



Guidance for Tennis Venues, Coaches & Players in Scotland

COVID-19: RETURN TO PLAY

Phase 3 (Version 2) – Published 25 August 2020

Current Exercise Restrictions



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

PLAY SAFE GUIDELINES - RETURN TO PLAY

These guidelines have been developed for Scotland in partnership between the LTA and Tennis Scotland. The guidelines have been produced in line with the Scottish Government guidance on outdoor and indoor exercise for Phase 3, [which can be viewed here](#).

These guidelines are operational from Monday 24 August 2020, other than where a future date is specified. This follows the Scottish Government's confirmation of the route map from lockdown and the subsequent updates from the First Minister.

IMPORTANT: Where a local lockdown is in place alternative measures and guidelines may be in place, which may delay the relaxing of measure or re-impose previous ones – further information, including details of any areas affected, can be read on the [Scottish Government website here](#).

INTRODUCTION

We know how important it is for people to be active, and the particular role tennis can have in the physical and mental wellbeing of those that play it. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided.

Based on recent Scottish Government guidance and following the further easing of lockdown restrictions, Tennis Scotland & the LTA has developed an updated set of practical guidelines to follow so that tennis can be played in Scotland consistent with the route map moving out of lockdown, where the local environment allows.

These guidelines apply to both tennis and padel, and outline adaptations so that tennis activity can be enjoyed in a way that is in line with Scottish Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include measures to limit hand to shared surface contact and minimise unnecessary interactions with others.

We have indicated the key additions and updates to these guidelines with **[NEW]** and **[UPDATED]** on the following pages.

VENUES

Tennis venues across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. Making an assessment of whether a safe exercise environment can be provided depends on a range of factors, which apply differently at each venue. It is the responsibility of each tennis provider, coach and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment.

COACHES

[UPDATED] One on one and group coaching is permitted outdoors, and if physical distancing can be maintained it can be done indoors from 31 August 2020. Adult group coaching can take place for a maximum of 30 people at any one time. There is no limit on the number of sessions that a coach can deliver per day.

Children's group coaching, camps and squads for those aged 17 and under are permitted, in line with the [LTA's recommended coach:player ratios](#).

When participating in coaching, where possible avoid touching surfaces, sharing equipment or touching your mouth and face. Physical distancing is required before and after sessions for adults and 12-17 year olds.

PLAYERS

[UPDATED] Play may take place for adults in a group up to a maximum group of 30 people in total. Doubles play where partners are from different households is permitted (when playing doubles indoors from 31 August 2020, doubles partners should take mitigating actions to limit risks to the two metre rule being compromised).

Players should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines (staying at least 2m away from others), and practice public health advice for hygiene.

Children aged 11 and under do not need to comply with physical distancing from each other at any time (including both indoor and outdoor activity). Adults and children aged 12 and over do not need to physically distance during outdoors activity, but do before and after, and need to maintain physical distancing at all times indoors.

Please be aware that not all courts may be open, as venues will need to make an assessment based on their own individual circumstances as to whether they feel they can facilitate safe play at their venue. Where they chose to remain closed please respect this decision.

COMPETITIONS

Tennis competition activity can take place in Scotland in line with specific guidelines - guidance for officials and competition organisers around the delivery of this activity has been provided on pages 15-20 of this document.

Detailed guidelines for players, venues, coaches and officials/competition organisers are provided on the following pages.

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS PLAYERS

STAY UP TO DATE

- Scottish Government information around physical distancing is available [here](#) and should be read in full
- Be aware guidance can change and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of the guidelines for tennis players in Scotland on the LTA website and with Tennis Scotland

WHO CAN PLAY

- People who are shielding can now undertake outdoor exercise activities. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Staying safe outdoors](#)
- **[UPDATED]** People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for **10 days** and household members for 14 days as per NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility/activity (this includes anyone who should self-isolate after returning from an overseas country not on the Scottish Government's [exemption list](#))

BEFORE LEAVING HOME & AFTER YOU RETURN

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving home to go to the court (or use an alcohol gel if washing hands is not possible)

COURT BOOKINGS

- Where the facility allows, ensure you have booked a court in advance and make payment online
- **[UPDATED]** Prior to 31 August 2020, play should only take place on outdoor courts
- **[NEW]** From 31 August 2020, indoor courts and bubble courts will be able to be used
- Use your clubs bookings system, i.e. Clubspark. Alternatively the LTA's online booking platform has courts that can be booked in over 300 parks and clubs nationwide via www.lta.org.uk/rally

EQUIPMENT

- Take hand sanitizer with you
- Use your own equipment where possible. Equipment such as rackets can be shared, but where this happens ensure thorough cleaning before and after use. Players should not share items such as towels.
- Only take the minimum amount of equipment with you that you need to play
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including racquets and water bottles before and after use
- Bring a full water bottle, and do not share food or drink with others
- Ensure you take all your belongings with you at the end of the session and do not leave anything on court

TRAVELLING TO AND FROM THE COURT

- Avoid using public transport
- Players can travel outside of their local area to play tennis, with unlimited travel throughout Scotland now permitted
- Unlimited travel throughout the UK for professional coaches and players operating at a performance level as defined by Tennis Scotland is permitted
- Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be there
- Use alcohol gel after touching any court gates, fences, benches, etc, and avoid doing so where possible
- Allow others to leave before you enter the court - if you need to wait then do so away from the courts and clear of the gates
- Ensure you leave the court before the end of your allotted time so that it is empty for the next players
- **[UPDATED]** Arrive changed and ready to play. Shower at home, and do not use the venue's changing area - from the 31 August 2020, changing rooms and showering facilities may be made available for participants with disabilities or special needs

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- **[NEW]** You can exercise with people from other households – for adults this can now be in groups of up to 30 people
- Both singles play and doubles play is permitted, and players from different households can form a doubles pair
- For doubles indoors (from 31 August 2020), to ensure compliance with physical distancing is maintained, players should take mitigating actions to limit risks to the 2 metre rule being compromised. This could include agreeing in advance which player will take the shot if a ball travels to the centre of the court
- For padel, doubles play is also permitted on the same basis
- Coaching activity should be in line with the [LTA's recommended coach:player ratios](#). Coaches still need to physically distance from players at all times

MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- **[NEW]** When playing outdoors, adults and children aged over 12 must physically distance both before and after activity but do not have to during activity
- **[NEW]** When playing indoors, adults and children aged over 12 should maintain physical distancing at all times (including during play, when taking breaks and before and after play)
- **[UPDATED]** Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance any time (including before, during and after activity) either indoors or outdoors
- Do not make physical contact with other players (such as shaking hands or high five)
- Avoid chasing the ball down to another court if other players are using it
- For coached sessions, pay careful attention to the instructions of the coach
- Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#)

EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

- Players do not need to use their own marked tennis balls – however, if you choose to use shared balls then extra care must be taken to ensure you do not touch your face during play, and you should clean your hands before play and immediately after finishing (use alcohol gel if required)
- Players should still avoid using their hands to pick up tennis balls from other courts where possible - use your racquet/foot to return them
- Avoid using other equipment such as courtside benches, net handles or court sweepers where possible
- When playing padel, try to avoid touching the court walls
- Onsite toilet facilities can be opened, but players should be aware this may not be the case at all venues and may wish to check in advance

HYGIENE

- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve
- Avoid touching your face
- Hand hygiene is imperative - use alcohol gel to clean your hands after touching a shared surface. See [Health Protection Scotland's hand hygiene](#) information for further details
- **[NEW]** Participants and visitors should wear face coverings, if indoors, before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas. **This is a mandatory requirement**
- **[NEW]** Face coverings may not be required when using hospitality services such as café's, bars and restaurants.

SUPERVISION

- No spectating should take place. Where attendance of a parent/guardian (non-participant) is required, or a carer for a disabled player, it is permitted and is not counted as part of the group activity, but should be off court and limited to one per player where possible, with physical distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions

COMPETITIONS

- Some formats of competition will be able to resume before others, for example internal box leagues/ladders can be played as long as they adhere to the guidelines in place
- **[NEW]** Competitions or events are limited to maximum size limits of 30 people
- Competitions should only be undertaken where physical distancing and hygiene measures are in place

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS VENUES

VENUE MANAGEMENT

- Ensure your club committee oversees and maintains the implementation of measures. Venues are advised to take time to ensure they reopen safely, rather than rushing
- Clubs providing children's activity must have a named 'COVID Officer' who will complete documented risk assessments and ensure all appropriate mitigations are put in place by the club before any children's outdoor activity is undertaken
- All activity should be consistent with the Scottish Government guidance regarding health, travel, physical distancing and hygiene at all times
- Venues must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. A thorough risk assessment should be undertaken (or updated if one previously done), and appropriate measures put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected. A risk assessment template is available from the COVID-19 section of the venue [Resource Library](#) on the LTA website and these should be documented at all venues
- Clubs and venue operators must ensure that relevant workplace guidance 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.
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Scottish Government measures – Tennis Scotland remains in discussions with sportscotland and Government and so we recommend you check the official LTA position at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures venues put in place to enable tennis activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter movement/physical distancing is reintroduced in future or when the restrictions are further relaxed
- Venues are encouraged to use **sportscotland's** *getting your facility fit for sport* [toolkit](#)

TEST & PROTECT [NEW]

- [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
- Maintaining customer records
 - It is a **mandatory** requirement that sport facility operators collect the name, contact number, date of visit, time of arrival, and where possible 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.
 - Sports facility operators should store information for 21 days and share it when requested to do so by public health officers.
- A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#)
- Registration with the Information Commissioner's Office;

- In order to gather and store customer information securely, sports facility 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
- 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

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Outdoor court rental (singles or doubles), one to one and group coaching activity and competitions can all take place, subject to the relevant guidance being followed
- **[NEW]** Indoor tennis activity is permitted from 31 August 2020 (see below)
- **[NEW]** Any group activity for adults should comprise of no more than 30 people in total
- Larger group coaching may need to utilise multiple full-size courts in order to maintain physical distancing, depending on the local environment and risk assessment. Coaches can refer to the [LTA's recommended coach:player ratios](#) for more specific guidance

TENNIS FACILITIES

- Outdoor courts only should be open, with indoor courts and bubble courts remaining closed until 31 August 2020
- **[NEW]** From the 31 August 2020, indoor and bubble courts can be opened if Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented
- Ensure nets are maintained at the appropriate height to avoid players having to adjust them, and remove net winders
- If your courts require dragging (e.g. clay) or drying after rain, have a nominated person to do this or make disposable gloves and spray available for players to use
- **[NEW]** From 31 August 2020, player access to indoor areas is allowed, meaning entering a building to switch on floodlights is permitted
- Remove any other unnecessary equipment / items from courts (e.g. benches). Where this is not possible, appropriate cleaning measures, including provision of sanitiser and disposable gloves, should be put in place to reduce the risk of contamination
- Bins may be provided but should be regularly checked, cleaned/sanitised, emptied and disposed of using appropriate personal protective equipment

OTHER FACILITIES

CHANGING & TOILETS

- **[NEW]** Use of changing rooms and showering facilities should be avoided where possible, although from the 31 August 2020 they may be made available for participants with disabilities or special needs or where required after an activity
- Venues may open toilets for public use if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#)
- **[NEW]** For detailed facility guidance including a checklist that covers use of changing rooms, showers and toilets visit Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#)

- **[NEW]** From the 31 August 2020 access to indoor locker rooms and storage areas is permitted for the dropping off and collection of sports equipment or clothing. Venues should ensure mitigating actions are put in place to minimise the risk of virus transmission including physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning measures.

CATERING & RETAIL

- Clubhouses can open to provide both outdoor and indoor bar and restaurant services, providing they adhere to Scottish Government [Tourism and Hospitality Guidance](#)
- Use contactless or at least card payment to avoid handling cash
- Retail units operated by venues/sport clubs may reopen provided all specific Scottish Government guidance for retailers is in place and adhered to. Further information from the Scottish Government is available at [Retail Sector Guidance](#)

INDOOR ACCESS FOR STAFF

- Once guidance is implemented relating to the reopening of indoor (non-office) workplaces, venue staff and coaches can access indoor facilities, including for things such as for toilet/comfort breaks, storage of equipment and changing for work
- Any indoor access needs to be subject to appropriate measures being in place for cleaning, hygiene and physical distancing in accordance with Scottish Government guidance
- **[NEW]** Although gym and leisure facilities are able to reopen on 31 August, venues are encouraged to consider whether internal meetings and training must be completed in person, or whether these can be completed online or via telephone.
- **[NEW]** If it is essential that meetings and training takes place in person, [Scottish Government guidance for general workplaces](#) must be followed and a risk assessment should be completed
- **[NEW]** Where circumstances make it difficult to achieve 2m physical distancing you must ensure that there is an additional physical barrier in place (i.e. a screen, visor or face covering). For more details see sportscotland's guidance on [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)

INDOOR ACCESS FOR THE PUBLIC

- **[NEW]** Venues should ensure participants and visitors wear face coverings, if indoors, before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility e.g. reception, locker rooms and storage areas. **This is a mandatory requirement**
- **[NEW]** 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](#)

MAINTAINING PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- A checklist for physical distancing considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)
- Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Please refer to and read thoroughly Health Protection Scotland's [general guidance](#) and [cleaning guidance](#) for non-healthcare settings, as well as advice for [hand hygiene techniques](#)
- Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these
- Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use at entrance/exit to venue/courts where possible (Hand sanitizer stations can be sourced from the LTA Buying Group - see <https://www.ltabuyinggroup.co.uk> or speak to Tennis Scotland at info@tennisscotland.org for further options.
- Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. For instance, common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) should where possible be left open but if not possible, regular cleaning with disposable gloves should be undertaken. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.
- A checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)
- Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment maintained and is in line with hygiene and safety protocols reviewed as part of a risk assessment
- Ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training
- **[UPDATED]** 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
 - Presence of one parent/guardian being required at the activity for children/vulnerable adults
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- If someone who has played at your venue develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to follow the Scottish Government's 'test and protect' guidelines, which can be read on the nhsinform.scot website

COURT ACCESS

- Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between people, including in car parks and at entrances
- Court users should be advised to clean their hands with alcohol gel after touching shared surfaces such as gates. Where safe and appropriate, doors and court gates could be left open during playing hours
- Consider different entry and exit routes to the courts/venue where possible, and ensure this is clearly marked
- Consider marking two metre distances at appropriate points, such as the entry gates to courts

EQUIPMENT

- Players are advised to bring their own equipment - however, use of communal rackets is permitted subject to thorough cleaning measures between use
- Any coaching equipment used (e.g. cones) should be cleaned and wiped down afterwards

BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for courts and sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings NB Clubspark is free and can be downloaded at <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/in-your-area/tennis-scotland/club--venue-management/clubspark/>
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash
- Online bookings can be facilitated through ClubSpark, which is free for all LTA Registered Venues, and via a free online national booking platform - LTA Rally - which makes it easy for players to find, book and pay for courts from their mobile phone. Email rally@lta.org.uk for more information on how to sign up to ClubSpark or Rally contact info@tennisscotland.org

COMMUNICATION

- Communicate with your members/customers 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
- Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system
- Ensure signage on guidelines for playing tennis safely and promoting hygiene measures is clearly displayed (and ensure these remain up to date as restrictions change)
- Posters that can be used to aid communication will be available from the COVID-19 section of the [Resource Library](#)
- 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

SUPERVISION

- No spectating should take place. Where attendance of a parent/guardian (non-participant) is required, or a carer for a disabled player, it is permitted and is not counted as part of the group activity, but should be off court and limited to one per player where possible, with physical distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions

COMPETITIONS

- **[UPDATED]** Guidance in relation to competitions is now provided in the section at the end of this document for officials and competition organisers

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS COACHES

COACHING ACTIVITY

- All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, travel, physical distancing and hygiene at all times
- Coaches and coaching organisations must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. A thorough risk assessment should be undertaken (or updated if one previously done), and appropriate measures put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected - you are advised to liaise with your venue when doing this. A risk assessment template is available from the [COVID-19](#) section of the venue [Resource Library](#) on the LTA website
- Guidance for coaches, leaders, personal trainers, and instructors is available at [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#)
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Government measures – Tennis Scotland and the LTA remain in discussions with Holyrood and Westminster Governments respectively and so we recommend you check the official Tennis Scotland / LTA position at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures coaches put in place to enable tennis activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter movement/physical distancing is reintroduced in the future or when the restrictions are further relaxed

COACHING LIMITS [UPDATED]

- **[NEW]** From the 24 August 2020 coaches can take organised group training sessions with a maximum of 30 people involved at any one time.
- Larger group sessions indoors (from 31 August 2020) may need to utilise multiple full-size courts in order to maintain physical distancing, depending on the local environment and risk assessment – where space and number of courts available is limited, then based on your risk assessment only smaller group sessions may be possible. Coaches can refer to the [LTA's recommended coach:player ratios](#) for more specific guidance
- All activity is subject to appropriate physical distancing and hygiene measures being fully implemented and maintained to protect participants and coaches
- There is no limit on the number of sessions that a coach can deliver per day

COACHING CHILDREN

- Group coaching sessions can take place, including children's camps and squads
- Red court guidance: Up to six mini red courts may now be set up per full sized adult court for players aged 11 and under.
- Guardian (non-participant) or carer attendance is permitted and is not counted as part of the group activity, but should be off court and limited to one per child where possible, with physical distancing strictly observed while watching the session
- Coaches should ensure, where possible, that everyone involved avoids touching surfaces, sharing equipment and touching their mouth and face.
- Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#)

MAINTAINING PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- **[NEW]** When playing indoors (from 31 August 2020), physical distancing between players aged 12 and over from different households, and between the coach and players should be maintained at all times. For outdoors, physical distancing should be maintained before and after the activity
- **[UPDATED]** Children aged 11 and under are not required to physically distance from each other at any time, indoors or outdoors
- Coaches should ensure this is emphasised to participants at the start of each session, and that they are clear on how they should maintain physical distancing for each drill before starting it
- Coaches should encourage players to avoid running down balls within an exercise if it could compromise the 2m rule

INDOOR ACCESS FOR COACHES

- Coaches can access indoor facilities, including for things such as for toilet/comfort breaks, storage of equipment and changing for work
- Any indoor access needs to be subject to appropriate measures being in place for cleaning, hygiene and physical distancing in accordance with Scottish Government guidance

EQUIPMENT

- Coaches do not now need to use new or fresh tennis balls for each lesson
- It is still advised that where possible the coach should be the only person to touch the tennis balls and players use their feet/racket to return them
- Where new or fresh balls aren't used, and where players need to handle tennis balls (e.g. serving toss, young children who need to self-feed using their hands) then extra care must be taken to ensure the coach and players do not touch your faces during play, and you should all clean your hands before, during and immediately after finishing the session (use alcohol gel if required)
- Players should bring their own equipment where possible – it is advised not to allow racket sharing but use of communal rackets can be done subject to thorough cleaning processes between uses
- Any coaching equipment used (e.g. cones) should be cleaned and wiped down afterwards
- Ensure all equipment is removed from the court at the end of the session

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- Hand hygiene is imperative - use alcohol gel to clean your hands after touching a shared surface. See [Health Protection Scotland's hand hygiene](#) information for further details
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve
- Avoid touching your face
- If a player you have coached develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to follow the Scottish Government's 'test and protect' guidelines, which can be read on the [nhsinform.scot](#) website



BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for coaching sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash
- Allow time for players to leave before the next players arrive

COMMUNICATION & VENUE LIAISON

- Coaches should liaise with the venue to ensure an agreed approach to activity that is feasible to deliver safely, and explore how coaches can be supported to deliver sessions
- Communicate with your customers clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place for your sessions, and guidelines they should follow when attending

GUIDANCE FOR OFFICIALS AND COMPETITION ORGANISERS

INTRODUCTION

We know Officials & Competition Organisers will be keen to provide competitive opportunities for players in Scotland as soon as it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided, with tennis a good example of an activity that can be undertaken in a way compliant with physical distancing restrictions.

Based on our continued discussions with Government and sportscotland, and following the further easing of restrictions, Tennis Scotland and the LTA have developed this set of practical guidelines for Officials and Competition Organisers to follow so that tennis competitions can be played in Scotland, where the local environment allows.

These guidelines outline adaptations and considerations so that tennis competition can be enjoyed in a way that is in line with Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include measures to maintain hygiene and minimise unnecessary interactions with others. **Tennis competitions which do not follow these Scottish Government-approved guidelines should not take place in Scotland at this time.**

Tennis venues across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. Making an assessment of whether a safe competition environment can be provided depends on a range of factors, which apply differently at each venue. It is the responsibility of each official & competition organiser and tennis facility to make that assessment based on their local environment.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the guidelines for venues, coaches and players, and all elements of the guidelines should be considered to ensure activity can be delivered safely.

Should you have any questions, [please refer to the FAQs on the LTA website](#).

IMPORTANT: Where a local lockdown is in place alternative measures and guidelines may be in place – officials and competition organisers in these areas are advised to check our main coronavirus information page at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus and follow the appropriate advice for the local area.

SECTION 1: PREPARATION & FACILITIES

VENUE MANAGEMENT

- Ensure your club committee / management oversees and maintains the implementation of measures. Competition organisers should take time to ensure they resume competition safely, rather than rushing
- All activity should be consistent with the Scottish Government guidance regarding health, travel, physical distancing and hygiene at all times
- All those providing competitions must abide by this guidance and have a named 'Covid Officer' who will complete documented risk assessments and ensure all appropriate mitigations are put in place before any outdoor competition or event is undertaken. A risk assessment template is available from the COVID-19 section of the venue [Resource Library](#) on the LTA website
- Organisers must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission, and ensure appropriate measures are put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected.
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Government measures – Tennis Scotland remains in discussions with Government and so we recommend you check the official position at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures put in place to enable tennis activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter restrictions are reintroduced in the future, or when the restrictions are further relaxed

FACILITIES

- Prior to 31 August 2020, outdoor courts only should be used – indoor or bubble courts must not be used
- **[NEW]** From the 31 August 2020, indoor and bubble courts can be used if Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented
- Ensure nets are maintained at the appropriate height to avoid players having to adjust them, and remove net winders
- If your courts require dragging (e.g. clay) or drying after rain, venues are advised to have a nominated person to do this or make disposable gloves & spray available for players to use
- Remove any other unnecessary equipment and items from courts and ensure appropriate cleaning measures are in place items that remain in place
- **[UPDATED]** Changing facilities should not be used, with participants asked to arrive ready to play and to shower at home (although indoor facilities can reopen from the 31 August 2020 use of changing rooms should still be avoided where possible)

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Physical distancing in line with Scottish Government guidelines must be in place for the competition, including before and after a competition takes place, with participants and support staff asked to immediately vacate the courts and venue after they have completed the competition
- Travel to and from competition must not mix households i.e. no car sharing
- Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between people in all areas, including in car parks and at entrances

- Consider marking two metre distances at appropriate points, such as the entry gates to courts, referee desk and areas for the parents
- Competition risk assessments should consider mitigating actions to limit the risk of participants encroaching within 2m of each other before and after the activity. For instance, competition organisers may consider, where appropriate, different formats of competition or staggered starts.
- Where an employee is involved in running the competition, relevant work placed risk assessments and consultation should take place in advance of any activity being undertaken. See the Businesses, workplaces and self - employed people section at [Scottish Govt: Covid-19](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained
- **[NEW]** Ensure that first aid equipment has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.
- **[UPDATED]** 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 designated 'Covid Officer' should consider processes for managing this as part of the risk assessment. This could include but not be limited to;
 - Provision of suitable PPE
 - Training of coaches/supervising adults
 - Presence of one parent/guardian being required at the activity for children/vulnerable adults
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- Health, safety & hygiene measures for all activity should be in line with guidance for venues provided in this document
- Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use at entrance/exit to venue/courts and buildings where possible (Hand sanitizer stations can be sourced from the LTA Buying Group - see <https://www.ltabuyinggroup.co.uk>)
- Clean all common touch point surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc.) regularly, wearing disposable gloves - attendees should be advised to clean their hands with hand sanitiser after touching shared surfaces such as gates.
- Where safe and appropriate, doors and court gates could be left open during the competition

ENTRIES

- Operate online entry for all competitions including recreational competitions to ensure you can manage competition size, and also make it easy to record attendee details
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash
- Online bookings can be facilitated through Online Tournament Entry or ClubSpark Events Module (Recreational Competitions only)

SECTION 2: COMPETITION ACTIVITY

PRE-ATTENDANCE SYMPTOM CHECK

- Anyone attending a competition in any capacity should undergo a pre-attendance self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms. No-one should leave home to participate in tennis if they, or someone they live with, has symptoms of COVID -19, currently recognised as any of:
 - A high temperature
 - A new, continuous cough
 - A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste
- If someone that has been involved in a competition develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to the 'Test & Protect' section on the nhsinform.scot website
- Officials and competition organisers should keep a temporary record of all those on site for the competition for 21 days, in a way that is manageable, and assist Test & Protect with requests for that data if needed

COMPETITION ACTIVITY

- LTA and Tennis Scotland Local Tennis Leagues and Youth Box Leagues plus internal singles and doubles box leagues/ladders can be played in line with the guidelines
- All LTA and Tennis Scotland staged and approved competitions (grade 1 to 5) up to Monday 31 August 2020 have been cancelled
- LTA and Tennis Scotland approved competitions (Grade 6) such as match plays can now restart subject to being in accordance with these guidelines
- Matches between Clubs/Counties, Team Challenge, Quorn Family Tennis Cup and Internal Club Competition can now restart subject to being in accordance with these guidelines
- We aim to restart the LTA Disability Competition Calendar from September 2020 onwards, but one day events / match plays for players with a disability can now restart subject to being in accordance with these guidelines

COMPETITION SIZE

- **[NEW]** Adult competitions should involve a maximum of 30 people
- There is no set restriction on the size of junior competition. However, competition organisers should still seek to reduce risk by minimising the numbers of children taking part in competition where possible
- The focus should be on delivering the competition with as few participants as possible in attendance at any given time, whilst still allowing the activity to run effectively.
- Any individual groups should not interact with anyone outside of the group they are attending the venue with (e.g. players on another court)
- All groups are to be self-sufficient i.e. an official or competition organiser should not oversee two separate competitions at a time
- You could organise a competition in the morning and then one for a different group in the afternoon, however you should ensure there is a suitable time gap between the competitions so that the two groups do not meet

SCHEDULING ADVICE FOR ONE DAY EVENTS/MATCHPLAYS

- To minimise waiting time for players on site, a competition should ideally be organised so that the schedule is 1 round on, 1 round off
- Consider only running 1 or 2 events per day based on the number of courts available
- Draw formats could be match play draws, round robins, compass draws or knock out with consolations
- Carefully plan the schedule so you know how many people will be at your competition at any time
- We suggest either Two Sets + MTB or Two FAST4 sets + MTB as the scoring format
- Consider the other needs of the club members and venue coaches – shorter days mean members and coaches can use the courts after matches have been completed or the venue may want to only provide so many courts leaving some for members or coaches
- Where club v club competitions take place, interactions could be kept to a minimum by participants just attending for their match and then leaving

MAINTAINING PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- **[NEW]** Adults and children aged 12 and over no longer have to follow physical distancing guidelines while undertaking tennis activity outdoors (but do need to before and after any activity, and also during indoor activity)
- Children aged 11 and under do not need to physically distance at any time
- Coaches, officials and others involved in the running of the competition should physically distance at all times
- Attendees should be advised to limit their interactions with anyone outside of the competition they are attending the venue for (e.g. players on other courts)
- Encourage players not to congregate on/around the court before & after play
- There should be no skin to skin contact for players. Racket taps are allowed but shaking hands or elbow alternatives are not permitted
- No formal presentation ceremonies should take place during or after an event and the focus should be on reducing numbers in attendance at any one time

SUPERVISION & SPECTATING

- No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult
- Parents/guardians who are supervising their children should be off court and abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance by staying at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity
- Consider marking out specific boxes/areas for this purpose
- Clubhouses can be opened to provide indoor bar and restaurant services, providing they adhere to Scottish Government [Tourism and Hospitality Guidance](#)

RAIN DELAYS

- In the event of rain, attendees should use own umbrella or if they drove, return to their own vehicle, to maintain physical distancing and avoid congregating under one shelter
- In the event of an extended delay, officials and competition organisers are encouraged to make an early decision with regards to cancelling the competition to avoid attendees waiting around for a prolonged period

EQUIPMENT

- Players are advised to bring and use their own equipment – where any equipment is shared it should be subject to thorough cleaning measures between use
- Any equipment used (e.g. mini tennis nets, orange lines, scoreboards) should be cleaned and wiped down afterwards
- New or fresh tennis balls are not needed for each match, but extra care must be taken to ensure the players do not touch their faces during play, and anyone involved in the match should all clean their hands before the match and immediately after finishing (use alcohol gel if required)

INCLUSION

- Although activity levels were at a record high prior to COVID-19, participation of disabled people in sport has been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus outbreak – the staging of inclusive and disability-specific competitions is therefore particularly encouraged
- Competition organisers and officials are encouraged to contact Tennis Scotland to assist the reopening of activity in a welcoming and accessible way

COMMUNICATION

- Communicate with your players/parents clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your competition, and guidelines they are asked to follow
- Make participants aware that undertaking any activity, including tennis, has the potential for increased risk of transmission of COVID-19, and advise attendees to read the [Scottish Government's FACTS advice](#) to stay safe and protect others
- Ensure a fact sheet is provided and/or ensure your emails highlight all guidance to players/parents
- Encourage attendees to bring their own blanket/chairs/umbrella/raincoat/hand sanitiser
- Ensure signage on guidelines for maintaining physical distancing and promoting hygiene measures is clearly displayed (and ensure these remain up to date as restrictions change)
- Player/parent briefings should be held outdoors on a tennis court where social distancing can be observed or in a large open space. This should not be held indoors
- Posters that can be used to aid communication will be available from the COVID-19 section of the LTA's [Resource Library](#)