



Scottish Tug of War Association

Guidance Document

Arrangements for Tug of War During

Covid-19 2020

Issue	Status	Date	Details
Phase 2 Guidance	Draft	28 June 2020	Draft for consideration by STOWA before submission to sportscotland for verification.
Phase 3 Guidance	Approved	14 July 2020	Verified and approved by sportscotland.

Overview:

This document has been developed by Scottish Tug of War Association for Tug of War activities in Scotland in conjunction with sportscotland and the Scottish Government.

The document shall remain in fluid and shall be updated as further phased guidance is released from the Scottish Government regarding Covid-19 and our route from lockdown.

Phase 3: SCOTTISH TUG OF WAR ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES – RETURN TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

These guidelines apply to Scotland only, and have been produced in line with the Scottish Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise published on 18 June 2020 (update as relevant), which can be viewed at: [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).

INTRODUCTION

1. On the 21st May 2020, the Scottish Government published [Scotland's COVID-19 route map through and out of the crisis](#), which sets out the order in which it plans to relax restrictions. Based on our discussions with Scottish Government/[sportscotland](#) and following the easing of lockdown restrictions, Scottish Tug of War Association (STOWA) has developed a set of practical guidelines for clubs and participants to follow so that Tug of War can happen in Scotland as the restrictions are eased and where the local environment allows.
2. These guidelines apply to Tug of War and outdoor adaptations so that Tug of War can happen in a way that is in line with Scottish Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).
3. Tug of War venues/facilities across the country are often different and operate in different local contexts including club, private or local authority run. Assessing whether safe exercise can be provided depends on a range of factors, which apply differently at each venue/location. It is the responsibility of each venue, club and participant to risk assess based on their local environment.
4. Currently all clubs remain closed. However, clubs and participants should be aware that not all facilities will be able to open immediately following guidance changes and there will often be time lags as plans are put in place to re-engage staff, set up operations and ensure safety of participants.
5. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with any updated Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene. Facility operators, clubs and participants should be aware of and can adapt to changes in guidance at short notice. Information on Scottish Governments approach to managing COVID-19 is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland Guidance](#).
6. People who are shielding should not visit Tug of War venues or undertake tug of war per se. However, people who are shielding are permitted to undertake physical activities providing physical distancing is adhered to. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: COVID-19 Shielding support & contacts](#).

7. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.
8. **IMPORTANT: Do not leave your home to undertake exercise or outdoor activity if Scottish Government advice means you should stay at home because you or someone you live with has or has had symptoms of COVID-19, or you are in the most vulnerable category and have been advised to shield from the coronavirus.**

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Travel restrictions outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Up to date guidance is available at: [Scottish Government Phase 3: Staying safe and protecting others](#).
2. At all times, participants and facility operators should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others.
3. Only outdoor facilities should be opened, with all indoor areas remaining closed including changing rooms, exercise rooms/halls and social areas. Clubs may now open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the [Scottish Government website Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).
4. Clubhouses should only be opened for operational purposes e.g. to switch on lights, maintenance checks, cleaning and to undertake essential work unless;
 - 4.1 the area of play can only be accessed through the clubhouse. In such cases the club must ensure that players enter and exit one at a time, ensuring physical distancing guidance is always adhered to.
 - 4.2 Where personal equipment needs to be retrieved from the club/facility one-off arrangements can be made in exceptional circumstances. In such cases physical distancing should be maintained and appropriate hygiene practices put in place.
5. All social spaces, gyms and sheds should remain closed.
6. Clubs, deliverers, and operators should check with their insurance company that correct and full insurance cover is in place and valid before any activity takes place.
7. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of the Scottish Government route map. Please ensure to check the official STOWA position at www.scottishtugofwar.com and [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#) on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest guidelines.

B. PROCEDURES FOR FACILITY OPERATORS & CLUBS

1. Ensure your facility management team or club committee has put in place appropriate mechanisms for overseeing operations and risk management. Venues should only open when it is safe to do so. Only outdoor facilities should be opened, with all indoor areas remaining closed including changing rooms, exercise rooms/halls and social areas.

2. **sportscotland** has produced the [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) guidance to help owners and operators of sports facilities as they prepare for when sport/activity resumes. The guidance is applicable to all phases of the Scottish Government route map, and can be adapted to support other planning-based work being undertaken by sports, clubs and community organisations.
3. Risk assessments should be carried out and documented for all activities and facilities. Consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission and following Scottish Government guidance regarding health, hygiene, travel, and physical distancing. A risk assessment template is available at [Getting your facilities fit for sport - Resources](#)
4. Any measures venues put in place to enable activity to resume must be flexible and able to adapt quickly if tighter movement/physical distancing is reintroduced in the future or when restrictions are further relaxed.

Health, Safety & Hygiene

5. Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained. As there is no access to indoor facilities allowed consideration should be made to house first aid equipment externally. Please ensure the first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID pandemic and first aiders have undertaken appropriate additional training.
6. Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use at entrance/exit to venue/facility where possible. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes are appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standard or any detergent is followed by chlorine releasing agent.
7. Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles & push pads/plates, door frames, doors, handrails etc.) regularly, wearing disposable gloves
8. A checklist of considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)
9. Detailed guidance is also available at;

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

[UK Government / HPE: Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting](#)

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

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

Facility Access / Physical Distancing

10. At all times, venues and clubs should ensure participants adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others including before, during and after the activity or when taking breaks
11. Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between participants, including in car parks and at entrances.
12. Clubs/facilities should manage the number of participants accessing the activity or facility to ensure the safety of users. No indoor activity can take place until further notice.

13. Where safe and appropriate, doors and gates should be left open during activity hours.
14. Consider different entry and exit routes to the facility where possible and ensure this is clearly marked.
15. Consider marking 2m distances at appropriate points, such as the entry gates to the facility.

Equipment

16. Participants should, where possible, use their own personal equipment and ensure appropriate hygiene rules are adhered to.
17. Where shared equipment is used appropriate hygiene measures must be put in place to ensure equipment is thoroughly cleaned before, during and after use. Antibacterial resin must be applied to hands between each end of pulling.
18. **Ropes should be marked at 2 metre intervals, with colour coded tape and each puller shall maintain the same position on the rope for the duration of each session.**
19. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes are appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standard or any detergent is followed by chlorine releasing agent.
20. Where possible, ensure all equipment is checked prior to use to avoid participants having to adjust or touch it.
21. Remove unnecessary equipment from the venue/facility e.g. benches/scoreboards.
22. No personal equipment should be left at the facility by the participant once activity has ended.

Bookings & Payment

23. Where possible operate electronic bookings/payments for sessions. Avoid cash handling.
24. Consider staggering the start time of training so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
25. Where possible and in line with Data Protection regulations, keep a register of users including temperature checks to assist with track and trace methods.

Communication

26. Communicate with members clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
27. Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures is clearly displayed (and ensure these remain up to date as restrictions change)
28. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and clubs/venue operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

Training & Coaching

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

30. One on one personal training or coaching is permitted if it is outdoors, physical distancing can be maintained. This should take into consideration that at Phase 3 you can meet with up to 4 other households (or extended households) at a time outdoors, and no more than 15 people in total at a time. **For Tug of War, STOWA are recommending a maximum of 14 participants can take part in exercise activity together.**
31. When participating in training or coaching, where possible, avoid touching surfaces and sharing equipment and touching your mouth and face. Coaches should wear their own face shields and maintain social distance, not less than 2metres apart.
32. Coaches should risk assess and plan appropriately for the session in advance, be aware of responsibilities and be clear on expectations with participants. Coaches are advised to retain risk assessment documents until further notice.
33. Coaches working with children:
 - a. Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance, as set out in Scottish Government guidance.
 - b. Children aged 12-17 a 'field of play bubble' can be created during organised sports activity that allows contact whilst the activity is taking place, in effect suspending physical distancing guidelines for the duration of the activity. Normal physical distancing guidelines will however apply before and after the activity takes place.
 - c. Coaches and other adults supporting organised activity should attempt to keep physically distant where possible, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible
 - d. Where there is likely to be close contact with children mitigation should be put in place to minimise risk. Therefore, STOWA consider that 12 children per 1 hr. session sufficient and each session lasts only ? hour.
 - e. Additionally, coaches/instructors should familiarize themselves with the additional considerations **Children 1st: [Child Wellbeing and protection Considerations](#)**

Spectators

34. Spectating should be discouraged. Where attendance of a parent or guardian (non-participant) is required, it should be limited to one per participant where possible, with physical distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions.

Competitions

35. The initial focus during Phase 3 is on facilitating recreational and social participation.
36. Some formats of competition may be able to resume before others, but further information will be provided at the appropriate time and in line with Scottish Government directives.

C. PROCEDURES FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. The following guidance has been established in line with Scottish Government guidelines to ensure a safe environment for participants and on-site staff which STOWA asks participants to follow. All guidance is subject to change; therefore, we would ask participants to regularly check STOWA website www.scottishtugofwar.com and your venue/club for regular updates.

Before Participating

1. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with any updated Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing, and hygiene. Be aware guidance can change and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of guidelines on the STOWA website www.scottishtugofwar.com and at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).
2. People who are shielding should not visit venues or undertake activities. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: COVID-19 Shielding support & contacts](#).
3. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.

IMPORTANT: Do not leave your home to undertake exercise or outdoor activity if Scottish Government advice means you should stay at home because you or someone you live with has or has had symptoms of COVID-19, or you are in the most vulnerable category and have been advised to shield from the coronavirus.

4. Travel outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. Further information is available at: [Staying Safe and Protecting Others: Travel](#)
5. At all times, participants should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others.
6. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving home to go to the facility/venue (or use an alcohol gel if washing hands is not possible). Information on hand hygiene is available at: [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)

Bookings and Payment

7. Where the venue/facility allows, ensure you have booked in advance and make payment online. Where possible try to avoid paying by cash.
8. Participation can only take place outdoors with all indoor facilities remaining closed.

Personal Equipment

9. Where possible take your own equipment with you and do not share equipment, such as boots, towels, belts, hats, padding etc.

10. Only take the minimum amount of equipment that you need to participate. Clean and wipe down your equipment, including water bottles before and after use.
11. Bring a full water bottle, and do not share food or drink with others.
12. Ensure you take all personal belongings and equipment with you at the end of the session and do not leave anything at the venue/facility.

Travelling to and from the venue

13. Where possible avoid using public transport (face coverings on Public Transport are mandatory (with limited exceptions) and adhere to Scottish Government physical distancing and travel guidelines: [Staying Safe and Protecting Others: Travel](#))
14. Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be at the venue/facility.
15. Avoid touching gates, fences, benches, etc. if you can.
16. Allow others to leave before you enter the venue/facility. If you need to wait, then do so away from the facility and clear of the gates.
17. Ensure you leave the facility before the end of your allotted time so that it is empty for the next participant.
18. Arrive changed and ready to participate. Shower at home as the facility changing rooms will be closed.
19. Do not congregate with others and adhere to physical distancing rules. No extra-curricular or social activity should take place.

During Participation

Participation Limits

20. **At Phase 3, the Scottish Government states that you can meet with up to 4 other households (or extended households) at a time outdoors, and no more than 14 people in total at a time, including children. For Tug of War, STOWA are recommending a maximum of 14 participants can take part in exercise activity together.**
21. Always stay at least two metres away from other participants including during participation, when taking breaks and before and after participation.
22. Do not make physical contact with other participants (such as shaking hands or high five).

EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

23. Use your own clearly marked equipment. **Ropes should be marked at 2 metre intervals, with colour coded tape and each puller shall maintain the same position on the rope for the duration of each session.**
24. Avoid using other equipment such as benches, exercise mats.
25. Be aware that onsite toilet facilities and other indoor spaces are not open.

HEALTH & HYGIENE

26. If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue into an appropriate bin supplied at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for 20 seconds.

CLINICALLY VULNERABLE PEOPLE

27. People who are shielding can now undertake outdoor exercise; however, STOWA do not recommend Tug of War activities to these individuals until it is safe to do so. Guidance is available at: [Scottish Government: COVID-19 Shielding support & contacts](#)

28. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.

SPECTATORS

29. Spectating is discouraged. Where attendance of a parent or guardian (non-participant) is required, it should be limited to one per participant where possible, with physical distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions.

COMPETITIONS and EVENTS

30. The initial focus during Phase 3 is on facilitating recreational and social participation only. Further guidance will be released at the appropriate time.

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE:

- www.scottishtugofwar.com
- [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#)
- [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#)
- [Scottish Government: Staying safe outdoors](#)
- [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)

Sportscotland:

- [Getting your facilities fit for sport](#)
- [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information and resources](#)