



GAA Handball Return to Safe Play

Staying Safe - 5 Rules to Follow

Safe return to sports is the personal responsibility of each player and coach/parent.

- (1) Wash your hands frequently, regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water (for 20 seconds). Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- (2) Maintain social distancing Observe social distancing guidelines (currently 2m) and keep this distance between yourself and others, especially anyone who is coughing or sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes, they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including COVID-19 if the person coughing has the disease.
- (3) Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth Hands touch many surfaces and surface to hand transfer can spread the virus. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
- (4) Practice respiratory hygiene Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. If using tissues, you should dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from all viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.
- (5) If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early CALL YOUR GP. DO NOT VISIT THE DOCTOR'S SURGERY OR GAA HANDBALL FACILITY. Stay home if you feel unwell. Follow the directions of your GP and public health service. This will protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

Assessing Risk/Vulnerable Groups

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are vulnerable. An extensive list is contained as part of the more in-depth medical information available on the GAA website at <https://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/dbrquujnn6bwinpfl1u0.pdf>.

The most common categories are:

- Age over 70 years (even if fit and well)
- Undergoing treatment for cancer
- Chronic lung disease
- Asthma (uncontrolled)
- Diabetes
- Cardiac disease
- High blood pressure
- Obesity Members who have a concern regarding personal higher risk, or a family member / household contact with higher risk, should discuss the situation with their GP (or an

appropriate medical professional) before making a decision on whether to return to activity or not.

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Health Questionnaire/Temperature Checks

Prior to commencing training, players, parents/guardians and venue officials should complete the self-administered standard risk assessment health questionnaire at <https://returntoplay.gaa.ie>. Symptoms such as a high temperature, fever, cough, sore throat, general weakness, shortness of breath, and change in taste or smell will be identified. The presence of symptoms, or temperature (over 37.5°C) precludes attendance at the venue. In such circumstances, the individual should telephone their GP for advice and management. The Questionnaire will need to be completed once, before the initial Return to Training. It will be the responsibility of the individual to inform the venue's Covid Supervisor of any change in circumstance before subsequent sessions.

These measures will be reviewed in conjunction with national public health advice.

REMEMBER: Positive symptomatology or a high temperature (over 37.5°C) precludes attendance.

In such circumstances, **THE GP SHOULD BE TELEPHONED - DO NOT ATTEND SURGERY OR GAA HANDBALL FACILITIES.**

MORE INDEPTH MEDICAL INFORMATION ON COVID-19 IS AVAILABLE ON THE GAA WEBSITE AT THE

FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://www.gaa.ie/api/pdfs/image/upload/dbrquujnn6bwinpf11u0.pdf>

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Preparation of facilities

Dressing Rooms, Gyms and Social areas should remain closed until further notice.

- **Signage**

Appropriate signage in line with public health guidelines should be placed at the entrance of club facilities, in car parks, at the entrances of toilets and within the alley. These signs should be clearly visible and easy to understand. Signs should emphasize the government recommended social distancing rules (2m at present), hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, avoidance of personal contact, shaking hands and spitting etc. Resources for Coronavirus posters and signage are available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

- **Hand gel dispensers**

Hand dispensers should be provided in the car park, toilets and entrance to the court. Appropriate disposal bins for hazardous biological waste to be available and clearly marked.

- **Toilets**

Toilets must be regarded as potentially contaminated areas. Ventilation is important, doors and windows should remain open in so far as is reasonable and appropriate. Basic hygiene etiquette adapted to the circumstances should be promoted: for example, use of elbows to open doors, and using paper towels to turn taps on and off. On exit of toilet, use hand sanitizer. There should be a regular cleaning programme with daily deep disinfection in place.

- **Alleys**

Keep windows open in order to promote good ventilation where possible. Provide disinfectant wipes outside each court for cleaning of touch points (door handles, walls, visibly moist spots on court floor etc.) After playing, the player who booked the court must clean the court (including wiping door handles, visibly moist spots on the floor and anywhere else touched - on and off court). There should be a regular cleaning programme with daily deep disinfection in place.

- **Medical isolation room**

In the unlikely event that a player becomes unwell during a training session, facilities should be in place for immediate isolation in a designated medical room containing the appropriate personal protective equipment. There will be a clearly defined protocol for linking up with the appropriate medical service - for example, local accident and emergency department (in the event of an injury), general practitioner or out of hours GP service.

Scheduling of activities

- Timesheets should be used to clearly show what members are using club facilities at what times. The principle of “get in, train and get out” will apply.
- There should be a time interval between members departing having completed training and the next member arriving.
- Attendance will be limited to essential personnel. Guests, who are not members of the club, are not permitted to access facilities at this time.
- Consider designated times for court access for members who may be identified as at increased risk with respect to COVID -19 infection
- Compliance will be necessary to ensure efficiency and harmony.

Attendance at Training

In general, only players and coaches should attend any underage training session. One Parent or Guardian per child (or per family if more than one child is attending from a particular family) is permitted to attend in a safeguarding /supervisory capacity involving any player in the U-18 or below age group, should they consider it necessary. However strict social distancing and public health guidelines should be adhered to at all times. In particular, it is important that parents do not congregate in groups before or after sessions, outside of what is permitted in current Government regulations.

Protocol for Participation

Club Members/Executives

- Every club will be required to have at least one Covid19 Supervisor who will be required to complete the Gaelic Games online education module. Only clubs with confirmed Covid19 Supervisors will be allowed to reopen their facilities.
- All players (parents or guardians in the case of underage players) should ensure they have completed the Gaelic Games online education module in the last 12 months. It can be viewed here <https://courses.gaa.ie/Covid19ClubEd/#/>
- All members should be provided with this document and familiarize themselves with its contents.

Players / Members

- Members are required to change at home, shower at home and where possible use toilet facilities at home. Strapping should be applied at home.
- Travel to and from training. If possible, walk or cycle to the venue. If travelling by private vehicle, such as a car, only travel with members of the same household. Avoid the use of public transport where possible (if it is the only option follow Government guidelines)
- Do not share equipment, food, drinks, towels, etc.
- All players should use their own individual and clearly labelled water bottles.
- Players should limit post-game social engagement. Keep a 2metre distance from your opponent and other players in the building before, after, and in between games.
- Leave the court immediately after play is finished and leave the facility immediately after play. On exiting the court, wash and/or sanitize the court, your touchpoints and your gloves and hands and then shower at home.
- No shaking hands, high fives, etc.

Responsibility

It is essential that everyone in the club works together to ensure compliance with these guidelines.

- Each 'Club Executive' will be responsible for ensuring that a Covid Supervisor is assigned and will ensure the full cooperation of participating officials, coaches, players and parents.
- Each Covid Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring COVID-19 protocols, including collation of health questionnaires, and cleaning and sanitising of facilities are followed. They will also be responsible for ensuring only necessary personnel are admitted to the venue.
- Each Player/member shall ensure compliance with COVID-19 guidelines within their own area and for health and safety of their colleagues.

Useful Links

The following links will provide additional guidance and references for those interested in further information.

World Health Organisation – WHO <https://www.who.int>

Health Service Executive - <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>

Health & Safety Authority - <http://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/covid-19/>

NSAI – National Standards Authority of Ireland - <https://www.n sai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/>

UK HSE - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>

NHS UK - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

COVID -19 Posters and Resources:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources/>

Summary

General Conditions of Return to Play all stages

- Continue to adhere to HSE and Government guidance.
- All clubs to have a Covid19 Supervisor in place
- All courts to have a sign in sheet/online system to record who has been at the courts at all times to allow for contact tracing in the event of a potential Covid19 case.
- Mandatory signage in clubs advising best practice in hygiene and social distancing.
- All courts must have hand sanitizer available, and players/coaches/spectators must sanitize hands prior to entry.

Guidelines for Players all stages

- Complete Return to Play Questionnaire prior to training.
- Complete the GAA Covid-19 E-learning module.
- Change at home, shower at home and where possible use toilet facilities at home. Strapping should be applied at home.
- Do not share equipment, food, drinks, towels, etc. Bring personal water bottles.
- No shaking hands, high fives, etc.
- Singles play only.
- Travel separately to the venue where possible.
- Practice social distancing between points and between games.
- Exit the court, wash and/or sanitize the court, touchpoints and your gloves and hands and then shower at home.
- Keep a 2metre distance from your opponent and other players in the building before, after, and in between games. Limit post-game social engagement.

DO NOT play if any of the following apply:

- Currently testing positive for COVID-19 or exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19
- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Are a vulnerable individual and/or live with someone vulnerable.