

Guidance to Clubs and Tournament Managers for holding tournaments in England from 29 March 2021

Introduction

1. This document is intended to help clubs and tournament managers plan and manage any tournaments that are due to be held after 29 March in order to ensure they comply with the government's guidance and regulations.
2. This guidance focuses principally on tournaments due to be held before the start of Step 4 (no earlier than 21 June) when restrictions are expected to be eased significantly. Updated guidance is expected to be issued for Step 3 (no earlier than 17 May) and Step 4 (no earlier than 21 June), and some restrictions are expected to remain after Step 4.
3. All events in 2021 must bear this guidance in mind, not least because this continues to be a fast-moving situation and government guidance can be relaxed or tightened at any time. Clubs and players should, therefore, be prepared to react to changes and players should be aware that this may include cancellation of an event at short notice.
4. This guidance is an update of a document reviewed by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in July 2020.
5. It is essential that at all stages of planning an event, the latest government and CA guidance should be taken into account. At the time of writing, the following are recommended reading:

Government Guidance:

- [COVID-19 Response for England](#)
- [Reopening businesses and venues in England](#)
- [Guidance for people who work in grassroots sport and sports facilities](#)

CA Guidance:

- [CA COVID-19 Guidance](#), which includes more detailed guidance for clubs and players.
6. Clubs located in, or close to, Wales or Scotland should also consider different guidance that may be applicable to them or visiting players.
 7. The final decision whether or not to hold a competition or tournament is left entirely at the discretion of the club(s) hosting it, in consultation with the Organising Body if different. In addition to this guidance they should take into account the views of their members, rules stipulated by landlords, the nature of the tournament and any other local conditions - including any local lockdown restrictions.

Guidance for size and format of event

8. An event is regarded as formally organised activity if it has been publicised in advance and is run under the direction of a manager/organiser, who must be present and responsible for ensuring that the event is conducted in a COVID-19 secure manner.
9. Although gathering limits do not apply to formally organised tournaments, it is important that events remain controlled and safe. Therefore, all tournaments must ensure that no more than eight people are on a full-size court at any one time, or four on half-size or Short courts.
10. All other government guidelines ensuring a Covid-19 secure event (especially social distancing) must be met throughout the duration of the tournament. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - a. The entry size must be no more than the playing capacity of the courts so that social distancing can be maintained during play and at all other times.
 - b. The host club must satisfy itself that it has adequate off-court space and facilities for that number of players, including toilet and hand-washing facilities and shelter in the case of extreme weather.

Preparations prior to the event

11. Clubs, when carrying out their risk assessment, must consider the whole end-to-end 'user journey' when planning safe operating practices. This means all activities from the time of arrival on site to leaving, not just the sporting activity. As well as considering players, this activity must also include staff (if applicable) and/or volunteers at the club.
12. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - a. **Ensure that it is clear that anyone who is symptomatic or suspects they have been exposed to the virus does not take part and remains at home.**
 - b. Indoor facilities, apart from toilets and through-ways, should be kept closed until government guidance in this regard changes.
 - c. Additional arrangements may be required for more frequent cleaning of any areas that are open. This should include appropriate signage regarding queuing arrangements, and ensuring that appropriate hygiene facilities are provided (e.g. disposable towels and hand sanitiser)
 - d. Provision must be made for players to shelter at the social distance in force at the time of the event. It is important to consider bad weather. A typical shelter found at most clubs may only accommodate one person unless the social distance plus mitigation measures can be enforced. Players' cars may provide an option if other facilities are limited.
 - e. Until catering is permitted, all players must bring their own refreshments, including drinks and food, and they should be told to take all their rubbish home with them. Players will assume

there are no bar and catering facilities open unless the club specifically informs them otherwise.

- f. Arrangements should be made for somewhere for players to eat their packed lunches at the social distance currently in force. Again, bad weather should be considered. This may mean gazebos, sitting under umbrellas or in their own car.
- g. Clear instructions should be sent to all the players about the club rules for arrival, hand washing, toilets, equipment cleaning, shelter etc. This should include instructions to players to arrive and leave in the clothes they will be playing in.
- h. Spectators should be limited to club members, members of a player's own household or support bubble, or other individuals agreed with the Manager in advance. All spectators should follow current government guidance on group sizes and maintain social distancing from each other and the players.

Guidance for managing the event

- 13. Do as much of the draw and arranging of games in advance of the tournament as possible. Let players know who they will be playing and on which lawn in advance if possible.
- 14. If possible, stagger start times so that everyone is not arriving at the club at the same time.
- 15. Inform the players of the format before the event. Avoid players asking for advice or instruction by telling them everything beforehand and putting up notices with the same information.
- 16. Players should avoid congregating, for example at a manager's table to write results on a board, or between games.
- 17. Players may call for a referee. All refereeing will require maintenance of social distance. This may mean the referee will ask the players to move away whilst testing static positions (for example, balls on/off court, hoops scored/not scored, balls in/not in contact, wirings). For questionable shots the referee should take the best position possible whilst maintaining social distance. Referees may use their own phones to provide high speed images of strokes if that enables them to referee effectively at a greater distance. (See Tournament Regulation L3)
- 18. Maintain, for at least 21 days, records of games and lawn allocations to support contact tracing should it subsequently be required.

Notes on Tournament Regulations

- 19. Attention is drawn in particular to the following provisions of the Tournament Regulations which clubs may need to rely upon in order to make appropriate adjustments to events in order to comply with the guidance above.
 - a. **M1(k) (Emergencies)**. The CA considers that this regulation applies to all events taking place during the Covid-19 pandemic. This Regulation requires that the manager takes actions necessary to protect players and the club. This may include:

- (1) Alterations to the published programme to adopt a different format or a reduced number of players (C2(c))
 - (2) Refuse entry to certain players, for example those who would be unable to commute to/from the club each day or who are displaying symptoms (C3(e))
 - b. **M2(g) (Sanctions)**, includes breaches of Covid-specific requirements (including distancing and hygiene measures), and may result in disqualification and being asked to leave the premises.
 - c. **C2(b) (Titles for Events)** still applies. If the requirements of, for example, a Championship cannot be met, the event should either be downgraded or not held.
 - d. **P4(b) (Reporting)**. Players should report to the manager at the start and end of play, and results at the end of each game/match in accordance with arrangements made for each event. It is not expected that this will be a face-to-face arrangement.
20. The following regulations are amended during the Covid-19 pandemic:
- a. **Appendix 1** -The use of flags, corner/off-side markers and clips is optional.
21. The CA does not intend to impose any penalties on players who withdraw due to Covid-19, whether that is imposed (for example, due to isolation requirements) or personal choice. Consequently:
- a. An administrative fee under Regulation P3(g) should not be imposed.
 - b. Withdrawals, even at short notice, will not be subject to sanction under Regulations P2(c) or P3(h).
22. Given the lack of opportunity to play last season and potentially this season, the adjustment for allocation and seeding purposes of 50 grade points per year for those who have not played sufficient games is suspended for the remainder of 2021. (Regulations C3(a)(3), F1(a)(3)).

Changes Log

17th March 2021

2021/V1 – first published.