



**COVID-19 RETURN TO PLAY ACTION
PLAN**

COMMUNITY CLUB GUIDANCE FOR ENGLAND

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Updated: 19 July 2021

To continue to simplify our approach to managing the risk of Covid-19 in British American football, following the lifting of most legal restrictions in England, we have created an updated single set of guidance that applies to both contact and flag formats.

Make sure you read this guidance carefully and fully understand the requirements before undertaking any activity. Please also be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced at short notice.

These guidelines have been produced in line with the most recent version of the UK Government's [return to recreational team sport framework](#) and the [COVID-19 Response - Summer 2021 document](#) which details step 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown for England. Our guidance takes account of changes in the law that take effect on 19 July and will be updated and reissued to take into account of further relevant changes to regulations.

Please remember...

As Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, it is important that we all use caution and good judgement to manage risk. All of us can play our part by exercising common sense and considering the risks. While no situation is risk free, there are actions we can take to protect ourselves and others around us while participating in American football activity. Following this guidance will help you enjoy our sport as safely as possible.

Although many people have been vaccinated, please remember it is still possible to catch and spread Covid-19, even if you are fully vaccinated, and we are still in the third wave of this pandemic in the UK. Please also remember there are people in our sport and in our wider communities who may still be especially vulnerable to the virus, including those with conditions or who are receiving treatments that suppress their immune system.

It is also important to consider that others may wish to take a more cautious approach as things open up. We should all be considerate of this and provide the opportunity and space for others to reduce close contacts if they wish.

If you have any questions relating to this document, or the guidance contained within, please contact covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org in the first instance.

GUIDANCE NOTE FOR UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL CLUBS

University clubs must ensure they work with the Sports or Athletic Union at their institution to meet their own specific return to play and risk assessment requirements. There is no requirement for risk assessment documentation or Club Covid-19 Officer details to be entered in BAFA's GoMembership system. Institution specific guidance for managing positive cases of Covid-19 and recording attendance should also be followed.

In addition, university clubs must also ensure that institution-specific regulations are followed in respect to registering playing membership ahead of facilitating physical activity. Please note, the £20 player affiliation fee has been waived for the 2020-21 academic year, but coaches must be registered on BAFA's GoMembership system as usual ahead of activity resuming.

University clubs who plan to hold inter-university or varsity games will need to provide advance notification and a risk assessment to BUCS Competition Commission Lead Marcus Boswell at bucs@britishamericanfootball.org in order to confirm plans have been overseen and approved by their Sports or Athletic union or other appropriate departments. BAFA will then sanction as appropriate and confirm to BAFRA that officials can be provided if requested.

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OFF-FIELD ACTIVITY

CLUB PREPARATION

1. Club management should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of the measures outlined in this document.
2. It is expected that clubs will draw up their own detailed practice protocols, however the Covid-19 adapted behaviours outlined in this document should be common to all clubs.
3. All clubs need to conduct a risk assessment of their facilities, operating procedures and planned activities prior undertaking American football activity. They should have appropriate measures in place to provide a safe environment for players, volunteers and other relevant individuals such as officials. These measures should be aligned with BAFA and Government guidance. The aim is to introduce suitable control measures to reduce the risk of contracting the virus to as low a level as is 'reasonably practicable'. A BAFA risk assessment template is available [here](#).
4. Clubs should upload a copy of their Return to Play Risk Assessment in BAFA's GoMembership system, where it will be reviewed. Where clubs have multiple teams returning to play in different facilities, a separate Return to Play Risk Assessment should be uploaded for each team. Clubs should make sure their risk assessments are updated to reflect any additional risks and mitigations for modified contact activity, including the provision of adequate first aid supplies and cover as normal.
5. Clubs must also make sure they have an Emergency Action Plan for reacting to incidents. An example template is available [here](#).
6. Participants must be made aware that relevant COVID-19 mitigations are in place and complying with these measures as a condition of participation.

CLUB COVID-19 OFFICER / COVID-19 TEAM LEADS

7. Each club should appoint a Club Covid-19 Officer to help assist in ensuring that the club has taken and maintains the appropriate measures to resume activity safely.
8. The name of your Club COVID-19 officer must also be entered in the club details section of the GoMembership system.

9. All Club Covid-19 Officers should complete BAFA's [ReActivate Covid-19 Awareness Award](#). This training is mandatory for all designated BAFA Club Covid-19 Officers and recommended for all Covid-19 Team Leads and any coaches leading activity, and supersedes any other equivalent training completed. Completion of this training will be tracked by BAFA and certificates should be loaded up within the GoMembership system as an individual qualification for approval.
10. As we appreciate many of our clubs comprise multiple teams operating across different third party provided facilities, and running to different timings, we know that having a single volunteer club Covid-19 Officer may be impractical. In these instances, we request that each team within the club has a designated Covid-19 Team Lead, reporting to an overall Club Covid-19 Officer.
11. Club management must make sure that the appointed persons will receive all necessary support to undertake their roles.
12. The club must ensure that all members are notified of who their Club Covid-19 Officer is, should they have to pass on their details to a member of the NHS Test and Trace team
13. The Club Covid-19 Officer and any Covid-19 Team Leads should not put themselves at risk whilst carrying out the role. Duties of these roles include but are not limited to:
 - Completing documented risk assessments and ensuring all appropriate mitigations are put in place by the club before any activity is undertaken.
 - Being aware of and understanding government and BAFA guidelines, communicating these with relevant club volunteers and monitoring that these are strictly adhered to.
 - Ensuring there is awareness of your club's Covid-19 protocols across club volunteers and participants, and that processes are in place to ensure participants and parents / guardians for those under 18 take individual responsibility to self-assess for symptoms of Covid-19 prior to attending sessions.
 - You are no longer obliged to keep a record of attendees practicing or attending games or tournaments within the club, but it is recommended you still do so. This may be delegated across the club, for example to Covid-19 Team Leads or coaching staff, but should be accessible by the Club Covid-19 Officer.
 - Ensuring all records must be kept for 21 days and used in accordance with GDPR legislation. More information is available from the NHS on ['how test and trace works'](#) and ['maintaining records'](#). Clubs should decide how these records will be kept and stored, for example on paper or using an online format e.g. Google Docs or a shared drive.
 - Providing Covid-19 safety information and protocols to all players, coaching personnel and parent/guardians
 - Ensuring relevant club volunteers are aware of the need to regularly clean and sanitise all equipment after each session (e.g. balls, flags).

- Making necessary representations to club management about any COVID-19 concerns. (Covid-19 Team Leads should raise any issues with the Covid-19 Officer to share first).
- Reporting any areas of non-compliance immediately to club management and ensuring that these are addressed. (Covid-19 Team Leads should raise any issues with the Covid-19 Officer to report first).
- The Club Covid-19 Officer should Inform club management if they become aware of a confirmed case of Covid-19 or if they have been made aware of an individual with COVID-19 symptoms. (Covid-19 team leads should advise the Covid-19 Officer first)
- Ensuring track and trace protocols are followed should the club be contacted

DEALING WITH A POSTIVE CASE OF COVID-19

14. If an individual receives a positive test result following testing for Covid-19, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and asked to share information about their activities and close contacts just before and/or after developing symptoms or testing positive. Participants who have taken part in club activities during this period should be encouraged to identify this activity on their Test and Trace record to support the contact tracing process. Further information is available on the [NHS Test and Trace webpage](#).
15. Should the confirmed case be unable to identify all those they may have had contact with during practice or play at the club, they should advise NHS Test and Trace during their interview and this will be escalated through the NHS Test and Trace system who may make contact with the club directly to see if contacts may be identified. Evidence of risk assessments, practice plans, record keeping, and other relevant documentation may be requested as part of this review and should be readily available to share if requested.
16. Please note, it is not the responsibility of the club to inform members if someone at the club has tested positive for Covid-19. This will be done by the NHS Test and Trace team if deemed appropriate, who will advise anyone identified as a close contact to self-isolate or seek testing if required. An individual's right to privacy must be observed.
17. Should the club have any concerns following a confirmed case that they become aware of, they should contact their local [PHE Health Protection Team](#) for advice and support.
18. In the event that a club becomes aware of a confirmed positive case of Covid-19, either by being notified by the individual or by Test and Trace, BAFA should be notified by emailing [Covid- 19@britishamericanfootball.org](mailto:Covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org) This information is requested to allow BAFA to monitor the number of confirmed positive Covid-19 cases occurring in clubs, and to make sure clubs have the appropriate support.

VENUE AND FACILITIES

19. Participants are still encouraged to avoid or minimise the use of changing rooms. Where possible, players should be arrive changed and shower at home afterwards.
20. As part of your risk assessment, identify any potential areas of crowding and consider what steps can be taken to avoid congestion, if they present a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission. For example, you could limit the number of people using changing facilities, at the same time. You could also use timetabling to prevent crowding.
21. We know that our member clubs are reliant on third party owned or managed facilities. Clubs should request information from their facility provider on venue operations plans, risk assessments and any special requirements relating to Covid-19 to help inform your planning.
22. In enclosed spaces (such as indoor settings, or indoor areas of outdoor venues), ventilation is an important control measure to reduce the risk of aerosol transmission of COVID-19. You should consider how best to increase ventilation when using your facility, to maximise the supply of fresh or cleaned air. For example, opening doors, windows and air vents where possible, to improve natural ventilation.
23. If not already in place, clubs are also encouraged to request their facility provider create and display a [QR code for their venue](#). This will enable visitors to scan the QR code when they arrive, using the NHS Covid-19 app, and help trace and stop the spread of the virus.

REGISTERING WITH THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

24. BAFA clubs in England who have created their own coronavirus QR code for their venue for people to scan and check-in on arrival with the NHS Covid-19 app should be aware that this may mean they have to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and pay a data protection fee. This may also apply to any other form of QR code or online check-in used to capture information for a venue by a BAFA club.
25. You may need register because you are using an electronic system to gather and store data and most organisations that process personal information are required by law to do so and pay the fee which for small organisations, is between £40-60 per year. If you're subject to the requirement, it's important that you register and pay the fee as otherwise the ICO can impose financial penalties.
26. You do not need to register if you are only using the QR code to capture information to keep an attendance record for your own members. This is because data processing which is only for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership is exempt. Your organisation must also have already been exempt from the requirement to register with the ICO.
27. You also don't need to do this if your venue has a QR code members scan on arrival, but this was not created and is not administered by your club. For example, the people who hire your pitch from require all your members to do this as a condition of use. You also do not need to do this if you are

simply recording attendance using pen and paper. Records should be kept no longer than 21 days, in line with data protection regulations.

28. If you are unsure whether or not you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113, or visit <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

SPECTATORS

29. If you're expecting a significant number of spectators, you should review the UK Government's [guidance for events and attractions](#) and follow any relevant measures to reduce the risk of transmission at your event. This includes further advice about the types of measures you can put in place (such as crowd movement strategies and stewarding) to manage risks in these types of events, along with a risk management template to help you plan your event.

TRAVEL

30. Participants are encouraged to follow best practice for travel. It is recommended you wear a face covering when travelling in a private vehicle with people you do not usually meet. On your journey, open windows to let fresh air in where possible. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands often, and always when exiting or re-entering your vehicle. See the UK Government's [safer travel guidance](#) for passengers for further information.

31. Please check if local restrictions on organised outdoor activity are in place before visiting another UK nation to participate in sport. Should you travel to a different nation to take part in American football activity, you must always strictly adhere to local regulations.

BAFA MEMBERSHIP

32. Only individuals registered in the [BAFA GoMembership System](#) are eligible to participate in sanctioned National Leagues American football activity. The only exception to this is new club members – who may undertake three trial sessions as long as their details are captured as per BAFA's existing three trial session process. New members MUST be registered after their third trial session.

33. Accurate player, coach and support staff data including full name, email address and phone number is collected upon registration and is available to designated club administrators to help enable detailed Test and Trace record keeping.

34. To support maintaining records for Test and Trace, participants should only take part in activity sessions with their registered BAFA club team and age group.

35. University clubs must ensure that institution-specific regulations are followed in respect to registering playing membership ahead of facilitating physical activity, but coaches must be registered on BAFA's GoMembership system as usual ahead of activity resuming.

TEST AND TRACE

36. [Test and Trace](#) is England's way to ensure that anyone who develops symptoms of Covid-19 can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus, and also includes targeted asymptomatic testing of NHS and social care staff and care home residents. It helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus.
37. The gathering of contact information from anyone attending American football activity in a secure and safe manner, will assist the Test and Trace service to identify any clusters of cases, contact those who may have been exposed to the virus, and request them to take appropriate steps to prevent potential onward spread.
38. In order to support Test and Trace, Club Covid-19 officers for BAFA affiliated clubs are required to keep a record of the name, contact number, date of activity session and timings for all those attending organised American football activities within the club. This may be delegated across the club, for example to Covid-19 Team Leads or coaching staff, but must be accessible by the Club Covid-19 officer at all times.
39. Ensure all records must be kept for 21 days and used in accordance with GDPR legislation. More information is available from the NHS on ['how test and trace works'](#) and ['maintaining records'](#). Clubs should decide how these records will be kept and stored, for example paper or using online format e.g. Google Docs.

PARTICIPANT SELF-ASSESSMENT

40. Before attending any sporting activities, all participants, officials, volunteers and spectators should self-assess for Covid-19 symptoms (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste). If they, or anyone they live with, have one or more of these symptoms (even if they are mild), you should advise them not to attend any sporting activity, and to follow [NHS guidance on testing and self-isolation](#).
41. Clearly communicate to participants that they should not take part in activity if they need to self-isolate, for example because they have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, are required to isolate after travel or because they are displaying any Covid-19, even if these symptoms are mild. Advise them that if they, or anyone they live with, have one or more of these symptoms they should not attend, and should follow [guidance](#)

[on testing and self-isolation.](#)

42. It's recommended that clubs have a regular reminder process in place to make sure participants take individual responsibility to complete a symptom self-assessment before attending practice or games.
43. We strongly encourage the regular use of rapid lateral flow tests amongst all our members. This is not mandatory, but is a simple, easy to use and free precaution. Packs of test kits are available to [order for free from the UK government](#) or to collect from a [local pharmacy or test site](#), and can help stop the spread of asymptomatic Covid-19. Remember, about 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms but can still infect others.
44. You should advise participants to consider their own health and circumstances (for example, if they are not yet double-vaccinated or they live with somebody vulnerable), so they can make an informed choice about whether they wish to participate. You should set out the safety measures you have put in place, and how you will mitigate any specific risks.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND FACE COVERINGS

45. You no longer need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. However, in order to minimise risk at a time of high prevalence, we recommend that social distancing is still maintained wherever possible when participating in American football activity. This is in line with UK government guidance to limit the close contact you have with those you do not usually live with, which includes minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.
46. Face coverings are no longer required by law, but the UK Government expects and recommends that people should continue to wear them in crowded and enclosed settings, to protect themselves and others. Where worn correctly, this can reduce the risk of transmission. For example, you may wish to put on a face covering after your American football activity if you are in a crowded indoor facility – for example, a changing room.

SAFEGUARDING

47. Please continue to follow the process outlined in your club Safeguarding Policy and report any concerns to BAFA by contacting our safeguarding team at safeguarding@britishamericanfootball.org
48. There will be no alteration to the standards we had in place pre-Covid 19, therefore DBS checks will still need to be in place for designated roles, including coaches, and for any new recruits to roles, prior to any activity resuming with children and youth teams.
49. Coaches and those working with children should familiarise themselves with the Covid- 19 resources for supporting young people developed by the [NSPCC](#).

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

PERMITTED AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY AND PRACTICE PLANNING

50. Coaches should risk assess and plan appropriately for each session in advance, be aware of their responsibilities and be clear on expectations with participants. It is recommended that practice plans include regular scheduled breaks for hand and equipment hygiene – before, during and after sessions.
51. As per [BAFA Competition rules and regulations](#) item 3.8, mixed age ranges may practice alongside each other in the same facility or field but must operate distinctly from each other. No game like scenarios should take place across (or mixing) any age ranges.
52. Under no circumstances should kitted contact players – those wearing helmets and / or shoulder pads - be mixed with un-kitted players during practice activity, even during non-contact drills.
53. Coaches must work to BAFCA recommended coach to player ratios. These are:
 - For 4 to 8 years – one adult to every 6 children (1:6)
 - For 9 to 12 years – one adult to every 8 children (1:8)
 - For 13 to 18 years – one adult to every 10 children (1:10)
 - For 18+ years – one supervising adult to every 10 participants (1:10)
54. There are now no longer any caps on participant numbers or pitch size. However, clubs are strongly advised to exercise caution to avoid over-crowding and ensure that adequate space is provided.
55. Staggered start and finish times and designated pitch entry points for different groups are still highly recommended to minimise any risks.

TEAM EQUIPMENT

56. Clubs should make sure all playing and training equipment, such as balls, flags and flag belts are regularly sanitised:
 - Each pitch area should have antibacterial wet wipes or spray available to enable this. At the end of each practice or game, the Covid-19 Officer or Covid-19 Team Lead should ensure any other equipment which has been handled (such cones) is sanitised.

57. You should avoid sharing equipment where possible and practical, particularly helmets. If equipment needs to be shared, it should be cleaned between users, where possible.

PARTICIPANT EQUIPMENT AND ETIQUETTE

58. Participants should be encouraged to bring their own hand sanitiser to practices and games and use it at regular intervals in activity.

59. Where possible, participants should bring their own clearly labelled or otherwise highly distinguishable water bottle to practice and not share it with others. Communal water buckets are only recommended to refill individual bottles.

60. Participants should not share towels, toiletry products, clothing such as practice jerseys or bibs, water bottles, boots, gloves, mouth guards, or disposables such as tape or ice packs.

61. Should personal playing equipment such as helmet and shoulder pads need to be fitted by a coach, please refer to Appendix 1 on safe equipment fitting.

62. As the virus is transmitted from respiratory secretions, mouthguard etiquette is very important. Players should refrain from touching or removing their mouthguard, and if they do so must sanitise their hands. Mouthguards must not be left on shared surfaces or public places but be placed in a personal container and stored with personal possessions.

63. Shouting - There may be an additional risk of infection in close proximity situations where people are shouting or conversing loudly. This particularly applies when face to face. Coaches and participants should avoid shouting or raising their voices where directly facing each other.

64. Spitting or mouth rinsing should be strongly discouraged.

65. Team scoring celebrations involving person-to-person contact are not recommended.

66. Pre or post-game handshakes, or alternatives of any sort e.g. elbowbump or foot taps are not recommended.

FIRST AID, HEALTH AND HYGIENE

67. Physios and other medical personnel should ensure that equipment and surfaces are frequently cleaned and disinfected, and maintain hygiene standards when treating participants.
68. Where close face-to-face contact is required, medical personnel may decide that they and patients should wear a face covering. This is particularly important when they are conducting treatments which require them to be in close proximity to a person's face, mouth and nose.
69. If you are not wearing face coverings and need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve. Dispose of your tissue into an appropriate bin supplied at the venue or place in a plastic bag and take home. Wash your hands afterwards for 20 seconds.

MORE INFORMATION

For additional information, please visit www.britishamericanfootball.org/Covid-19

If you have any questions, please contact:

covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org - for Covid-19 safety and other off-field activity related questions

info@bafca.co.uk - for coaching specific queries

mark.snow@britishamericanfootball.org – for queries relating to contact football

adultflagfootball@britishamericanfootball.org - for queries relating to mixed or women's adult flag football

sreeni.shaji@britishamericanfootball.org - for queries relating to U11,U14 or U17 flag football

bucs@britishamericanfootball.org – for questions relating to university football

registrations@britishamericanfootball.org – for questions relating to BAFA team or individual membership

APPENDIX 1 – SAFE CONTACT EQUIPMENT FITTING

Where a coach is required to fit a player for personal playing equipment, such as helmet or shoulder pads, the following guidance is recommended to ensure this is carried out safely.

- Equipment should be fitted outdoors where possible.
- Strong hand hygiene is recommended prior to equipment fitting and post equipment fitting.
- It is recommended that both the participant and fitter wear a face covering.
- Time spent in close contact fitting equipment must be minimised where possible, and the majority of fitting actions should be completed by the wearer under distanced, verbal direction. Share the approved fitting videos and resources with participants beforehand to set expectations and minimise time spent.
- Where equipment of different sizes is tried on by an individual, all equipment tried on but not used by them should be thoroughly sanitised with appropriate disinfectant wipes or spray before being tried on by another participant or returned to storage.
- Equipment should not be shared between individuals in the same session, and all equipment used by participants and collected back by the clubs afterwards must also be thoroughly sanitised after use.
- Game pants, practice jerseys and bibs etc should not be shared. Any team issued practice or playing uniform should be thoroughly washed before being reissued.

Helmet fitting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zi0smzNUk1M>

Shoulder pad fitting video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLZ1vPBjrwQ>



1. Measure chest and record measurements
2. Measure shoulders and record measurements
3. Select pads
4. Put on pads
5. Secure straps and laces
6. Check for proper fit
7. Ensure coverage in front
8. Ensure coverage in back
9. Confirm proper fit



1. Check head size and record measurement
2. Put on helmet
3. Adjust helmet height
4. Adjust helmet front to back and side to side
5. Adjust face pads
6. Check for proper fit
7. Adjust chin strap
8. Take off helmet



APPENDIX 2

ORGANISING AND PARTICIPATING IN GAMES AND TOURNAMENTS

The emphasis for organising and participating in contact games and tournaments should be on careful and cautious planning and taking a common-sense approach to minimise risk. The following is not an exhaustive list of potential precautions or mitigations, as we appreciate clubs may face many different scenarios and challenges. However, clubs are encouraged to use this checklist to review and inform their own plans.

Pre-game / tournament planning – things to think about

- Where games take place between teams in differing home nations (ie between teams in England and Wales or Scotland and England), the guidance that should be followed is that of the home nation where the game is taking place.
- When planning games and tournaments, clubs must keep themselves up to date on any enhanced local restrictions that may impact on the host team or travelling team, particularly related to travel, and be aware that the guidance in place may change at short notice.
- Club risk assessments must be updated to reflect preparations for organising and participating in games and tournaments with named owners for all actions. Risk assessments should be regularly reviewed, and updated risk assessments should be uploaded on the BAFA GoMembership system.
- Club management should read the appropriate sections of BAFA's [Covid-19 officiating guidance and recommendations](#) to ensure that the needs of the game officials are included in the preparation and planning for all tournaments / games. Plan to set aside an area of the playing enclosure to be used by officials, and, if needed, indoor facilities that are big enough for the officials to maintain social distancing from each other.
- Club management should also make sure their coaches, players and other relevant staff are aware of the additional BAFA rules adjustments for Covid-19 here - <http://rules.bafra.info/covid-19/>
- Contingency planning - should either the host or a visiting team need to cancel the game or tournament at short notice due to Covid-19, make sure you have a list of everyone you need to tell at hand.
- Team travel - if you're planning to use a bus to travel to an away fixture, have you risk assessed this and worked with your travel supplier to put adequate precautions in place to ensure safe travel? For example, lateral flow testing before travelling, suggesting face coverings be worn, reduced capacity.
- Do you have enough volunteers to support your game / tournament? Do you need to recruit more?
- Consider how best to manage hydration during the game. While shared water bottles are not recommended, water dispensers / buckets can be provided on your side-line for players to fill disposable cups or top up their own bottles. You must provide access to fresh drinking water for visiting opposition and officials – for example, by directing them to a tap in your venue to fill their own water bottles / dispensers.

- Do you have a lightning safety plan in place? This should take Covid-19 risks into account, should the game or tournament need to be suspended due to lightning. Review the game management guidance for managing lightning [here](#). Should personnel need to shelter indoors, whether in a building or a vehicle, where groups of people may need to gather together face coverings are recommended.

Spectator management

- No spectators are permitted within the team area.
- Where a game or tournament is held on private land, it is recommended that clubs maintain a record of spectators to support [NHS Test and Trace](#). This means asking spectators aged 16 and over to scan the NHS QR code for your venue using their NHS Covid-19 app. If a QR code is not available for your venue, you may provide an alternative means to capture their name and contact details, so this information is available for contact tracing purposes if required. For games and tournaments taking place in outdoor sport facilities in public places we appreciate it is not possible or practical to collect information from all spectators.
- Engage with your club members and supporters in advance of your game or tournament to encourage sensible behaviours.

Face coverings

- The requirement to wear face coverings in law has been lifted. However, the UK Government has made clear it still expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas. It is still recommended that personnel in the team area wear a face covering except for squad members preparing to enter the field or those who are exempt for age, health or disability reasons. This is because participants may find it difficult to distance in a crowded area like a sideline or forget themselves during the flow of the game. Note – this is a recommendation and is an issue for teams to manage, not for officials to penalise.
- Face coverings are also recommended for officials' assistants – those acting as chain crew and ball persons.

On the days leading up to the game /tournament

- Make sure your own members know what to expect on the day. This includes club parents / guardians of children participating in games and tournaments. Information should be shared prior to game day, including reminders on symptom self-assessment and any other precautions you have in place such as lateral flow testing.
- Don't forget to organise officials' assistants - chain crew and ball persons - for adult and U19 D1 contact games. You need a minimum of five volunteers who must make themselves available at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. The minimum age for officials' assistant is 14. Officials' assistants under the age of 18 remain the responsibility of game management at all times and must be supervised by a responsible person appointed by game management. Ball persons will be responsible for regularly sanitising game balls. This must be done at the end of each period as a minimum. Plan to

provide them with sanitising materials and towels. (a supply of soapy water and cleaning cloths is adequate for balls).

- Rosters - check your roster and make sure everyone is correctly registered with BAFA and has a clear head and shoulders passport style photo. Your roster is available to download until 7pm on the Friday prior to your fixture. You should take two printed copies of your photo roster to the game. These should be updated with the shirt numbers and game day status of all personal. You should also have a list of player names and shirt numbers for game officials.
- Photographers are welcome to attend games as usual, should clubs wish. It is recommended that attendance should be prearranged, and normal good practice for photographing American football should be followed. Only photographers registered with a team on BAFA's GoMembership system and who appear on their roster are permitted in the team area.

On the day – pre-game / tournament

- Where appropriate ensure entrances and exits to the venue are monitored to avoid congestion or other issues that may be caused by people congregating.
- Make sure sanitising materials are available for the officials, chain crew and ball persons.
- Ensure the chain equipment and balls are thoroughly sanitised before the game.
- If a radio microphone is being provided for referee announcements, make sure it's sanitised before use.
- Roster checks should take place as usual. You should provide a copy of your photo roster to the representative from your opposition carrying out the check with you. This is to enable them to remain distanced should they wish while the check is carried out, rather than sharing at the host team's copy. You can request this is returned after the check is completed.
- It is recommended that players remain distanced during the roster check and should step forward or otherwise identify themselves when called, and then either leave the area of the roster check (for example, returning to the warmup area) or move to form a second, distanced, line up of checked players.

On the day – during the game /tournament

- It is still recommended that participants should arrive changed and ready to begin the warmup, if possible, to minimise time spent waiting or in holding areas.
- All individuals acting in the capacity of game officials should observe the appropriate sections of BAFA's [Covid-19 officiating guidance and recommendations](#).
- Game balls must be sanitised at the end of each period during the game as a minimum.
- Injuries during play should still be treated as participant wellbeing is utmost. A face covering is recommended for the person administering first aid.
- Team scoring celebrations involving person-to-person contact are not recommended – for example hugging, chest bumps, high-fives, or fist bumps.
- It is recommended teams remain outdoors during half-time wherever possible.

On the day – post-game

- Post-game handshakes, or alternatives of any sort e.g. elbowbump or foot taps are currently not recommended.
- Participants should be encouraged to take any team uniform home to wash it themselves, rather than have one person handling a large quantity of soiled materials. Where uniform is kept together, other precautions must be put in place. For example, those persons handling soiled uniform must wash or sanitise their hands immediately afterwards.

Organising friendly games / scrimmages and tournaments

Any plans for flag or contact friendly games or tournaments involving contact teams must be sanctioned by BAFA before taking place. To request sanction, please contact covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org detailing your plans, venue, the teams involved, estimated numbers attending and attaching a copy of your risk assessment for the event. Please give at least 14 days' notice for approval.

If you need help or support, please contact covid-19@britishamericanfootball.org for guidance.