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# GUIDANCE ON THE RESTARTING OF COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL

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Final Version

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## INTRODUCTION

**Important: If you, your child or any other member of your household are showing symptoms of the virus or have been in contact with someone displaying symptoms within the last two weeks, then you should stay at home until an NHS practitioner advises you that you no longer need to remain in isolation.**

The restarting of competitive football at Ruislip Rangers is being done with careful consideration for everyone's safety, especially vulnerable groups, children and their families.

The Club have undertaken a comprehensive Risk Assessment which has the necessary approval from Hillingdon Council. We have based our safety measures on The FA's and the Government's guidance.

### Vulnerable groups

Anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the Government's guidance, only returning to football when it is right for them to do so.

A recent Public Health England (PHE) report published has highlighted a greater risk from Covid-19 to people from BAME communities. As the current impact of Covid-19 on members of these communities is not yet fully understood, there may be increased concerns and levels of anxiety from within these communities.

## SUMMARY OF THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS

### Before football training and matches

- Everyone should self-assess for Covid-19 symptoms before every training session or match. If you are symptomatic or living in a household with possible or actual Covid-19 infection you must not participate or attend. You should stay at home and follow the latest Government guidance.
- The Club is required to follow the current NHS Test and Trace protocols. This includes keeping an Attendance Register for training and matches.
- Sports and personal hygiene measures need to be carried out by players, officials, coaches and parents. This includes the use of hand sanitisers.
- The sharing of kit and equipment should be avoided where possible. But where equipment is shared, it must be cleaned before use by another person.
- Goal posts and corner poles should be wiped down before matches, after matches and at half time.
- Government guidance for travel must be followed, including minimising the use of public transport.
- Players should arrive changed and ready to take part.
- Meet-up times will be adjusted to avoid time spent congregating at a venue.
- The use of clubhouses, hospitality facilities, changing rooms and toilets must adhere to Government guidance.
- Anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the Government's guidance. They should only return to football when it's right for them to do so.

## During training and matches

- Competitive training can take place outdoors in groups of no more than 30 (including coaches).
- Competitive matches are allowed with social distancing in place before and afterwards and during any breaks in play.
- The sharing of kit and equipment should be avoided.
- Participants should bring their own drinks or refreshments in named containers.
- When the ball goes out of play, it should only be retrieved by participants in the game. It should be retrieved using the feet rather than the hands where possible.
- The FA Covid-19 Code of Behaviour should be followed. This can be found as an appendix to this document.
- Participants must not spit and should avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other.
- Modifications have been made to specific situations, such as set plays and goal celebrations. For example, players should take free kicks and corners as quickly as possible in order to minimize the amount of time that players spend marking each other.
- Coaches should do their best to keep down the instances of players being in close proximity during match play and training.
- Injuries can be treated and this should be done using rigorous hygiene procedures.
- Spectator groups should be limited to six people per group. The groups should be distanced from each other in line with Government guidance.
- Match fee payments should be cashless where possible.
- Small-sided football matches should include more regular hygiene breaks.
- When playing at venues such as Goals, players should be discouraged from touching or tackling against the boards.

## After training and matches

- Hands should be washed at the earliest opportunity and personal equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant.
- Unless absolutely necessary, players should take their kit home to wash themselves.
- Players should take a shower at home after training and matches.
- Everyone must continue to maintain social distancing if they visit any facilities where groups of people congregate such as cafes, bars and clubhouses.
- Anyone who becomes infected after training or matches should report this to the NHS Test and Trace system.

## NHS TEST AND TRACE

As a Club we must support NHS test and trace efforts by collecting the names and contact information of participants at both training and matches.

This information will:

- be stored for a minimum of 21 days in line with the Government Recreational Team Sport Framework; and
- collected/processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with GDPR principles.

It will only be used only for the purpose of NHS test and trace.

## Attendance register

Managers and coaches will need to keep a register of everyone from their team that attends training sessions and matches. A template that can be used for this purpose is at Appendix 1 of this guide.

## ARRANGEMENTS AT KINGS COLLEGE PLAYING FIELDS



- The car parks at King's College Playing Fields are for the use of managers and coaches only. So parents or carers who travel by car will need to park on the adjoining roads.
- Everyone should enter the playing fields via the car park entrances and not via the gates on King's College Road and Park Avenue. The entrance and exit to the fields will be clearly marked with signage. If there is a queue to enter the playing fields, people should make sure they maintain social distancing as they wait to enter.
- There are sanitising stations located as people enter and as they exit the playing fields. These should be used on entry and exit from the fields.
- Until teams move to their winter training venues, they are allocated to designated training areas at Kings College Fields.
- Each training session slot is 90 minutes. The slots should be used as follows by coaches:
  - 15 minutes for preparation including equipment cleaning
  - 60 minutes for training
  - 15 minutes to clean equipment and pack away

## THE KEY SPORTS HYGIENE MESSAGES

Sports hygiene has never been more important. Good practices in this area are as follows:

- Message 1 - Maintain social distancing
- Message 2 - Ensure clean hands and avoid touching your face
- Message 3 - Cover coughs and sneezes
- Message 4 - Ensure clean surfaces and equipment
- Message 5 - Avoid sharing equipment
- Message 6 - Clean and cover wounds

## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Making the decision about whether to return

While some players - or parents of players - might want a return to competitive football activity as soon as possible there will be others who have real concerns, or their personal circumstances might make it difficult.

The period of isolation may have resulted in a child becoming anxious or unsure whether to resume previous activities such as football. So parents and carers should only support their return to football activity when they feel confident to do so.

Managers and coaches should be sensitive to these differing viewpoints. Some individuals, such as members of the BAME community, or due to their age, may face heightened risks from Covid-19. As such, any concerns should be taken seriously and addressed sensitively.

### Return to football consent forms

- For children that wish to return, a consent form will need to be completed by a parent or carer if they have not already done so and handed to the team manager. The consent form is at Appendix 2 of this guide.
- Adults who wish to return need to complete the consent form which is at Appendix 3.
- The manager of the team should retain the consent forms for three months.

### Parents and carers

- Please ensure your child/children know how to maintain good hygiene and hand washing.
- Young children may struggle to maintain social distancing. Please continue to do your best to help your child recognise what two metres or 'one-metre plus' look and feel like.
- Despite the changed circumstances the organiser of the activity still has a responsibility to implement The FA's safeguarding requirements. Anyone involved in activity directly with children (anyone aged under 18), must have an in-date DBS Check, is responsible for ensuring the environment is safe and should have completed some FA safeguarding training.
- People should not attend training or a match and should seek medical advice:
  - if they are showing symptoms of Covid-19 infection: or
  - if they have been in contact with someone displaying symptoms or diagnosed with Covid-19 within the last two weeks.

### Additional disability or medical needs

If a child has other needs that may need to be catered for this matter should be discussed by the parent or carer and the team manager of coach in order to agree how/if these needs can be met within current Government Covid-19 guidance.

### Code of Behaviour

At Appendix 4 you will find a Code of Behaviour that The FA has produced to ensure a commitment for all involved to adhere to Covid-19 adaptations. Participants must be clear that they are opting in to participating as defined in The FA's guidance about risk and risk mitigation.

# THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS

## REQUIREMENTS FOR TEAMS

Before a team can run training sessions or play in matches the manager or coach will need to have the following.

### Forms

- A Consent Form at the outset for each player that wishes to return
- A COVID-19 Self Check form (a form need to be given to you for each player before each training session starts)

### Equipment

- Sanitiser Spray for the equipment
- Sanitiser Wipes (for cleaning footballs)
- Hand Sanitiser
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for when First Aid is given. The PPE needed is:
  - disposable gloves
  - disposable plastic aprons; and
  - face masks

### Coaches

Within each team, two coaches must be in-date DBS checked and at least one must be Level 1 qualified and have completed the Safeguarding and Emergency Aid courses.

## BEFORE TRAINING SESSIONS AND MATCHES

- No changing rooms will be available so players must arrive changed and ready to exercise.
- Players need to bring the following items to each training session:
  - a water bottle; and
  - hand sanitiser (alcohol-based).
- Their name must be clearly marked on the water bottle and the hand sanitiser. They must not share their items with anyone else.

### Self-checks

The purpose of a self-check is to identify if a person has:

- had a high temperature (above 37.8C)
- has developed a new continuous cough
- has shortness of breath or a sore throat
- loss of or change in normal sense of taste or smell
- is feeling unwell

The self-check form is at Appendix 5 of this guide.

The self-check needs to be conducted by thinking if any of the above apply and completing the self-check form accordingly. Ideally this should be done before leaving for the training session or match.

- If any of these symptoms do apply, the player will not be able to participate and the team manager should be informed. The player should stay at home and follow NHS advice. There may be a need to reassure a child that there will be other opportunities for them to participate in the future.



- If all of the symptoms do not apply, the form should be completed accordingly and it should be handed to the manager or coach before the start of the session and before they enter the training area.

If the self-check is done upon arrival at the training session, it should be conducted before the player mixes with the other players. This is so that, if they have symptoms, there is no chance of others being affected. If any of these symptoms do apply, as mentioned above, the player will not be able to participate and they should return to and stay at home and follow NHS advice.

In all cases, the self-check form should be handed to manager or coach. Unless this is done, the player will not be able to take part in the training session or match.

- Anyone who has already been instructed to self-isolate by a health care practitioner or PHE should continue to follow this advice and may not participate.
- Everyone should comply with public health restrictions and avoid high-risk behaviour outside the football setting to reduce the risk to fellow participants and other attendees.

## TRAVELLING TO AND ARRIVING AT TRAINING AND MATCHES

Best practices for travel should be followed, including minimising the use of public transport. Participants should walk or cycle if possible. People from a household or support bubble can travel together in a vehicle.

If participants do have to travel with people outside their household or support bubble, they should adhere to the following best practices.

- Share the transport with the same people each time.
- Keep to small groups of people at any one time.
- Open windows for ventilation.
- Face away from each other.
- Clean the car between journeys using standard cleaning products – this includes door handles and other areas that people may touch.
- Face coverings should be worn.
- Consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle.
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise hands often, and always do this when exiting or re-entering the vehicle.
- When finishing the journey participants should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise their hands as soon as possible.

## DURING TRAINING AND MATCHES

### General issues

- In outdoor competitive training and matches, physical contact is allowed, but for all other activity (e.g. warmups/cool-downs) the Government guidance on social distancing should be observed:
  - Two-metre social distancing should be observed where possible.
  - Where not possible, 'one-metre plus' distancing should be observed.
- All participants should practise social distancing before and after training sessions and during any breaks.
- Prior to every training session or match players should be given a reminder of the 6 sports hygiene good practices:
  - Maintain social distancing

- Ensure clean hands and avoid touching your face
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Ensure clean surfaces and equipment
- Avoid sharing equipment
- Clean and cover wounds
- The players should put their belongings a safe distance away from the items of the other players.
- Access to a toilet may be possible but people should try to use one at home.
  - Kings College Playing Fields - toilet facilities may be available at the hockey club and at King's Café but this cannot be guaranteed. Please note that these facilities are owned and operated by other organisations and the Club has no influence or responsibility for their Covid-19 and hygiene procedures. They are not part of or operated by Ruislip Rangers in any way.
- After a period of low or no activity, players may be more susceptible to injury than before lockdown. Coaches should therefore consider the need for a thorough warm-up, and for the physical demands of a session to be suitable to the individuals involved. A session should start at a low physical intensity with gradual progression. Helping decrease the risk of injury is very important while social distancing requirements remain in place.
- Handshakes, high-fives or group goal celebrations are not allowed because of the social distancing requirements. This should be made very clear to the players.
- Footballs should be cleaned frequently with disinfectant wipes.
- If a player becomes symptomatic during an activity, they should be immediately removed from the training session or match and taken home as soon as possible. NHS guidance on further management of symptoms should be followed.

#### Competitive training

- Competitive training can take place outdoors in groups of no more than 30 (including coaches). Different groups should be appropriately socially distanced from each other.
- Care should be taken to ensure safe play when the training venue is busy.
- Matches can be played as part of training sessions.
- Where possible, start times will be staggered and time will be allowed for equipment cleaning between changeovers.
- There should always be the appropriate ratio of coaches to players as per the relevant FA safeguarding policy.
- Spectators at training sessions (including parents and carers) must stand in groups of no larger than 6. Individuals and groups should be spread out in line with wider government guidance ensuring that sufficient space is allowed for officials, coaches and substitutes.

#### Competitive matches

Competitive match play is now allowed.

#### Covid-19 modifications for competitive matches and training matches

- Players should clean their hands with hand sanitiser before kick-off.
- Pre-match handshakes should not take place.
- Social distancing should be observed during team talks.
- Social distancing should be observed during warm-ups and cool downs.
- Coaches and substitutes must observe social distancing whilst standing on the sidelines. Social distancing must also be observed during the process of making a substitution.

- Referees and coaches should encourage players to get on with the game and not take too long when taking free kicks. For example, the setting up of a defensive wall should not be prolonged unnecessarily.
- Corners should be taken as quickly as possible in order to limit prolonged close marking.
- Goal posts should be wiped down before matches, after matches and at half time.
- Goal celebrations should be avoided.
- Social distancing should be practised when talking to referees and linesmen.
- Small-sided games should be modified to provide more regular hygiene breaks.
- At the venues such as Goals, players should be discouraged from touching the boards or tackling against them. Referees will consider stopping play when this happens.
- Coaches should do their best to keep down the instances of players being in close proximity during match play and training.
- All participants must remain socially distanced during breaks in play such as half-time.
- Each coach and player should have a separate area on the ground, for example, where they keep their drink and other items. Drinks or other refreshment containers should not be shared in any circumstances.
- Players and officials should also observe social distancing during sin bin instances.
- Match fee payments should be cashless where possible.

#### *Use of equipment*

The sharing of equipment must be avoided where possible. Where equipment is shared, equipment must be cleaned before use by another person.

Participants should 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 or a shortage of kit - each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately afterwards and appropriate cleaning arrangements for the kit must be made.

#### *Ball transfer*

When the ball goes out of play, it should only be retrieved by participants in the game. It should be retrieved using the feet rather than the hands where possible.

The ball should be disinfected during breaks if throw-ins or handling of the ball have occurred during a training session or a match.

#### *Shouting*

When people shout or talk loudly there is an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations. This is particularly the case in indoor environments and when face to face. So, if possible, players should therefore avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other during, before and after games.

#### *Spitting*

Everyone should refrain from spitting. If you need to sneeze or cough, you are encouraged to do so into a tissue or upper sleeve and advised to avoid touching your face. Ensure any tissues are disposed of in a sealed bin as soon as possible.

#### Treatment of injuries

The FA has produced a detailed First Aid Guidance document for First Aid which can be found here:

- <http://www.thefa.com/news/2020/jul/17/grassroots-guidance-for-competitive-football-restart-in-england>

Injuries during play should still be treated as participant health and safety is of utmost importance. In all cases but particularly where medical treatment is needed, the best form of protection is through rigorous cleaning, personal hygiene and regular hand hygiene.

An increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces and equipment, using standard household cleaning and disinfection products, will be recommended in The FA's medical guidance.

If a player gets injured, a member of their household can assist if present and appropriate, but others (including match officials and teammates and coaches) will still need to socially distance unless a life- or limb-threatening injury necessitates compromising guidelines to provide emergency care.

If there is a first-aider or other medical personnel present, they should be equipped with the appropriate PPE (including face coverings) to protect themselves and others if they need to compromise social-distancing guidelines to provide medical assistance.

After contact with an injured participant, the person who has administered first aid should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or social distancing was maintained. The first aider should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose.

Physios or their equivalent or anyone who is administering any form of treatment, should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with for NHS test and trace purposes. Further information for those who may need to act as a 'first responder' role in a sports setting can be found here.

If a participant becomes Covid-19 symptomatic during the activity, they should immediately remove themselves from the session and return home as soon as possible. NHS guidance on further management of symptoms should be followed.

## AFTER TRAINING AND MATCHES

- All participants should sanitise their hands and wash their hands at the earliest opportunity.
- All equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant.
- People should leave the venue as soon as the session is over and that they do not congregate at the exit.
- Depart by following the traffic-flow system that the venue will have in place.
- Coaches are encouraged to maintain a record of the regular cleaning of club or team equipment that players use, and review the risk assessments you undertake in between sessions, learning from any changes you need to apply.

## MORE INFORMATION

We have a special Covid-19 section on our website:

- [www.ruisliprangersyfc.org.uk/covid-19](http://www.ruisliprangersyfc.org.uk/covid-19)

We also publish Covid-19 information on our social media platforms:

- [www.facebook.com/ruisliprangersyfc](https://www.facebook.com/ruisliprangersyfc)
- [www.twitter.com/RRYFC](https://www.twitter.com/RRYFC)

If you have any questions about the Club's COVID-19 arrangements, you can email us at [covid19@ruisliprangersyfc.org.uk](mailto:covid19@ruisliprangersyfc.org.uk).

**DISCLAIMER**

This guidance is for general information only and does not constitute legal advice or replace 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.

# APPENDIX 1: RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Team Name:

Date of Session

Time of Session

Location (Place / Grids)



Participants		
<b>Coaches</b>		
Name		Contact number
<b>Players</b>		
Name	Name of Parent/Guardian	Contact number
<b>Others</b>		
Name	Name of Parent/Guardian	Contact number



## APPENDIX 2: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Child's name: .....

As a parent/guardian/carer of the above-named child, I hereby give my consent for them to attend training sessions and matches with Ruislip Rangers. I am aware of the FA guidelines and the safety measures the Club have put in place and I agree to abide by them. I understand that by attending Ruislip Rangers training sessions I am assuming the risk of exposure to COVID19 or other public health risks.

Name of Parent/Guardian/Carer: .....

Signed: ..... (Parent/Guardian/Carer)

Date: .....

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## APPENDIX 3: ADULT PLAYER CONSENT FORM

Name of Player: .....

I hereby consent to return to football training and matches with Ruislip Rangers. I am aware of the FA guidelines and the safety measures the Club have put in place and I agree to abide by them. I understand that by attending football activities at Ruislip Rangers I am assuming the risk of exposure to COVID19 or other public health risks.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

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## APPENDIX 4: CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Covid-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease.

A resumption of contact play is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection.

Risk in sport cannot be completely eradicated but with caution and care these risks can be reduced.

Each player will need to decide when to return to contact football, based on their own circumstances and the arrangements that have been put in place for a safe return. This is particularly the case for players from BAME communities or those with underlying health conditions.

All those returning to competitive grassroots football must adopt the following code of behaviour:

- Be aware of your own personal health. If you show any of the Covid-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.
- Be responsible. Read the guidance provided by The FA and by your club so that you are aware of the changes to the game and what is expected of you. This will include things like being prepared to wash your own kit, bringing your own labelled water bottle and being aware of changes to meet-up times.
- Practise good hygiene. Wash your hands regularly and before, during and after a game.
- Where possible maintain social distancing. This won't always be possible in a competitive match environment (for example when tackling an opponent) and that is acceptable. However, before, and after a game you should maintain social distancing.
- Support NHS Test and Trace. You're likely to be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please co-operate.
- Do not spit. Spitting and the rinsing out of mouths is now a recognised risk to health and must not be done. Avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other players.
- After the game. Be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities. Changing rooms and showers are likely to be closed and any socialising must follow the Government's guidance on social distancing

## APPENDIX 5: COVID-19 SELF-CHECK FORM

*Please complete this form before every Ruislip Rangers training session and match and hand it to the manager or coach.*

NAME OF PLAYER: .....

Has your child had a high temperature (above 37.8C)?

Yes    No

Has your child developed a new continuous cough?

Yes    No

Has your child had shortness of breath or a sore throat?

Yes    No

Has your child had a loss of or change in normal sense of taste or smell?

Yes    No

Has your child been feeling unwell?

Yes    No

### DECLARATION IN REPECT OF CHILD PLAYER

Name of Parent/Guardian/Carer: .....

Signed: ..... (Parent/Guardian/Carer)

Date: .....

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### DECLARATION IN REPECT OF ADULT PLAYER

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## APPENDIX 6: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

### Guidance for club officials and coaches

Your club must have completed a safeguarding and Covid-19 risk assessment and briefed you on your responsibilities.

You are responsible for continuing to ensure the environment is safe and for implementing the club's safeguarding children policy and procedures.

Coaches working with children must have an in-date FA DBS Check.

If Government guidance changes the position on group size in due course, you must ensure the ratio of coach to different age groups of children is appropriate.

Children (anyone under 18) should not be working 1:1 with a coach unless their parent/carer is present and observing social distancing.

### Listening to children

While many families have coped well during lockdown, others may not have and for some children the experience will have been very difficult. You may be one of the first people outside the family unit that a child has met in recent times. It's important you know that some children may be struggling for various reasons, including:

- Lacking confidence, as they have felt cut off from their friends;
- Being confused and stressed about how to behave because of social distancing;
- They or someone they care about may have been or still be unwell;
- They may still be grieving because someone they love has died;
- Hearing that people from BAME communities may be more vulnerable to Covid-19;
- They may have been neglected emotionally and/or physically – through lack of food and/or care;
- Children with learning disabilities may find it particularly confusing, as their routine has changed.

You may also have seen media coverage on the increase in:

- Domestic violence – significantly impacting children emotionally and/or physically in households where this has happened;
- Online grooming of children;
- Cyberbullying.

You have an important role in safeguarding. If you are worried about a child as they return to football, it's vital you report your concerns. Doing nothing is not an option.

Please check-in with the children you are coaching/working with, and ask them how they've been and how they're doing. There are five ways to report your concerns if you are worried about a child as they return to football:

- To your club or league Welfare Officer;
- To your County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

By emailing The FA Safeguarding Team at [safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:safeguarding@TheFA.com);

- If urgent and you cannot contact your club, league or County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer, you should call the NSPCC 24-hour helpline on 0808 800 5000;

- If it is an emergency because a child or children are at immediate risk, then call the Police on 999.

The NSPCC has produced a great film which reminds us all how best to respond if a child discloses to you. It really is worth taking the two minutes it requires to watch.

- You can watch the film here: <https://youtu.be/bvJ5uBIGYgE>

## APPENDIX 7: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*This section has been taken from the Team Grassroots website ([www.teamgrassroots.co.uk](http://www.teamgrassroots.co.uk)).*

*Q: Can clubs and venues provide food and drink?*

A: Yes, for those clubs that have catering and bar facilities they are able to operate in accordance with the government guidelines for that sector. Extra considerations should be made to ensure social distancing in place.

*Q: Does this now mean we can play football indoors?*

A: Unfortunately, for now, the current government approval does not permit football or futsal activity within indoor settings. The FA will look to work with indoor facility providers to develop appropriate guidance for indoor formats as soon as possible.

*Q: We want to arrange a football competition with different teams competing, is this allowed under the new guidelines?*

A: The FA would strongly, recommend a phased return to competitive football activity as follows:

- Until 31 July - When ready, you can begin competitive training, with the overall group size (inclusive of coaches) being limited to 30 people.
- From August - Competitive matches to begin, for example pre-season fixtures, festivals and small side football competitions.
- From September - Grassroots leagues, men's National League System, Women's Football Pyramid tiers 3 to 6, and FA Competitions can commence.

The current government guidance permits competitive football activity, therefore in order to host multiple fixtures at the same time you will need to ensure you have considered this as part of your Covid-19 risk assessment and are comfortable that the groups can maintain social distance off the field at all times.

All clubs and teams need to ensure they are affiliated to their respective Country FA to ensure valid insurance is in place and to allow for the use of FA registered referees.

You must ensure that you do not overload your facilities.

*Q: If there is a regional lockdown, does this mean we won't be allowed to play competitively?*

A: Clubs must always consider whether there are local restrictions in place in their area. If so, clubs should first read the guidance relevant to their areas this may supersede FA guidance and therefore also football activity.

*Q: Will we be able to use changing rooms?*

A: Changing rooms are an area of increased risk of transmission. Where possible, they should remain closed. Players and Officials should arrive changed and shower at home. Exceptions may be made where safety and safeguarding measures require their use e.g. supporting disabled athletes or a child needs a change of clothing etc. If you choose to use your changing and shower facilities, you must follow government guidelines.

Preparation and use of toilets before, during or after the match or training should follow government guidance.