



## British Crown Green Update December 2020 Covid Tier guidance

This guidance sets out information for the public and sport providers on how to participate in grassroots sport and physical activity during COVID-19 restrictions. The local restriction tiers which apply to areas across England will determine which restrictions apply and how you can safely participate. You should check [which tier applies to your local area](#) and follow the appropriate measures.

In this guidance, 'organised sport' refers to sport which is formally organised by a national governing body, club, public body, qualified instructor, company or charity, and which follows the sport's national governing body's guidance.

### **Participation in sport and physical activity: key points**

#### **Organised outdoor sport is exempt from legal gathering limits across all levels, but modifications to high-risk activities should be made in tier 3 areas**

This means that organised outdoor team sport and outdoor exercise classes, as well as outdoor licensed physical activity, can happen with any number of participants, as long as undertaken in line with published COVID-secure guidance. This includes personal training and sport coaching. Participants should adhere to social distancing when not actively participating (e.g. during breaks in play, or when awaiting substitutions).

#### **Social interaction**

Social interaction before and after playing any sport should be extremely limited and only take place in line with legal gathering limits and other relevant restrictions. You should check the rules which apply to your local area.

**Observing the rules during play but then disregarding them after (e.g. by socialising in breach of the wider restrictions) is unlawful, irresponsible and jeopardizes both public health and the case for safe sport to continue.**

Failure to follow or observe the rules could incur club in sanctions from play.



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**In tier 3 areas:** sports which involve close contact between participants, such as team sports, can continue with matches as normal, but teams should minimise physical contact between participants during training sessions. National governing bodies of the relevant sports will set out guidance on the modifications needed to allow training and matches in tier 3 areas.

**Informal or self-organised sport and physical activity is not exempt and must adhere to legal gathering limits - both indoors and outdoors.**

**In tier 3 areas:** this can only take place within households or support bubbles indoors and outdoors (except in some public outdoor places such as parks and sports facilities, where people can meet in groups of up to 6).

### **Organised sport participation events**

Organised sport participation events such as races and organised walks can take place outdoors but must adhere to legal gathering limits and follow COVID-secure guidance

**In tier 3 areas:** organised sport participation events can take place outdoors, but only if participants do not mix with people from outside their household or support bubble (except in some public outdoor places, including outdoor sports grounds and facilities, where people can meet in groups of up to 6).

**Spectators** Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events.

**In tier 3 areas:** people cannot mix with others from outside their household or support bubble indoors. Outdoors, people cannot mix with others from outside their household or support bubble in a private garden or most public outdoor venues. However people can meet in groups of up to 6 in public outdoor spaces, including outdoor sport grounds and facilities.



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**In tier 2 areas:** this can take place in groups of up to 6 people (or larger groups from the same household or support bubble) outdoors, or within households or support bubbles indoors.

### **Organised sport participation events**

Organised sport participation events such as races and organised walks can take place outdoors but must adhere to legal gathering limits and follow COVID-secure guidance

#### **What this means**

**In tier 1 and 2 areas:** organised sport participation events can take place outdoors, but participants must not gather or participate in groups of more than 6 people (unless from the same household or support bubble), and should follow social distancing guidelines.

### **Spectators**

Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events.

**In tier 2 areas:** people can gather in groups of up to 6 (or larger groups if they are from the same household or support bubble) outdoors. Indoors, people cannot mix with others from outside their household or support bubble.



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### Organised sport participation events

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#### What this means

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### Spectators

Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events.

**In tier 1 areas:** people can gather in groups of up to 6 (or larger groups if they are from the same household or support bubble) outdoors and indoors.



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### How to participate safely

#### Step 1 - Check for COVID-19 symptoms and health conditions

Before attending any sporting activities, all participants, officials, volunteers and spectators must self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste

If you have one or more of these symptoms you should not attend any sporting activity, and must follow [NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation](#).

People with health conditions that put them at increased risk should consider the risks of participating in group activities like sport and physical activity.

#### Step 2 - Check if your sport is safe to play, and if there are modifications

Before participating in any sporting activity, you should check whether your sport is safe to play. Every sport's national governing body should have published guidance on how to participate safely. You should ensure you are following the national governing body's latest guidance, and follow any measures put in place by the sport provider or event organiser, even where this means modifications to the game.

In addition to this, team sports and contact combat sports (such as boxing, wrestling and martial arts) will need to have their action plans approved before they can resume contact activity (advice for sports on how to do this is set out in the guidance for [safe provision of grassroots sport](#). The sports which have been approved will be listed at the bottom of that page. If you want to participate in a team sport or a contact combat sport, you should check they have received approval (the list is included in the [guidance](#). If they are not listed, you should not participate in team sports in numbers above the legal gathering limits, or contact within combat sports in any number, until they have been approved.

Sports in which people primarily compete as individuals (such as tennis or golf) are not listed as they do not need to submit their action plans for approval, but you should ensure you are following the sport's published guidance on how to participate safely.

#### Step 3 - Check if it is safe to travel

You should always follow best practice for travel, and aim to walk or cycle if possible. Where that is not possible, you can use public transport or drive, but should avoid travelling with someone from outside your household or support bubble unless you can practise social distancing. See the government's guidance on [safer travel](#) for passengers, and [car sharing](#), for further information.

There is additional guidance for tier 2 and tier 3 areas, which affects those living in the areas as well as those who wish to travel into the areas to take part in sporting activities.



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- **In tier 2 areas:** you should aim to reduce the number of journeys you make, where possible.
- **In tier 3 areas:** you are advised not to travel into or out of tier 3 areas, including for sport, unless this is necessary to enable individual exercise (or exercise for people from the same household or support bubble). Where this is necessary (for example to access a green space for a run or cycle), you should only travel a short distance and stay as local as possible. Travel is also permitted where it is necessary to enable sport for disabled people, sport for educational purposes, or supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, to take place, but should still be minimised and kept to short distances only.

### Exemptions

Sport for people with disabilities is exempt from legal gathering limits. This means that people with disabilities can take part in sport in any number (indoor and outdoor).

Sport for the purpose of education is also exempt. This means that school sport such as PE, and curriculum-related sport for students in further and higher education (e.g. a student studying a sport course being able to practice), are exempt from legal gathering limits. However, this does not cover extra-curricular sport (such as playing for a college team) so these activities can only take place within the guidance set out above.

All supervised activity for children (including outside school) is exempt from legal gathering limits, and can happen in any number. This includes organised team sports and all supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s. This includes young people who were 17 at the start of the academic year, even if they turn 18 during the remainder of that year. This applies to young people who were under 18 on 31 August 2020, even if they turn 18 during the remainder of the academic year.

### Spectators

Supporters, parents, and other spectators must adhere to legal gathering limits whilst attending events.

**It is important that spectators adhere to these limits; in addition to being legal requirements punishable by fines, those violating the measures are endangering public safety and undermining the case for safe sport to be allowed to take place.**

If spectators do not follow these legal requirements, the club or provider can ask them to leave or not to attend again. Where there are serious or consistent issues with spectators, the sport's national governing body may consider sanctions including suspending the



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relevant sport provider from running any leagues, matches, training sessions or other events or activities until this has been addressed.

There is an additional risk of infection where people are shouting or singing in close proximity to others (particularly indoors and when face-to face). Spectators should minimise shouting or raising their voices.

### **Match officials, medics and coaches**

Match officials, medics and coaches should observe the relevant guidance in the same way as participants. Where legal gathering limits apply, people participating in a work or volunteering capacity (such as match officials, medics and coaches) are exempt and therefore not included in the number of participants. However, they must remain socially distanced from players where possible during play. Should match officials not be able to remain socially distanced due to their role in the sport, the sport's national governing body or local provider should conduct a risk assessment to see if other mitigations may be necessary.

Match officials will be empowered to ensure that COVID-secure measures are adhered to, and to enforce this through appropriate sanctions set out by the sport's national governing body.

**Sport providers must ensure they follow their NGB's guidance and have the appropriate measures in place to offer their sport safely.** Each provider should undertake their own risk assessment, including ensuring that operators, organisers and volunteers are aware of modifications to game-play or activity structure. They should also write their own action plan to be distributed to all relevant personnel, including coaches and welfare officers.

### **NHS Test and Trace**

Continued opening up of the economy and public services is reliant on NHS Test and Trace being used to minimise transmission of the virus. In order to ensure that businesses and local services are able to remain open, organisations in designated sectors must:

- ask at least one member of every party of customers or visitors (up to 6 people) to provide their name and contact details
- keep a record of all staff working on their premises and shift times on a given day and their contact details
- keep these records of customers, visitors and staff for 21 days and provide data to NHS Test and Trace if requested
- display an official NHS QR code poster, so that customers and visitors can 'check in' using this option as an alternative to providing their contact details



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- adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation

These duties apply to (among others) clubs providing team sport activities, indoor sport and leisure centres, outdoor swimming pools and lidos, sports and massage therapists, services provided for social and recreational purposes in youth and community centres, and village halls.

### Organising sporting activities

When planning a sporting activity, you should ensure that:

1. Participants do not attend if they have any health conditions which would put them at increased risk.
2. All participants and attendees (including players, officials, organisers, volunteers and spectators) are aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the need to self-assess before attending every sporting activity.
3. Any participant or other attendee reporting symptoms does not attend and is directed to follow [NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation](#).
4. Participants are aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in sporting activity, based on the national governing body's guidance and risk assessment.
5. Participants are strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high-risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.
6. Participants continue to adhere to legal gathering limits before and after sporting activities, act responsibly and limit transmission risk wherever possible.
7. Participants are aware that they are choosing to take part in the modified version of the game, including any relevant COVID-19 measures, and should comply with these measures as a condition of participation.
8. You should also ensure you are adhering to important safety measures:
  - Ensure that spectators are following legal gathering limits and do not put the safety of participants at risk. Where it is anticipated that an activity will attract spectators, there should be a named person or persons with responsibility for ensuring adherence with these guidelines and ensuring the facility is COVID-secure. They should carry out and publish a risk assessment for the activity which limits the number of spectators and focuses on the need to maintain social distancing on arrival, for the duration of the activity, and on departure.
  - Ensure you are collecting information from participants, spectators and other attendees, which is detailed enough to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary (as set out in the NHS Test and Trace section above). You should check



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your NGB's guidance or see the [maintaining records guidance](#) for further information.

- Ensure that all sessions comply with your NGB's safeguarding policies and procedures, with particular consideration to children and young people, and vulnerable adults who may be less able to understand or maintain social distancing discipline.
- All clubs running activities for under-18s should consult the Department for Education's guidance on [protective measures for out-of-school settings](#), which sets out further practical steps providers of community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children should follow to minimise the risk of transmission for children attending their settings.

### Sanctions for non-compliance

Sporting activities are permitted despite wider restrictions because of the benefits of sport and physical activity for people's physical and mental wellbeing. If people act irresponsibly when participating in sport (including off the pitch, and when socialising before and after activity) they jeopardize public health and undermine the case for safe sport to take place.

National governing bodies should ensure that clubs / leagues / providers are running their activities safely, and should take action to address any issues, including putting in place additional measures or suspending players / teams / leagues / clubs which do not adhere to guidance.

**If there are serious or consistent concerns with a particular sport which the NGB cannot or does not address, the NGB's approval may be revoked so that the sport cannot take place.**

### Off-field activity

Sport providers should put in place measures to limit transmission risk from off-field activity, including:

- Limiting the time spent congregating at a venue before and after activity. This could involve having strict meeting times or staggering start times, and advising participants to arrive in kit and ready to warm-up.
- Minimising use of changing rooms and shower facilities. Changing rooms and shower facilities can be used, but participants must adhere to gathering limits while indoors, and maintain social distancing wherever possible. You should encourage participants to avoid or minimise use where possible (e.g. by arriving



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in kit and showering at home) and to minimise the time they spend in the changing area. Team talks/briefings and other gatherings should not take place in changing rooms under any circumstances. Access should be maintained for those with disabilities, and will be important for sports such as swimming, or outdoor sports in bad weather

- Ensuring that participants maintain social distancing throughout warm-ups and when not on the field of play (e.g. awaiting substitutions) and limit higher-risk activities like spitting or shouting (particularly when facing each other).
- Ensuring that participants adhere to legal gathering limits. Social interaction before and after playing any sport should only take place in separate and distinct groups consisting of up to 6 people (Tier 1) or limited to people from the same household or support bubble (Tiers 2 and 3). Exceptions may be made where safety and safeguarding measures require this, such as supporting participants with disabilities (though minimal time should be spent waiting or in changing rooms).
- Avoiding equipment-sharing where possible. Teams should limit the number of players handling the same ball during warm-ups, and ensure the balls are frequently sanitised.
- Advising participants to bring their own water bottles and ensure they are labelled or highly distinguishable. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared under any circumstances.
- Advising participants to take their kit home to wash it themselves, rather than have one person handling a large quantity of soiled materials. Where kit absolutely has to be shared or kept together (for example last minute stand-in players, shortage of kit, or an essential club function), each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately after.

### **On-field activity**

All sport providers must follow their national governing body's guidance on how to participate safely in their sport. This includes any modifications to game-play required (e.g. limits on numbers for indoor activity, reducing physical contact or face-to-face exposure). Providers should also put in place additional mitigations to reduce unnecessary contact, such as removing pre-game handshakes, face-to-face interaction, and scoring celebrations.

Providers should ensure that participants remain socially distanced during breaks in play with spaced areas for equipment and refreshment storage, including officials and substitutes. Coaching staff and substitutes, should, for example, be spread out and avoid sharing a dugout or bench if social distancing cannot be observed.