



FAI SAFER RETURN TO TRAINING PROTOCOL

ADULT AMATEUR & UNDERAGE FOOTBALL
INCLUDING UNDERAGE NATIONAL LEAGUES

1ST EDITION: MONDAY 8TH JUNE 2020



INTRODUCTION

- The primary aim of this Protocol is to support clubs affiliated to the Football Association of Ireland 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 Roadmap For Reopening Society and Business
- The Protocol will be utilised in line with all other FAI policy documents including Child Welfare
- The FAI has identified the return to training date for all clubs to be on or from Monday, June 15th 2020
- The FAI has made this decision to allow clubs time to review this Protocol and plan and implement all conditions
- As per Government guidelines, no matches – friendly or competitive - are permitted until further notice
- This Protocol is a live document and is subject to change in line with Government updates



CONTENT

1 - Key Dates

2 - Club Management | COVID-19 Compliance Officers

3 - Preparing Training Venues, Facilities & Equipment

4 - Training Groups | Numbers

5 - Coach Responsibilities

6 - Before You Coach

7 - Player & Parent Responsibilities

8 - Before You Train

9 - Training Sessions

10 - Player Welfare

11 - Updating Policy

12 - Next Steps



1 - KEY DATES

Friday 5th June

- Government publishes new guidelines on return for sport in Phase Two of the Roadmap For Reopening Society and Business

Monday 8th June

- Circulation of FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol, Risk Assessment form and Checklist to all clubs

Monday 15th June

- Clubs permitted to train from this date, in accordance with FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol



2 - CLUB MANAGEMENT | COVID-19 COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

- It is recommended club management committees meet to review the FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol ahead of any return date, on Monday, June 15th 2020, or thereafter which the club may implement
- All club meetings must adhere to social distancing guidelines
- Management Committees should be familiar with the FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol in advance of any meetings
- 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 [hse.ie/coronavirus](https://www.hse.ie/coronavirus)
- Clubs are advised to inform their insurers of their intention to return to training



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
- The FAI will circulate a Risk Assessment template to all clubs & affiliates on Monday, June 8th 2020
- 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 Roadmap For Reopening Society and Business
- 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 will be available for download from FAI.ie



4 - TRAINING GROUPS | NUMBERS

- Clubs are permitted to train on or after Monday June 15th
- Clubs can only train when the completed checklist is returned to the FAI, via email to covidchecklist@fai.ie
- The maximum numbers are as follows:
 - Adult Training - Group of 15 (14 players & minimum 1 coach)**
 - Underage Training - Group of 15 (13 players & minimum 2 coaches/volunteers)**
- Clubs must adhere to the FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy and other associated policies, at all times
<https://www.fai.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/FAI%20Child%20Welfare%20Safeguarding%20Policy.pdf>
- Only essential personnel are permitted access onto the training pitch/area



5 - COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

- All coaches must be familiar with the FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- All coaches must ensure that all participants in training sessions are briefed on the FAI Safer Return to Training protocol
- Coaches must arrive to the session in their training gear
- All coaches must adhere to the FAI Safer Return to Training Protocols 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 ask 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 FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- Clubs must ensure that all players & parents/guardians of underage players are briefed on the 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)
- Parents must not remain at the training venue. Any parents who need to remain for children should ask to be incorporated within training numbers
- 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 probable case of COVID-19 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- Please see above re specific symptoms

You must:

- Check with your GP if you are in a high-risk health category and ask 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 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 training



9 - TRAINING SESSIONS

- The minimum size of the training area must be 75 X 50 metres
- Access & Egress to and from the training pitch or area must be coordinated and 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
- Contact in training sessions must be kept to a minimum:
 - No handling of the ball (apart from the Goalkeeper)**
 - No throw-ins**
 - No corner kicks**
 - No free kicks**
 - No hand contact (handshakes, fist bumps etc)**
 - No spitting is allowed**
- Players & Coaches must practice sneezing & coughing 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 must adhere to social distancing guidelines



10 - PLAYER WELFARE

- **Players in need of attention, where possible, should be treated on the pitch**
- **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 - UPDATING POLICY

- Club should meet regularly to review implementation, Risk Assessment and FAI Safer Return to Train protocol
- All clubs should hold regular de-briefing sessions with coaches, player representatives and COVID-19 Compliance Officers



12 - NEXT STEPS

- The FAI will update this FAI Safer Return to Training Guideline based on the advice of Government and Health agencies
- All FAI Safer Return to Training updates will be posted on FAI.ie
- The FAI will review the Cessation of Football deadline around matches, which currently runs until July 20th, in the coming weeks
- No competitive or friendly matches are permitted until further notice, as per Government guidelines

