promote wellbeing more generally.

The information outlined below summarises the key areas which will change as we move 'Beyond Level 0' and should be read in conjunction with [Return to sport and physical activity guidance](#) to inform the development of sport specific information which will be shared with participants, clubs, local authorities/trusts, third sector and other sports facility operators.

- It is the responsibility of each club committee, sports facility operator and/or deliverer (herein referred to as the operator) to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions continue to be applied before any sport or leisure activity takes place and to check if the activity is in an area which is subject to additional Scottish Government localised measures and restrictions.
- Where a local outbreak has been reported sport and physical activity operators, in all settings, should review their risk assessment and consider if additional mitigating actions should be put in place to reduce risk. This may, for example, include suspending activity, enhancing hygiene and physical distancing measures, or introducing additional activity restrictions.
- Scottish Government may update or change Levels and restrictions at any time, including local areas subject to them. Therefore, COVID officers should regularly check [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Local Protection Levels](#).

Travel Restrictions

'Beyond Level 0' no travel restrictions will be applicable, within or between areas in Scotland, which are not categorised under the protection level system. Please refer to the [Travel Guidance](#) section within Return to Sport for further information on where restrictions will apply should a local area move into protection levels.

Scottish Government are also continuing to monitor the UK wide and International Covid-19 position. Further information on restrictions applicable between Scotland and other parts of the UK and internationally is available on the Scottish Government website at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): travel and transport](#).

Health, Safety & Hygiene

High levels of personal hygiene and respiratory etiquette will remain essential as we move Beyond Level 0.

Operators should continue to follow Scottish Government guidance on health, safety and hygiene measures including face covering advice. Please refer to the [Health, Safety and Hygiene](#) section of the Return to Sport guidance for further information including relevant links.

Test & Protect

Contact tracing and testing of close contacts will continue as we move forward through the pandemic, including 'Beyond Level 0'. Test & Protect will change as the population becomes more protected by vaccination but will still play a role in mitigating clusters and outbreaks where they arise.

Operators should continue to maintain customer records and follow applicable guidance available in the Test & Protect section of Return to Sport guidance.

People who are symptomatic or identified as close contacts should follow Scottish Government and NHS guidance on self-isolation available at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#). No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

Competition & Events

Organised sporting competition and events can take place 'Beyond Level 0' but should continue to follow guidance outlined in the [Sports Events & Competition](#) section within Return to Sport guidance.

At 'Beyond Level 0' there are no limits on spectator numbers, subject to organisers obtaining relevant permissions, where they normally would be required to do so. However, operators/ organisers should follow Scottish Government's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Certification Scheme - Information for Businesses and Event Organisers](#) where attendance thresholds are met. A COVID vaccine certificates or a record of a recent negative COVID-19 test result (from either a Lateral Flow Device or PCR) is needed for:

- indoor events (unseated) with 500 or more people
- outdoor events (unseated) with 4,000 or more people
- any event with 10,000 or more people

Other bodies depending on the type, location, and scale of the event, may include the landowner, Community Council, the transport police, or other body responsible for the safety of the public.

Where a competition/event requires a licence from a Local Authority under existing Civic Government legislation, this must include agreement from local Environmental Health Officers.

Hospitality

Sports facility operators providing catering or bar services should refer to Scottish Government guidance for applicable guidance including takeaway services. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance.](#)

Retail

Retail units operated by sports facility operators should follow Scottish Government [Retail Sector Guidance.](#)