



Return to Rugby Guidance Document

As of Monday 9 August 2021

INTRODUCTION

In line with Scottish Government's announcement on Tuesday 3 August, Scottish Rugby has updated the Return to Rugby guidance for clubs and schools. All mainland local authority areas will move beyond Level 0 restrictions as of Monday 9 August 2021. For full details on restrictions please visit www.gov.scot.

Although restrictions are easing and we move into more normal arrangements, it remains important that we are cautious and following the guidance outlined by the Scottish Government to protect each other:

- Get vaccinated - If you are over 18 and haven't had a first dose appointment - or if you are 8 weeks or more from your second dose - register on the [NHS Inform website](https://www.nhs.uk) for an appointment or go to a drop-in clinic.
- Get tested regularly – If asymptomatic, free lateral flow tests are available by post through NHS Inform, or for collection from test sites and local pharmacies. If you test positive through one of these devices - or if you have symptoms - make sure you self-isolate, and book a PCR test as quickly as possible.
- Follow basic hygiene measures.
- Meet other people outdoors as much as possible, and stick to the group size limits.
- Remember physical distancing, hand-washing, the cleaning of surfaces and face coverings.
- People who are symptomatic and household members should self-isolate for 10 days as per NHS Scotland guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a rugby facility or activity.

Organised rugby training activities can be undertaken, providing all activity is consistent with current Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene. Clubs and participants should be aware of their local area protection level and associated restrictions which may be in place and should consider this as part of risk assessment planning.

Further information on protection levels that apply in each local authority area are available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): allocation of protection levels ([click here](#)).



**Return to Rugby
Club & School Game**
Summary (as of 9 August 2021)

As of 9 August all local authority areas move out of the levels framework. Baseline measures and some restrictions remain to place - please see guidance.

Stay up to date on the latest Return to Rugby guidelines for the community game at: scottishrugby.org

For information on Scottish Government restrictions, please visit: www.gov.scot/coronavirus

#AsOne
Updated 9 August 2021

It is the responsibility of the Club Covid-19 Safety Coordinator to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any rugby activity takes place.

GENERAL GUIDANCE

- ✓ Get vaccinated
- ✓ Follow basic hygiene measures
- ✓ Get tested regularly
- ✓ Wear face coverings indoors and on public transport

OUTDOOR RUGBY ACTIVITY

- ✓ All full contact and touch rugby activities permitted in line with Age Grade Law Variations and World Rugby laws.
- World Rugby Law trials to be introduced for season 2021-22 at all levels.
- Unlimited number of players permitted per bubble.
- Coaches no longer need to remain physical distanced from players.
- All equipment (ball, shields etc) should continue to be cleaned after each session.

SPECTATORS:

- ✓ Spectators are permitted under the following circumstances:
 - Where supervising a child and/or vulnerable person.
 - Where a rugby fixture or event is organised and takes place at premises whose entrances and exits are controlled (indoors and outdoors) for the purpose of crowd and capacity management in line with Scottish Government Guidance (restrictions apply).
 - Maximum 5,000 spectators outdoors.

TRAVEL

- ✓ National travel permitted as per guidance from Travel Scotland.
- ✗ Avoid car sharing with anyone from another household unless you deem it to be necessary.

INDOOR RUGBY ACTIVITY, FACILITIES & HOSPITALITY:

- ✓ Gyms can re-open for group exercise.
- ✓ Indoor contact and non-contact activity permitted - all age groups.
- Hospitality can re-open – operational recommendations apply.
- Changing rooms can re-open (recommendations apply).

You can get seriously ill with coronavirus at any age. Please get the COVID-19 vaccine when invited.



It's time to roll up our sleeves
Vaccinations for COVID-19 are underway



When offered the vaccine, please get it
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1. Covid-19 Safety Coordinators

- 1.1. To support a Return to Rugby, Scottish Rugby has asked every club to appoint a Covid-19 Safety Coordinator to address the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2. Clubs must appoint someone to this role before any official club activity takes place. Schools and Referee Societies can also nominate someone to fill this role.
- 1.3. To nominate a Covid-19 Safety Coordinator, please [click here](#).
- 1.4. Regular 'check in' sessions will be arranged with all safety coordinators at times when relevant information is available.
- 1.5. The Covid-19 Safety Coordinator **must** ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any rugby or clubs activity takes place. Specific consideration should be given to the needs of those who are at greater risk including some older adults or those with disabilities.

2. Player Welfare

- 2.1. Before returning to intensive exercise, and especially contact rugby (e.g. tackling), players should ensure they undertake a gradual phased return back to activity.
- 2.2. For participants who are returning to physical activity having contracted COVID-19 there are some useful materials [available here](#) via the British Association of Sport and Exercise Medicine.
- 2.3. Scottish Rugby has developed an e-learning Mental Wellbeing course which is available free of charge [here](#).

3. First Aid and Physiotherapy

- 3.1. Scottish Rugby has produced a guidance document for first aid responders which can be found [here](#).
- 3.2. The Resuscitation Council UK has provided specific guidance on CPR delivery and COVID-19 which is available at [Resuscitation Council - Covid-19 Resources](#).
- 3.3. Guidance for physios can be gained directly from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy by [clicking here](#).
- 3.4. Physios should only carry out their activities if they have the appropriate level of PPE in line with the guidance [available here](#).
- 3.5. Medical rooms can be used for treatments which cannot be undertaken outdoors (where the risk of virus transmission is lower), as long as a relevant risk assessment has been undertaken by the club and the physio themselves.
- 3.6. The reopening of medical rooms must be done in accordance with **sportscotland** guidelines ([available here](#)) and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy by [clicking here](#).

4. Age Banding

- 4.1. For the remainder of season 2020-21 and for the start of season 2021-22, all 'play-up' age band dispensation processes (e.g. U18 into Adult rugby) will be suspended ([further details available here](#)).
 - 4.1.1. This decision serves to prevent underage players from being exposed to an increased risk of injury when returning to rugby after a lengthy spell of inactivity caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. This position will be reviewed in December 2021.
 - 4.1.2. Players who had previously been cleared to participate in adult rugby who are 17, have had their clearance withdrawn and should return to playing U18 rugby for the rest of the season/until they turn 18.



5. General Rugby Activity Guidance

- 5.1. Clubs should note that the situation around COVID-19 is fluid and activities may need to be cancelled at short notice should there be a change in local or national restrictions. In such circumstances plans should be in place to notify participants of event cancellation and to ensure they do not attend the venue.
- 5.2. Clubs should undertake comprehensive risk assessments to minimise the risk of movement or contact between bubbles including before, during or after an activity. Once an individual has completed their activity, they should immediately vacate the 'field of play' and are then subject to household rules.

6. Bubble sizes

- 6.1 Unlimited number of players can participate in a bubble. All previous bubble size restrictions have been removed.

7. Friendly Fixtures

- 7.1. Inter club/school friendly fixtures are permitted.
- 7.2. Clubs and schools do not need to take part in friendly fixtures if they do not wish to do so. In addition, all touch rugby activities will remain an option as per current guidelines.
- 7.3. All youth and adult fixtures must be registered with Scottish Rugby at competitions@sru.org.uk, and referee societies should be notified (with as much notice as possible provided).
- 7.4. Please inform your referee society as soon as possible to arrange a referee (with as much notice as possible).
- 7.5. Separate supporting documents are [available here](#) which provide guidance for clubs and schools wishing to resume friendly fixtures when restrictions allow.
- 7.6. Careful consideration should be given to the volume of friendly matches played over the summer months in anticipation of a full 2021/22 competitive season.
- 7.7. A separate mini rugby festival guidance document has been produced to support mini rugby organisers.

8. Spectators

- 8.1. Spectators are permitted under the following circumstances:
 - 8.1.1. where supervising a child and/or vulnerable person.
 - 8.1.2. where a rugby fixture or event is organised and takes place at premises whose entrances and exits are controlled (indoors and outdoors) for the purpose of crowd and capacity management in line with Scottish Government [\(COVID-19\): events sector guidance](#) and [\(COVID-19\): calculating physical distancing capacity in public settings](#).
- 8.2. Spectator capacity is 5,000 outdoors.
- 8.3. Clubs seeking to hold an event with increase spectator numbers must seek approval from their local authority.
- 8.4. All spectators must check in and out of the venue and follow public health hygiene measures.
- 8.5. It is recognised that it may not always be possible to prevent people from spectating [at a competition or event] in a public space such as a park. In such circumstances, clubs are required to consider mitigating measures as part of their risk assessment/management plan with an emphasis on discouraging, where possible, informal spectating. Any such measures should be clearly communicated by the club prior to the competition or event which may include, amongst other things, the displaying of notices around the venue to remind the public to follow Scottish Government guidance.
- 8.6. For clarity, where informal spectating does take place, clubs are not expected to enforce government guidance on



members of the public in places not under their control.

- 8.7 Before deciding whether to allow spectators, clubs should consider the following;
- Club to undertaking a risk assessment to ascertain if spectators can be accommodated safely and in keeping with current Scottish Government guidelines
 - Can a controlled entry and exit be established to ensure maximum numbers are not breached
 - Implement a booking/registrations system to assist test and protect

9. Facilities

- 9.1. Scottish Rugby has produced a number of guidance documents for clubs to support the safe re-opening of facilities:
- 9.1.1. Care for your club checklist
 - 9.1.2. Training checklist
 - 9.1.3. Pitch re-opening checklist
 - 9.1.4. Risk assessment template
- 9.2. The resources above can be found [here](#) and should be viewed alongside the [sportscotland](#) guidance [here](#).

10. Coaches

- 10.1. Coaches operating within clubs and facilities should liaise with the relevant Covid-19 Safety Coordinator before undertaking coaching and all sporting or physical activity must adhere to Return to Rugby guidelines.
- 10.2. Please see the [sportscotland](#) Getting Coaches Ready for Sport resource ([click here](#)) which provides a 4-stage approach/checklist to help coaches get ready for delivering sport and physical activity.
- 10.3. Face coverings are only required to be worn by coaches during indoor activities.

11. Match Officials

- 11.1. Scottish Rugby is working closely with the Referee Societies to ensure a smooth return back to match officiating. A return to match officiating document is [available here](#).
- 11.2. Clubs must ensure that Match Officials are contacted prior to the match taking place to inform them of the covid protocols in place at the venue, and to advice on changing room facilities.

12. Gyms

- 12.1. Gyms can re-open as per the guidance and restrictions available in the specific gym guidance document.
- 12.2. Clubs are also advised to read the [sportscotland](#) guidance document [available here](#).

13. Indoor Activity



- 13.1. Indoor contact and non-contact sport and physical activity can resume for all age groups.
- 13.2. Participants should not congregate before or after an activity. Operators must ensure comprehensive mitigating actions are put in place and documented in their risk assessment to stop this happening. Consider staggering start/arrival times and any other relevant additional measures.
- 13.3. Additional guidance is available in the 'Guidance on Using Indoor Space for Physical Activity and Sport' document [here](#).

14. Hospitality

- 14.1. Clubs can also find information in the 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector' webpages [available here](#).
- 14.2. Encourage people to make bookings online where possible.
- 14.3. Where possible use online or contactless payment options and avoid handling cash.
- 14.4. Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use in bar and restaurant areas and at the entrance/exit to the venue/facility where this is possible. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on.
- 14.5. Clubs should collect the name, contact number, date of visit, time of arrival, and 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.
- 14.6. Clubs should store information for 21 days and share it when requested to do so by public health officers.

15. Changing Rooms, Toilets & Showers

- 15.1. Changing rooms, toilets and showers can be used (recommendations apply).

16. Travel & Transport

- 16.1. Travel into and out of other areas is permitted.
- 16.2. Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on travel and transport](#).
- 16.3. You should avoid car sharing with anyone from another household unless you deem it to be necessary. If individuals or groups do car share then they should follow [Transport Scotland: advice on how to travel safely](#) and put in place appropriate risk assessment and mitigations.

17. Equipment Provision and Use

- 17.1. Where shared equipment is necessary for an activity, appropriate hygiene measures must be put in place before, during and after use.
- 17.2. Appropriate hygiene protocols should be undertaken including hand hygiene and regular cleaning of balls before, during and after exercise.

18. Test & Protect

- 18.1. Clubs need to ensure that all player, coach and parent details are captured on arrival at the venue. This is a regulatory requirement from the Scottish Government and will support the Test and Protect teams should a



- contact tracing process need to begin in light of a positive case.
- 18.2. If a club is made aware of a positive test of an active club member, then they should follow local NHS board advice as a priority.
 - 18.3. A Scottish Rugby guidance sheet is [available here](#).
 - 18.4. We encourage everyone to download the Protect Scotland App to assist in the contact tracing process – details can be found [here](#).

19. Dealing with a positive case

- 19.1. Scottish Rugby has produced a simple guidance sheet to support clubs in dealing with a positive COVID-19 case at their clubs ([available here](#)).
- 19.2. This document aims to set out some simple guidance for clubs on how to respond to a suspected or confirmed positive Covid-19 case. As with all Return to Rugby information, this guidance is subject to change at any time in line with Scottish Government guidelines.

20. Safeguarding

- 20.1. As government restrictions ease and we gradually move through the Return to Rugby roadmap, supporting children and young people to reintegrate back into rugby will be a key focus for your club.
- 20.2. Scottish Rugby has produced, in conjunction with Safeguarding in Sport, a guidance document 'Safeguarding & Wellbeing Considerations for the Return of Children & Young People to Rugby' which can be [downloaded here](#).
- 20.3. No PVG = No coaching.
- 20.4. There will be no alteration to the standards we had in place pre-Covid-19, therefore PVGs will still need to be in place for designated roles, or new recruits to roles prior to any activity resuming with children and youth teams.
- 20.5. Child Protection Officers may wish to recap on their Club Safeguarding Policy and/or refer to the Scottish Rugby Safeguarding webpage in advance of any return.

21. Equality & Inclusion

- 21.1. Covid-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to Covid-19 - Older people, Disabled people, Ethnic minorities, Women, People from deprived communities.
- 21.2. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and clubs should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

22. Insurance

- 22.1. Scottish Rugby's Club Accident Insurance Scheme provides catastrophic injury Personal Accident cover to those participating with each team declared by the club on its insurance proposal form. Those participating for clubs opting to take out the Temporary Disablement cover have access to additional policy benefits. The Club Accident



Insurance Scheme operates on a twelve-month basis, however, please note that whilst this is a 12-month policy there is an operative time during which cover applies. This is:

- 22.1.1. “Whilst an Insured Person is participating in Rugby Union as a Member of an Insured Team playing in any scheduled fixture, friendly match, charity match, coaching or training or practice game organised by an Insured Club or whilst at any ground or premises where a scheduled fixture, friendly match, charity match, practice game, coaching or training session has been organised by the Insured.”
- 22.2. The key points to note are the phrases “organised by an Insured Club” and “organised by the insured”. Please remember that in the event that someone sustains a serious injury whilst participating in a training session or game not officially organised by the club or Scottish Rugby, then policy cover may not apply.
- 22.3. For more on the Club Accident Insurance Scheme please [click here](#).
- 22.4. Scottish Rugby provides member clubs with Public Liability cover in respect of the rugby risk associated with playing and training through the Union’s own Public Liability policy. Many of a club’s activities go beyond the actual playing of the game and clubs should therefore have in place Public Liability cover in respect of other activities and in relation to other appropriate insurable risks. To read more on the Public Liability cover provided through Scottish Rugby please [click here](#).

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