

## COVID Guidelines and Advice

### 1. Preparation for the Return of Outdoor Competitive Grassroots Football

A return to competitive football can only happen once clubs and facility providers have completed the necessary risk assessments and comprehensive plans are in place. These assessments do not need to be submitted to the league or County F.A. for approval

Documents to support this process are:-

[COVID-19 GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL](#) (issued 18th July 2020)

[COVID- 19 GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING FOOTBALL ACTIVITY for providers of outdoor football facilities, including clubs](#) (issued 18 July 2020)

[COVID-19 SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE](#) (issued 18 July 2020) **This includes a blank Risk Assessment form**

[RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL - SUMMARY](#)

[COVID-19 GUIDANCE ON RE-STARTING OUTDOOR COMPETITIVE GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL](#)

All these documents can be found on the F.A. website [TheFA.com](http://TheFA.com)

As a League we have compiled the following summary of practical arrangements required to assist clubs in ensuring games within DYFL can re-commence on 5th/6th September with both teams satisfied that all necessary precautions are in place. Please note this is goodwill advice and the documents referred to above remain the definitive advice to clubs and teams.

#### 1. Preparing For League Football

1.1 All clubs must identify a Covid-19 officer who will be responsible for developing a Covid- 19 plan and risk assessment prior to the restart of any activity. The Covid-19 officer should continually monitor how compliance is being observed within the club.

The Covid-19 officer should consider establishing a Covid-19 group to be responsible for producing and implementing the Covid-19 risk assessment and to oversee the safe return to play.

The Covid-19 officer at each club will be responsible for communicating clearly all relevant guidance to its players, coaches and volunteers.

Each Team should have a member of the Covid-19 Group who should be in a position to relay and apply COVID arrangements at matches.

1.2. Where clubs do not own or control their home match venues they should liaise with the pitch provider who is required to have produced a risk assessment within the Guidance for Providers of Outdoor Football Facilities issued on 12th June.

1.3. The League must have signed confirmation that the club has a COVID Risk Assessment and COVID Officer appointed and agrees to adhere to the COVID FA Guidelines for returning to Football.

1.4 Risk Assessments must be made available to opposing teams where requested, and Clubs with their own websites are advised to post copies of the assessments on those sites for ease of access for club members and opposition teams.

## 2. Pre-Matchday:

- 2.1 At the time of confirming match details the respective teams should exchange information to confirm appropriate COVID arrangements will be in place, including access to risk assessments when requested e.g. on club websites as above.

## 3. Match-Day:

- 3.1 All teams must adhere to the COVID FA Guidelines sent to every club.
- 3.2 Match balls/goal posts should be cleaned in front of both teams prior to kick-off.
- 3.3 Team sheets should be available for reference by the opposing team manager prior to a game (they could be emailed the night before). A4 Picture Sheet should be exchanged but not retained by the other manager, to check the players are correctly registered. It is suggested the sheet could be laminated or placed in a plastic wallet to enable easy cleaning.
- 3.4 DYFL games should have hygiene breaks midway through each half. During these breaks and at half time the match balls/goal posts should be cleaned again. Hygiene break arrangements should be confirmed with the match referee before the game.
- 3.5 Players and officials should sanitise hands before and after a game as well as scheduled breaks throughout a game or warm-up session.
- 3.6 Ball handling should be kept to a minimum with most contact via a boot and the ball disinfected in breaks of play
- 3.7 Equipment should not be shared, and goalkeepers should ensure they disinfect their gloves regularly in breaks in matches and thoroughly afterwards. Where possible, coaches should avoid handling equipment being used by players.
- 3.8 Exchanging Assistant Referee flags is to be avoided. Each team should supply its own flag, and should it be necessary to change official the flag should either be cleaned, or an alternative bright coloured item used e.g. training bib.
- 3.9 Youth football coaches are encouraged to limit persistent close proximity of participants during match play.
- 3.10 For minor football related injuries during play it is suggested any treatment could be applied by the parent under the guidance of the team's qualified First-aider.
- 3.11 Goal celebrations should be avoided.
- 3.12 Coaches, Substitutes and Spectators from each team should be together on one side of the pitch with the opposition group on the other side and in small bubbles (max 6). No-one should be behind the goals. This temporarily over-rides Charter Standard guidance that all spectators should be on one side and all players and coaches on the other.
- 3.13 Each team must keep a Track & Trace attendance sheet of every person who attended the match and their contact details. This must be kept for 21 days.
- 3.14 Registered Referees appointed to a game by DYFL have received their own guidance on match arrangements. These include arriving at a game wearing a facemask; not engaging in the exchange of documentation; encouraging speedy re-starts in play at free-kicks and corners; and requesting where possible cashless payment after a game i.e. BACS or similar.

**Disclaimer:** This guidance is for general information only and does not constitute or replace legal advice, or any Government or PHE advice; nor does it provide any specific commentary or advice on health-related issues.

While efforts have been taken to ensure the accuracy of this information at the time of publication, the reader is reminded to check the Government website to obtain the most up-to-date information regarding social distancing and any other Government measures, and the Football Association website for football specific guidelines.