

Non-protected

# Return to sport and physical activity

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

Sport for life

**sportscotland**  
the national agency for sport

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## INTRODUCTION

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.

Therefore, protection levels guidance for sport and physical activity continues to be provided within this document along with additional information for 'Beyond Level 0'. A summary of changes relating to 'Beyond Level 0' is available in [Appendix 1](#).

If local restrictions are enforced in the future, organised sporting activities can be undertaken providing all activity is consistent with relevant Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing, and hygiene. Operators 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 restrictions are implemented by Scottish Government at short notice. Information on Scottish Government's approach to managing COVID-19 is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).

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.

To manage a safe return to organised sport and physical activity all clubs, facility operators and deliverers (referred to as 'operators') should continue to have in place Test & Protect procedures to help break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#).

SGBs, clubs and participants should, where applicable, be aware of any local area restrictions which may be in place and should consider this as part of risk assessment planning. In the event of the reintroduction of local restrictions or Levels, guidance for sporting activity which should be followed is set out in [Table A](#) below. Please note this may be subject to change.

TABLE A

		Beyond Level 0	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>OUTDOOR SPORT</b>  Organised outdoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	<b>Overview</b>	No field of play bubble restrictions apply beyond Level 0, although limits on participation numbers at competition and events may be applicable. 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.					<b>Local training / competition only.</b>  <b>U12s:</b> max 30 including coaches. <b>Over 12s / adults:</b> max 15 including coaches.
		<b>No bubble restrictions</b>	<b>Maximum bubble size:</b> 500 participants* <b>Total Daily Limit:</b> 5000 participants	<b>Maximum bubble size:</b> 100 participants* <b>Total Daily Limit:</b> 1000 participants	<b>Maximum bubble size:</b> 50 participants* <b>Total Daily Limit:</b> 500 participants	<b>Maximum bubble size:</b> 30 participants <b>Total Daily Limit:</b> 200 participants	
	<b>Children &amp; Young people (u18 years)</b>	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	<b>U12s:</b> Contact sport & PA permitted <b>12-17 years:</b> Non-contact sport & PA permitted.
	<b>Adults (18+ years)</b>					Non-contact sport & PA permitted <b>Contact sport &amp; PA prohibited</b>	Non-contact sport & PA permitted <b>Contact sport &amp; PA prohibited</b>
<b>INDOOR SPORT</b>  Organised indoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	<b>Overview</b>	Organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer Businesses and Workplaces</a> and sport specific <a href="#">SGB Guidance</a> . <b>'Group' activity</b> 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.					
	<b>Children &amp; Young people (u18 years)</b>	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	<b>Indoor sport &amp; PA prohibited:</b>  <b>Leisure Centres, gyms and other indoor sports facilities closed.</b>
	<b>Adults (18+ years)</b>			Non-contact sport & PA permitted <b>Contact sport &amp; PA prohibited</b>	Non-contact sport & PA permitted <b>Contact sport &amp; PA prohibited</b>	Indoor <u>individual exercise only</u> <b>No contact or non-contact group activity</b>	

<b>COACHING</b>	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, <a href="#">Getting Coaches Ready for Sport</a> 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.		
<b>PERFORMANCE SPORT</b>	Elite sports with <a href="#">Resumption of Performance Sport</a> guidance in place and approved by Scottish Government or <b>sportscotland</b> is permitted at all Levels.		
<b>TRAVEL</b>	For further information please refer to <a href="#">Travel Guidance</a> within this document.		
<b>HOSPITALITY &amp; RETAIL</b>	Clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance. Further information is available at <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector guidance</a> .		
	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 <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer Businesses and Workplaces</a> .		
<b>TOILETS, CHANGING &amp; SHOWER ROOMS</b>	Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available at <a href="#">Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport</a> . 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 <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Opening Public Toilets Guidelines</a> .		Public Toilets open.
<b>INDOOR FACILITIES</b>  (can open up to Level 3)	<b>Overview</b>	Specific information relating to indoor sports facility guidance is available at <a href="#">Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport</a> . 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.	
		<p><b>Beyond Level 0</b></p> <p>Return to <u>normal facility occupancy levels</u> but focus on good ventilation and '<b>Give people space</b>' 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><b>Level 0</b></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>
<b>WORKFORCE</b>	Sports facility operators must ensure that Scottish Government guidance on <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer Businesses and Workplaces</a> 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.		
	Although gym and leisure facilities can open to Level 3, where local restrictions or Levels apply, 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, <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safer Businesses and Workplaces</a> must be followed and a risk assessment should be completed.		

The information outlined below is generic and should be used to inform the development of suitable guidance which can be shared with participants, clubs, local authorities/trusts, third sector and other sports facility operators. Although Scotland has moved to 'Beyond Level 0' caution is still required, and the following guidance should be considered where appropriate - for instance, if local restrictions or Levels are reintroduced.

## SPORTS FACILITY & PARTICIPATION GUIDANCE

1. It is the responsibility of each club committee, sports facility operator and/or deliverer (referred to as the operator) to appoint a responsible person/s, referred to as the [COVID officer](#), to act as the point of contact on all things related to COVID-19. An [e-learning module for COVID officers](#) is available to support those undertaking the role.
2. The COVID officer **must** ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any sport or leisure activity takes place. Specific consideration should be given to the needs of those who are at greater risk including some older adults or those with disabilities.
3. Operators should check with their insurance company that correct and full insurance cover is in place and valid before any activity takes place.
4. Operators should only open facilities when it is safe to do so and in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.
5. Operators must ensure that users are made aware of the requirement to adhere to the relevant approved SGB guidance prior to any sport or physical activity being undertaken at the venue and reserve the right to intervene where there are any clear and visible breaches of this guidance by participants. Where such breaches take place operators should notify the nominated club/activity COVID Officer overseeing the activity and they should in turn take appropriate action to mitigate future risk and protect participants and the wider public.

### Travel Guidance

6. 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](#).
7. 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.
8. Sport & Physical Activity Participation
  - 8.1 Participants can take part in organised sport and physical activity as detailed in [Table A](#). If local restrictions or Levels are reintroduced, sport and physical activity is subject to exemption from household rules as detailed within this guidance.
  - 8.2 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'.

## 9. Children & Young People (17 years or under)

- 9.1 People can travel between Level 0-3 areas to facilitate or take part in organised sport, training, and competition which is for persons under 18 years of age.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 Children and young people living in a Level 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.

## 10. Adults (18 years or over)

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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](#).
- 10.3 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.

**Table B: Domestic Travel Summary (Organised sport and physical activity)**

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

## Definitions - for the purposes of this guidance

11. **‘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.
12. **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 1m of one another”.
13. **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.
14. **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.”
15. **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.
16. **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.
17. **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

18. Participants and operators should follow guidance based on the area protection level (where applicable) in which the sporting activity is to take place. A summary of what sporting activity can be undertaken is available in [Table A](#) and should be read in conjunction with the rest of this document.
19. Where local area restrictions or protection levels apply, organised sport or physical activity can take place indoors or outdoors, in effect suspending physical distancing and household guidelines, if relevant guidance in this document is followed.
20. Where local restrictions or protection Levels apply, and where there is likely to be proximity or contact between participants involved in a sporting activity, mitigating actions should be considered to minimise risk and keep participants safe. For instance:

- 20.1 SGB 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.
- 20.2 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.
21. When a local area is operating 'Beyond Level 0' it is recommended that '**Give people space**' messaging is promoted.
22. 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.
23. 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.
  - 23.1 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**

24. '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.
25. 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](#).
26. Information relating to outdoor sport and physical activity that can be undertaken by protection level (where applicable) and age group is available in [Table A](#).

#### *Outdoor sporting bubbles for training, competition, and participation (up to Level 3)*

27. An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble', including multiple bubbles, can be used for organised training, competition, or participation events as noted below. Coaches, officials, and other volunteers are not included in Level 0-2 bubble/participation numbers but are at Level 3:

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 a maximum of 5000 participants 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.

28. Where applicable, operators should undertake comprehensive risk assessments to minimise the risk of movement or contact between bubbles (or waves) including before, during or after an activity. Once an individual has completed their activity, they should immediately vacate the 'field of play' and are then subject to household rules.
29. Total participant numbers taking part in training, competition, or events, other than detailed below, should not exceed maximum daily numbers.
  - 29.1 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 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 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.
30. 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.
31. Where Levels or local restrictions apply any further exemptions or variation to training, competition, or event bubble or participant numbers must be agreed directly with the Scottish Government and may be subject to other relevant Scottish Government guidance. Where international participants are likely to be involved organisers should refer to guidance provided at [Return to Competitions and Events \(sportscotland.org.uk\)](#).
32. 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.
33. Outdoor group coaching for organised sport and physical activity including aerobics and fitness classes can take place if appropriate physical distancing is maintained in line with bubble/participation numbers as identified in [Table A](#).

*Outdoor sporting bubbles for localised training and competition (Level 4)*

34. See [Appendix 2](#) for detailed information on Level 4 restrictions.

### **Indoor Sport & Physical Activity**

35. Indoor sport and leisure facilities can open, up to and including Level 3, if applicable Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#) is implemented.

36. 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.
37. Participants should not congregate before or after an activity in areas where local restrictions apply. In such circumstances 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.
38. 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 \(COVID-19\): Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#) and sport specific [SGB Guidance](#).
39. Information relating to indoor sport and physical activity that can be undertaken is available in [Table A](#).

### **Sports Events & Competitions**

40. Sport Competition
  - 40.1 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.
  - 40.2 The maximum number of participants allowed to take part in a sport competition should be no more than:
    - 40.2.1 Outdoors: Bubble/daily participation numbers as outlined in [Table A](#).
    - 40.2.2 Indoors: Risk assessed maximum numbers following Scottish Government guidance for [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#). Additional information is also available in [Table A](#).
  - 40.3 Operators / organisers should 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.
  - 40.4 Spectators are permitted under the following circumstances:
    - 40.4.1 '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

40.4.2 Professional football and rugby stadium operators should follow Scottish Government's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Stadium Sector Guidance for Professional Football and Rugby](#).

40.4.3 where supervising a child and/or vulnerable person.

40.4.4 where local area restrictions or protection levels apply and 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 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) stadia and live events guidance](#) and [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): supporting safer capacity in public settings and events](#).

40.5 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.

40.6 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.

## 41. Sports Events

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

## Coaching

42. 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.

43. 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](#).

44. 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.
45. 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.
  46. Up to date information on the latest travel regulations is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): travel and transport](#).
  47. Coaching (Levels 0-3)
    - 47.1 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 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): sport and leisure facilities](#) guidance. They should also ensure to follow specific guidance on [sporting bubbles](#) within this document.
  48. Coaching (Level 4)
    - 48.1 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)
    - 48.2 Coaches can run organised outdoor contact and non-contact training sessions for up to 30 children (including the coach/es) aged under 12 years.
  49. 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.
  50. Face coverings must be worn by coaches when indoors, except where an exemption applies. For instance:
    - 50.1 where an individual has a health condition or is disabled, including hidden disabilities, for example, autism, dementia, or a learning disability.
    - 50.2 or if there is a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering such as:
      - 50.2.1 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.
      - 50.2.2 being physically active or exercising as part of the coached session.
    - 50.3 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.
  51. At all times coaches should:

- 51.1 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.
  - 51.2 ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene are clearly displayed and up to date.
  - 51.3 check measures, 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.
  - 51.4 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.
  - 51.5 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.
  - 51.6 Coaches working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1<sup>st</sup>**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).
52. 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](#).

### **Additional Sport & Leisure Activity Considerations**

- 53. Specific consideration should be given to supervision of children under the age of 5 years as it is not appropriate for young children to maintain physical distancing, either practically or in terms of child development. You may, for instance, ask a parent or carer to be present.
- 54. Where a disabled participant requires functional support to help them participate coaches, carers or those supporting the participant can provide this without maintaining physical distancing. In such circumstance the responsible 'Covid Officer' may consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment. For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in proximity, or a combination of actions.
- 55. Where an employee is providing an activity, relevant work placed risk assessments and consultation should take place in advance of any activity being undertaken. Further information is available at Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#).

### **Toilets, Changing and Locker Rooms**

56. 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.
57. 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](#).
58. Operators may open public toilets if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).

### **Equipment Provision and Use**

59. Operators should consider, where possible, removal of equipment including benches, scoreboards, tables and any other objects that are not essential for participation purposes.
60. 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.
61. 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.
62. Where shared equipment is necessary for an activity appropriate hygiene measures must be put in place before, during and after use.
63. Where balls are used in sports areas, courts and pitches, risk assessments should 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.

### **Bookings and Payment**

64. Encourage people to make bookings online. However, be aware that a proportion of disabled people, people from low-income households and older adults do not have access to the internet. Ensure you have alternative measures in place. For example, telephone bookings.
65. Where local area protection levels apply consider introducing buffer periods between sessions to stagger start times so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
66. Where possible use online or contactless payment options and avoid handling cash. Where people do not have bank accounts it is okay to accept cash payments.

## **Communication with Members / Customers**

67. Operators should communicate clearly and regularly with members and participants setting out what they are doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after visits to the venue/activity.
68. Make them aware in advance of measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
69. Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.
70. Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed, up to date and in accessible formats.
71. When communicating with members and participants, consider how you will reach people who do not have access to the internet. When publishing information on websites, consider how to make it accessible when accessed via a mobile phone or tablet rather than a PC or a laptop.
72. Special attention should also be given to how you communicate physical distancing rules, to young people, where they apply.

## **Safeguarding**

73. All adults involved in coaching / actively engaging with children or vulnerable adults in an organised environment should have undertaken appropriate SGB safeguarding training.
74. Operators should ensure appropriate ratios of coach/adult to child/vulnerable adult as per SGB guidance and follow all related safeguarding advice.
75. Health, safety, and welfare policies should always be risk assessed and implemented.
76. Operators should also refer to the additional considerations developed by Children 1<sup>st</sup>: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

## **Equality & Inclusion**

77. 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 inequalities due to Covid-19:
  - Older people
  - Disabled people
  - Ethnic minorities
  - Women
  - People from deprived communities

78. 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.
79. The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include:
- 79.1 **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 must think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people about sport and physical activity.
- 79.2 **Accessibility** – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and leisure centers 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.
- 79.3 **Anxiety, mental health, and wellbeing** – The pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health for people. 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.
- 79.4 **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.

## Health, Safety & Hygiene

80. As restrictions are eased, the emphasis will continue to be on personal responsibility, good practice, and informed judgement. The latest available information can be accessed on the Scottish Government website at [Coronavirus in Scotland](#).
- 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
81. Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained.

82. Ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.
83. 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.
84. Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these.
85. 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.
86. 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.
87. 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.

## Face Coverings

88. Sports facility operators should follow Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): face coverings guidance](#) and ensure participants and visitors wear face coverings, if indoor, before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility. For example: reception, locker rooms and storage areas. This is a mandatory requirement except where an exemption applies or where there is a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering e.g., if you have a health condition or are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia, or a learning disability.
89. Be aware that face coverings discriminate against some deaf people who need to look at lips to help communicate. Staff in facilities should be made aware that it is okay to remove their face coverings to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading and facial expressions.
90. Face coverings may not be required when using hospitality services such as café's, bars, and restaurants. For further information refer to Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).
91. The [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): public use of face coverings](#) provides guidance on general use and exemptions.

Links to supporting guidance:

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

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

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

## Test and Protect

92. [Test and Protect](#) is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy. Containing outbreaks early is crucial to reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect the NHS and save lives, and avoid the reintroduction of social and economic lockdown. This will support the country to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life.
93. 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.
94. Operators should where possible collect the name, contact number, date of visit, time of arrival, and the departure time of all those attending facilities or activities. Where attending as a small household group, the contact details for one member – a 'lead member' – will be sufficient.
95. Operators should store information for 21 days and share it when requested to do so by public health officers.

## Registration with the Information Commissioner's Office

96. In order to gather and store customer information securely, operators may need to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This will be the case if you are using an electronic system to gather and store data.
97. If you are unsure whether you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113 or visit [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

## Protect Scotland App

98. NHS Scotland has launched a free mobile app designed to help with contact tracing efforts and slow the spread of COVID-19. The app will alert users if they have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus.
99. Supported by a dedicated Protect Scotland website, the app is an extra tool complementing existing person-to-person contact tracing which remains the main component of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect system.
100. Further information on the Protect Scotland app is available at [www.protect.scot](http://www.protect.scot).

What should someone do if they have coronavirus symptoms?

101. 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.

## **Local Outbreaks or Clusters of Coronavirus Cases**

102. Where a local outbreak has been reported, sports facility operators and deliverers within this locality should review Scottish Government local protection 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.

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## APPENDIX 1: 'Beyond Level 0' Guidance

### Introduction

1. 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'.
2. Most legal restrictions relating to Covid-19 were lifted on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 when Scotland moved to 'Beyond Level 0'. This included restrictions on physical distancing and the size of social gatherings. Additionally, no businesses must legally remain closed due to Covid-19.
3. However, as of 17<sup>th</sup> 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.
4. In determining these measures, consideration must be given to the Scottish Government guidance available at [Scottish Government: Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#).
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Scottish Government may update or change Levels and restrictions at any time, including local areas subject to them. Therefore, COVID officers should regularly check the [Coronavirus in Scotland](#) section of the Scottish Government website for updates.

## Travel Restrictions

9. '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 [Travel Guidance](#) within the Return to Sport document for further information on where restrictions will apply should a local area move into protection levels.
10. 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

11. High levels of personal hygiene and respiratory etiquette will remain essential as we move Beyond Level 0.
12. 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

13. 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.
14. Operators should continue to maintain customer records and follow applicable guidance available in the [Test & Protect](#) section of Return to Sport guidance.

## Competition & Events

15. 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.
16. 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

17. [Professional football and rugby stadium operators should follow Scottish Government's Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Stadium Sector Guidance for Professional Football and Rugby.](#)
18. 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.
19. 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**

20. 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**

21. Retail units operated by sports facility operators should follow Scottish Government's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Safer Businesses and Workplaces](#) guidance.

## APPENDIX 2: Level 4 Guidance

### Introduction

1. The guidance within this appendix is applicable to sport and physical activity facilities and activities where Scottish Government have identified the requirement for **Level 4** restrictions to be applied.
2. This guidance is not applicable to professional or performance sports activity which is approved through the [Resumption of Performance Sport](#) process by Scottish Government or **sportscotland**.
3. The information outlined below should be used in conjunction with, and where appropriate supersede, the '[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 within Level 4 areas.
4. 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.
5. Where a local outbreak has been reported, sports facility operators and deliverers should review 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.
6. Scottish Government may reintroduce, update, or change protection Levels and restrictions at any time, including the local areas subject to them. Therefore, COVID officers should regularly check the [Coronavirus in Scotland](#) section of the Scottish Government website for updates.

### Travel Restrictions in Level 4 areas

7. Those living in a Level 4 local authority area can travel out with that area to undertake informal outdoor exercise and recreation including walking, cycling, golf or running if they abide by the rules on meeting other households.
8. Children and young people may travel to and from a Level 4 area, if for example, they belong to a club which is outside their own local government area.
  - 8.1 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.

- 8.2 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.
9. Adults living in a Level 4 local authority area may travel within, but not outwith, that area to take part in non-contact organised sport.
10. Travel exemptions are applicable for essential animal welfare reasons, such as exercising or feeding a horse or going to a vet.
11. When taking part in informal exercise or recreation participants should always follow relevant Scottish Government guidance available at the time.

### **Outdoor Sport & Leisure Activity**

12. Operators in Level 4 areas may continue to open outdoor sports areas, courts, pitches and facilities (with the exception of ski centres/resorts) if documented risk assessments are undertaken and all appropriate mitigating actions including the guidance herein is put in place to ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers. Please also refer to additional guidance produced by **sportscotland** at: [Keeping Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#).
13. Restrictions on participants taking part in outdoor organised sport, exercise and recreation in Level 4 is as follows.
14. Children (aged up to 11 years)
  - 14.1 Children can take part in outdoor contact and non-contact organised sport including training, group exercise and competition within their usual club or facility environment. Inter club competition should not take place.
  - 14.2 An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' can consist of up to 30 children, coaches, and officials at any one time.
15. Young People (aged 12-17 years)
  - 15.1 Young people can take part in outdoor non-contact organised sport and physical activity including training, group exercise and competition within their usual club or facility environment. Inter club competition should not take place.
  - 15.2 An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' can consist of up to 15 young people, coaches, and officials at any one time.
16. Adults (aged 18 years or over)
  - 16.1 Adults can take part in outdoor non-contact organised sport including training, group exercise, aerobics, fitness classes and competition within their normal club or facility environment.
  - 16.2 An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' for adults can consist of up to 15 people, including coaches, and officials at any one time. Physical distancing should always be maintained.

17. Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.

### **Indoor Sport & Leisure Facilities**

18. Indoor sport and leisure facilities including club houses, changing rooms and activity areas should remain closed at Level 4. Exemptions are noted below.
19. Public Toilets
  - 19.1 Operators may open indoor toilets for public use if they follow Scottish Government [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).
20. Storage Areas & Lockers
  - 20.1 One off access to storage areas and locker rooms is permitted to retrieve personal equipment which is essential for an activity to be undertaken. Personal equipment should not be returned to these areas.
  - 20.2 Where equipment cannot reasonably be taken home and is stored on site, such as kayaks, boats etc, access to retrieve and return such equipment to storage areas is allowed if appropriate risk assessments are undertaken.
  - 20.3 Risk assessments should include mitigating actions to reduce the risk of virus transmission such as individual access, booking slots and cleaning/hygiene protocols.
21. Access to outdoor facilities

Where external access to outdoor sports facilities is not possible, access through an indoor area can be provided if suitable risk assessments and safety measures are put in place. These should include restricting access to one person at a time, ideally with a one-way system in operation, and no contact with hard surfaces such as door handles. Persons moving through the area should not stop or congregate at any time.

### **Hospitality**

22. Additional restrictions may be in place for hospitality businesses within Level 4 areas including bar and café closures. Sports facility operators providing catering, bar or takeaway services should refer to Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).

### **Retail**

23. Retail units operated by sports facility operators in Level 4 areas should follow Scottish Government [Retail Sector Guidance](#).

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