



Managing Covid within Hockey

Return to Play Guidance

July 2021 - Version 1

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Introduction

This document outlines the latest measures and guidance from England Hockey to support clubs, organisations and participants in continuing to Return to Play and whilst Managing Covid within Hockey.

Although a lot of the previous measures put in place to keep us safe are no longer required by law, consideration of the good practice that we have seen within our clubs and community will continue to help everyone to return with confidence and get back on the pitch enjoying the sport they love.

It is important that everyone understands the latest guidance in place and respects the interpretation of others and their application of the measures. England Hockey thank everyone for their cooperation and efforts and look forward to a brighter future.

Key changes in Step 4 of Governments roadmap out of lockdown

From 19 July in England, most legal restrictions with regards to Covid ended. A summary of what these key changes mean for hockey are below:

- No legal gathering limits – there is no longer a restriction on the number of people that can meet to participate in, or spectate, hockey, outdoors or indoors.

- No social distancing – there is no longer a requirement to keep two metres (or one metre plus) distance from anyone outside of your household group. This removes the restrictions on changing rooms, clubhouses, hospitality, and domestic travel*.

Although these restrictions are no longer in place under law, good practice is encouraged. See below for how England Hockey and Government are recommending people respond to the changes announced in Step 4 of Governments roadmap out of lockdown.

**For international travel, wider Government [guidance for travel abroad from England during coronavirus](#) must be followed. The elite sport dispensation only covers the England/GB senior national squads and GB Elite Development Programme.*

England Hockey requirements

England Hockey have set out the following requirements which must be followed by clubs and organisations that want to continue participating in hockey in England.

Covid Officer

- All clubs and organisations are required to have a registered Covid Officer.
- The Covid Officer is the recognised point of contact between England Hockey and a club or organisation. They are responsible for communicating messages between England Hockey and participants and monitoring how guidance is applied within club or organisation settings and during any hockey activity.
- England Hockey will maintain communication with Covid Officers in the case of any future changes to guidance.
- Covid Officers can register or amend their details via the [Club Portal](#).
- A list of affiliated clubs with Covid Officers is published on the EH website [here](#).

NB In line with current Government guidance, Participation Agreements are now not a requirement to participate in hockey in England.

England Hockey recommendations

England Hockey recommends that the following guidance is considered whenever organising hockey activity.

- **Attendance registers** – it is good to keep a record of who is attending which sessions, this may support with track and trace efforts as well as player welfare requirements.
However, there is no longer a requirement to send these to England Hockey.
- **Covid specific risk assessments** – there is value in completing Covid-19 specific risk assessments to ensure you are doing what you can to limit the risk of Covid transmission and give participants the confidence to return.
- **Planning Safe Hockey guide** – click [here](#) for information about Planning Safe Hockey. It is more important than ever that we consider the policies and procedures we have in place as well as the safety of ourselves and others.
- **Venue protocols and safety measures** – in line with Government guidance, venues may choose to implement measures such as the wearing of face masks, or QR code check ins. All hockey participants should cooperate and follow venue protocols and safety measures.

- **Communication** – to help manage expectations and experiences, clubs and organisations should communicate clearly with members and visiting participants regarding the protocols and measures they should expect upon arrival to a venue.
- **Respectful practises** – Covid created some changes in practises at club level that England Hockey recommends continue.
 - Continue to 'stick tap' as an alternative to shaking hands
 - Spitting is discouraged, particularly given the risk of infection
 - Be mindful of your distance and shouting to communicate, especially with officials.
- **Support and awareness** – be aware of the fact that not everyone will be responding to Covid in the same way. Respect others application of guidance and feelings towards returning, support them in easing their anxiety or nervousness while at hockey.
- **Competition guidance (e.g. postponements)** – England Hockey plan to issue further guidance before the start of the season to support with fulfilment of fixtures that may be impacted as a result of self-isolation and a number of positive cases within a squad.
- **Residential camps & multiple team/day tournaments** – consider the implications of a large group that may be coming from different areas of the country and sharing facilities for a prolonged period. Additional measures linked to Government guidance may be considered more strongly in these cases, such as testing prior to events.

Government guidance

This guidance sets out information for the public and sport providers on how to organise and participate in grassroots sport and physical activity as safely as possible.

- **Self-assessment for Covid-19 symptoms** – before attending any activity all participants should self-assess for Covid-19 symptoms. The main symptoms of Covid-19 are: a high temperature; a new continuous cough; a loss of, or change to, sense of smell or taste.
- **Informed decisions and self-isolation** – participants should consider the health and safety of themselves and others in attendance. If an individual or anyone they live with has Covid-19 symptoms, they should not attend any activity. Follow the NHS guidance on [symptoms and testing](#), and [self-isolation](#).
- **NHS Test and Trace** – although no longer required to collect participants' contact details, activity organisers and venues are advised to continue to display NHS QR codes, and encourage 'checking in', to support NHS Test and Trace.
- **Pre-participation safety measures** – activity organisers and venues may consider asking participants to take a Covid-19 test before participating, where this is practical and possible. Also consider using the NHS Covid Pass which allows individuals to demonstrate they are at lower risk of carrying and transmitting Covid-19 through proof of vaccination, negative test results, or natural immunity.
- **Hygiene** – continue to follow good hygiene practices, such as frequent cleaning of surfaces and touch points. Water bottles and refreshment containers should not be shared, individuals should be encouraged to bring their own. Do not spit or rinse out mouth around playing area. Try alternatives to shaking hands.
- **Equipment** – avoid sharing equipment where it is possible and practical. Where equipment needs to be shared, it should be cleaned between users. Equipment that is regularly touched by hands should be sanitised at regular intervals.

- **Face coverings** – although no longer required, it is expected and recommend that individuals wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed settings. Face coverings should not generally be worn during strenuous activity.
- **Medical provision** – physios and medical personnel should ensure that equipment and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected. Where face-to-face treatment is required, face coverings should be considered. After treatment physios, medical personnel and the injured participant should thoroughly clean or sanitise their hands.
- **Facility usage** – facility providers should continue to carry out risk assessments that include risks from Covid-19. They should also provide adequate ventilation and ensure a supply of fresh air to all enclosed spaces. Continue to frequently clean all surfaces and common touch points. It is also recommended to provide sanitiser for visitors and enable guests to check in via NHS Test and Trace. Clearly sign post and communicate the processes and measures that are put in place and do so in advance of people arriving where possible.
- **Sporting events** – if organising a large event, or expecting a significant number of spectators, [guidance for events and attractions](#) should be reviewed to help further mitigate the risk of transmission.

Resources

England Hockey is aware that during these challenging times, further support and resources may be required to support our clubs, organisations and participants. Click on the links below for access to resources linked to England Hockey's Return to Play.

- [Covid Support page](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Contact us by email](#)
- [Planning Safe Hockey guidance](#)
- [Government Coronavirus website](#)
- [DCMS sport guidance](#)
- [NHS Coronavirus website](#)