



# FAI SAFER RETURN TO TRAINING PROTOCOL

ADULT AMATEUR & UNDERAGE FOOTBALL



# INTRODUCTION

- This Protocol applies to all training sessions from Wednesday, October 7th 2020
- The primary aim of this Protocol is to support clubs affiliated to the FAI and to protect the health & safety of their players, coaches, all essential personnel and volunteers in a safer return to training
- This Protocol will be in line with Department of Health and Public Health Policy at all times
- This Protocol will follow all Government updates on the Plan for Living with COVID-19
- The Protocol will be utilised in line with all other FAI policy documents including Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy - [FAI Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy](#)



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# 1 - KEY DATES

- This Protocol applies to all training sessions from Wednesday, October 7th 2020 and must be adhered to for all training sessions under the jurisdiction of the FAI and its Affiliates



## 2 - CLUB MANAGEMENT | COVID-19 COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

- It is recommended club management committees review the FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol 5th Edition ahead of any return to non-contact training from Wednesday, October 7th 2020
- No indoor gatherings/meetings are permitted
- COVID-19 Compliance Officers should be familiar with the Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol 5th Edition in advance of any consultation with their club
- All clubs must appoint at least one COVID-19 Compliance Officer before any return to training is implemented
- Clubs with multiple training venues will need to appoint more than one COVID-19 Compliance Officer (minimum 1 per training venue)
- The Football Association of Ireland will provide Role & Responsibilities Document for all COVID-19 Compliance Officers
- Clubs must confirm appointment of COVID-19 Compliance Officer(s) to FAI via the checklist
- Clubs must ensure, through their Compliance Officers, that all coaches, parents and players are fully aware of their responsibilities
- Clubs must continually educate players/coaches/parents/guardians/volunteers - see <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
- Clubs are advised to inform their insurers of their intention to return to training
- Clubs who have not yet returned to training must follow all steps as set out above
- Clubs who have already returned a completed checklist are not required to resend it





# 3 - PREPARING TRAINING VENUES, FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

- A COVID-19 Risk Assessment must be carried out by all clubs in advance of any resumption of training and/or facility reopening
- FAI Risk Assessment Template can be found here - [FAI Risk Assessment Template](#)
- The Risk Assessment must be reviewed regularly and kept up to date at all times
- The Risk Assessment must be in line with any Government updates to the Plan for Living with COVID-19
- No changing rooms can be used
- No shower facilities can be used
- Sanitary facilities should be accessible for players and coaches
- Sanitary facilities should be thoroughly cleaned before the first and after the last training session at the venue
- Hand sanitiser and cleaning products should be available in the sanitary facilities for use during training sessions
- All training equipment - including goalposts - must be sanitised before and after every training session
- Players & Coaches must bring their own hand sanitisers
- Clubs are advised to have hand sanitisers in place and observe strict hand hygiene measures
- COVID-19 Signage must be clearly visible throughout the training facility
- COVID-19 signage is available for download from FAI.ie



## 4 - TRAINING GROUPS | NUMBERS

- The maximum numbers are as follows:

**Adult Training – Group of 15 (14 players and minimum 1 coach)**

**Underage Training – Group of 15 (13 players and minimum 2 coaches)**

- A parent or guardian is allowed to accompany any player under the age of 18 to training and may remain at the venue for the duration of the training session
- Any parent or guardian attending a training session must strictly observe 2 metres social distancing at all times
- Clubs must adhere to the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy and other associated policies, at all times which can be found here - [FAI Child Welfare & Safeguarding Policy](#)
- Only essential personnel are permitted access onto the training pitch/area
- More than one team can train at a venue at any given time provided there is a clear buffer zone between the groups





# 5 - COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

- All coaches must be familiar with the Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- All coaches must ensure that all participants in training sessions are briefed on the Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- Coaches must arrive to the session in their training gear
- All coaches must adhere to the Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol throughout the full duration of the training session
- Coaches must provide a register of attendees at all training sessions to the COVID-19 Compliance Officer for contact tracing purposes
- Coaches must bring their own hand sanitiser
- Coaches must ensure that the training area and pitch is clear of all equipment before leaving the facility





# 6 - BEFORE YOU COACH

**You must stay at home if you:**

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 or a suspected COVID-19 case in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have flu-like symptoms or are feeling unwell
- Have a temperature of 38C or more
- Experience the sudden onset of a cough or a shortness of breath
- Experience a sudden loss of sense of taste and smell

**You must:**

- Check with your GP if you are in a high-risk health category and if you are medically fit to coach
- Familiarise yourself with COVID-19 safety protocols at your club
- Ensure your club has up-to-date contact details for you
- If you have additional concerns due to underlying medical conditions - or living with people with underlying conditions - please discuss these concerns with your club's COVID-19 Compliance Officer as part of your club's risk assessment
- Please ensure you have clarified that it is safe for you to return to coaching



# 7 - PLAYER & PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- All players & parents/guardians of underage players must be familiar with the Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- Clubs must ensure that all players & parents/guardians of underage players are briefed on the Updated Protocol before returning to training
- Players and parents/guardians are advised to keep up to date with HSE guidelines via [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus)
- Adult players must arrive to the training venue alone or can be dropped off by a member of the same household
- Underage players must be dropped off by a member of the same household or can arrive to the training venue alone (if appropriate age)
- Players must arrive in their training gear and with their own equipment including water (labelled with their name) and shin pads
- Goalkeepers, or any player acting as a goalkeeper, must wear their own gloves
- Players must bring their own hand sanitiser
- Personal items must be labelled with the player's name and not shared
- Players must bring all personal items home with them





# 8 - BEFORE YOU TRAIN

**You must stay at home if you:**

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 or a suspected COVID-19 case in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have flu-like symptoms or are feeling unwell
- Have a temperature of 38C or more
- Experience the sudden onset of a cough or a shortness of breath
- Experience a sudden loss of sense of taste and smell

**You must:**

- Check with your GP if you are in a high-risk health category and if you are medically fit to train
- Familiarise yourself with COVID-19 safety protocols at your club
- Ensure your club has up-to-date contact details for you
- If you have additional concerns due to underlying medical conditions – or living with people with underlying conditions please refer to HSE guidelines - [HSE Covid-19 Guidelines](#)
- Please ensure you have clarified that it is safe for you to return to training



## 9 - TRAINING SESSIONS

- Access & Egress to and from the training pitch or area must be coordinated and is subject to social distancing guidelines
- A 15 minute gap between sessions must be implemented if consecutive training sessions are scheduled on the same training area
- All activity must take place only on the training pitch or area
- Players & Coaches must practice good coughing & sneezing etiquette
- Players & Coaches must adhere to HSE guidelines on hand hygiene at all times
- Any meeting which may need to take place must take place on the training pitch or area and should last no longer than 10 minutes
- All meetings on the training pitch or area must adhere to social distancing guidelines
- All training sessions must be **non-contact** including no in-house matches, small sided games, or other activities that will involve contact between players
- Coaches and players are not permitted to leave their resident county for training with adult amateur and non-elite underage teams





# 10 - PLAYER WELFARE

- Players in need of attention, where possible, should be treated on the pitch
- A Coach or Club Physiotherapist can attend to an injured player on the pitch
- They should wear a face mask and gloves
- A designated room – where applicable and necessary – can be used for treating an injured player
- Physiotherapists - where applicable - must wear PPE
- A player suspected of a new onset of COVID-19 must be given a face mask and must be isolated immediately from the rest of the attendees
- Contact must be made with a parent/guardian of any underage player who is suspected of contracting COVID-19
- Any adult player suspected of contracting COVID-19 must be advised to contact their GP as soon as possible



# 11 - ACTIONS AROUND A SUSPECTED CASE

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- **Has the player travelled with other players or staff members to games and training over the past 14 days?**
  - If the answer is Yes – The players and those he/she travelled with should stand down until test results are known and public health have completed their contact tracing process
  - If the answer is No – There is no requirement for anyone other than the player to stand down
- **Has the player socialised with other squad members over the past 14 days?**
  - If the answer is Yes – The players and those he/she travelled with should stand down until test results are known and public health have completed their contact tracing process
  - If the answer is No – There is no requirement for anyone other than the player to stand down
- **Has the player been in a dressing room, meeting room or team bus for 15 minutes or more with the full squad over the past 14 days?**
  - If the answer is Yes – The players and those he/she travelled with should stand down until test results are known and public health have completed their contact tracing process
  - If the answer is No – There is no requirement for anyone other than the player to stand down



# 12 - CONTACT DEFINITION

## Close Contact V Casual Contact

- A close contact is deemed to have occurred when a person is in face to face contact with a positive or suspected case (result of test awaited) for more than 15 minutes, inside a 2-metre distance
- Close contacts need to self-isolate for 14 days pending contact and subsequent testing by Public Health
- Close contacts in the context of training and playing are most likely to occur in the following circumstances:
  - Shared car journeys
  - Shared dressing rooms
- Contacts on the field of play (training or playing) are considered casual contacts
- Casual contacts are not required to restrict their movements or self-isolate

Please send any queries to [covidchecklist@fai.ie](mailto:covidchecklist@fai.ie)



# 11 - UPDATING POLICY

- Clubs should communicate regularly to review implementation, Risk Assessment and Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- All clubs should hold regular de-briefing sessions with coaches, player representatives and COVID-19 Compliance Officers





# 14 - NEXT STEPS

- The FAI will continue to update this FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol based on the advice of Government and Health agencies
- All FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol updates will be posted on FAI.ie
- All enquiries can be emailed to [covidchecklist@fai.ie](mailto:covidchecklist@fai.ie)

