



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

COMMUNITY CLUB GUIDANCE FOR SCOTLAND

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With effect from 3 Dec 2021

Our guidance for Scotland has now been updated, to combine into a single document for all formats of American football, reflect minor changes since it was last shared over the summer, as well as **new measures which have been put in place as a precaution, because cases of a variant of concern have been found in the UK**. These guidelines have been produced in line with sportscotland's latest [sport and physical activity guidance](#) and the [latest Covid-19 guidance for Scotland](#).

Please remember...

It's important that we all use caution and good judgement to manage risk. All of us can play our part in stopping the spread of Covid-19 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. 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. We should all be considerate of this and provide the opportunity and space for others to reduce close contacts if they wish.

Please also be aware that guidance can change, and restrictions may be reintroduced at short notice. Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, guidance in this document may not apply. Please also make sure you check with BAFA, **sportscotland** and the [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#) website for any additional updates or changes.

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 Covid-19 protocols risk assessment requirements. There is no requirement for risk assessment documentation or Club Covid-19 Officer details to be entered in BAFA's JustGo 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. Coaches must be registered on BAFA's JustGo system.

University clubs who plan to hold inter-university or varsity games out of season 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 to returning to American football activity. They should have appropriate measures in place to provide a safe environment for players, volunteers and other relevant individuals including 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](#) and an example **sportscotland** risk assessment template is also available [here](#).
4. Clubs should regularly review their Covid-19 risk assessment. Where clubs have multiple teams active in different facilities, a separate Covid-19 risk assessment should be held for each team.
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 JustGo system.
9. We recommend the **sportscotland** [Covid-19 COVID 19 Officer e-learning module](#) developed in partnership with Scottish Rugby is also completed by Club Covid-19 officers, team leads and, where appropriate, coaches and club volunteers. The certification of completion should also be loaded up within the JustGo 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 Scotland Test and Protect 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 especially in terms of the 2m social distancing rules and the practice activity undertaken by the club.
 - 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 should keep a record of attendees practicing or attending games or tournaments 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 .

- Ensuring all records must be kept for 21 days and used in accordance with GDPR legislation. 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 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 Test and Protect protocols are followed should the club be contacted

A [Covid-19 Officer](#) role summary is also available from **sportscotland** to help you.

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 Scotland's Test and Protect team 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 Protect record to support the contact tracing process. Further information is available on the [NHS Scotland Test and Protect](#).
15. 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 Scotland Test and Protect 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.
16. 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 NHS Scotland's Test and Protect team, 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

17. Access to, and use, of changing rooms and showering facilities is permitted if appropriate risk assessment and hygiene measures have been put in place. However, 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.
18. 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.
19. We know that our member clubs are reliant on third party owned or managed facilities. Adherence to the following guidelines should be worked out collaboratively between club and facility. 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 their planning.

More information can be found in **sportscotland's** guidance on [getting facilities fit for sport](#).

REGISTERING WITH THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

20. BAFA clubs in Scotland who use any form of QR code or online check-in to capture information for a venue should be aware that this may mean they have to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and pay a data protection fee.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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 that 21 days, in line with data protection regulations.
24. 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

25. If you're expecting a significant number of spectators, you think 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.
26. For indoor events, remember that by law, everyone aged 12 and over must wear a face covering, unless exempt, in most indoor public spaces, including indoor stadia.

TRAVEL

27. 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 [Transport Scotland: advice on how to travel safely](#) for further information.
28. By law, everyone aged 12 and over must wear a face covering, unless exempt, in most indoor public spaces, including private hire coaches.
29. 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

30. Only individuals registered in the [BAFA JustGo 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.

31. 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 Protect record keeping.
32. 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.
33. Players, coaches and support staff registered for any BAFA football format may participate in non-contact flag American football activities with their registered BAFA club team and age group.
34. 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 JustGo system as usual ahead of activity resuming.

TEST AND PROTECT

35. [Test and Protect](#), is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.
36. The gathering of contact information from anyone attending American football activity in a secure and safe manner, will assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect 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.
37. In order to support Test and Protect, Club Covid-19 officers for BAFA affiliated clubs should 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.
38. This information should be stored for 21 days and shared with public health officers when requested. Clubs should decide how these records will be kept and stored, for example paper or using online format e.g. Google Docs.

PROTECT SCOTLAND APP

39. NHS Scotland has launched a free mobile app designed to help with contact tracing efforts and slow the spread of COVID-19. The app will alert users if they have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus.
40. Supported by a dedicated Protect Scotland website, the app is an extra tool complementing existing person-to-person contact tracing which remains the main component of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect system.
41. Further information on the Protect Scotland app is available at www.protect.scot.

PARTICIPANT SELF-ASSESSMENT

42. 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 Scotland and Test and Protect guidance on [testing and self-isolation](#).
43. In addition, any participants who require to quarantine following overseas travel or who have been asked to isolate by NHS Scotland's Test and Protect must not participate in activity.
44. 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.
45. 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.
46. You should advise participants to consider their own health and circumstances (for example, if they are not yet double-vaccinated or had a booster 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

47. 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.
48. By law, everyone aged 12 and over must wear a face covering, unless exempt, in [most indoor public spaces](#). This includes indoor stadia, changing rooms, meeting spaces, and private hire coaches. If playing indoors, this includes before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility. This is a mandatory requirement except where an exemption applies or where there is a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering e.g., if you have a health condition or are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia, or a learning disability.
49. Face coverings must be worn by coaches when indoors, except where an exemption applies.

SAFEGUARDING

50. Ongoing restrictions in place during the pandemic will have affected children in many ways. While most will have had a positive time with family, others may have had negative experiences and could be at increased risk. 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
51. There will be no alteration to the standards we had in place pre-Covid 19, therefore Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership 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 teams.
52. Coaches and those working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by **Children 1st**: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

53. Covid-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to Covid-19:

- Older people
- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities
- Women
- People from deprived communities

54. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

55. The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include;

Communication – Digital exclusion is a key issue. With so many services and so much information moving online it risks worsening the health impacts of the pandemic. We have to think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people about sport and physical activity.

Accessibility – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and leisure centres re-open it's important to build understanding of people's specific accessibility needs around things like hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings so we can provide the best possible support to people to take part in sport and physical activity.

Anxiety, mental health and wellbeing – The pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health for people who share all characteristics. We know that sport and physical activity can have significant benefits for people's mental health so it's vital that we continue to promote those benefits, so people are encouraged to get involved.

Confidence - Confidence to return to sport is a big issue across all groups. We know that some groups are at higher risk from Covid-19 than others (including some ethnic minorities, disabled people and households experiencing poverty). These groups may be even more nervous about returning to sport or starting to participate. They are also less likely to participate in sport in the first place, so we'll need to give extra attention to their needs to help build their confidence.

ON-FIELD ACTIVITY – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

PERMITTED AMERICAN FOOTBALL ACTIVITY AND PRACTICE PLANNING

56. Coaches should risk assess and plan appropriately for each session in advance, be aware of their responsibilities and be clear on expectations with participants. Practice planning should reflect the requirement for regular scheduled breaks for hand and equipment hygiene – before, during and after sessions.
57. 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.
58. 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.
59. Coaches must work to BAFCA recommended coach to player ratios for non-contact practice activities and during Stage 5d and beyond. 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 15 participants (1:15)

TEAM EQUIPMENT

60. 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.

61. 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

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

63. 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.

64. 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.

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

66. 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.

67. 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.

68. Spitting or mouth rinsing should be strongly discouraged.

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

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

FIRST AID, HEALTH AND HYGIENE

71. Ensure that access to first aid equipment is maintained and has been updated appropriately for the Covid– 19 pandemic and first aiders have appropriate training.
72. In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognized that a suitably qualified person, coach or supervising adult may require to attend to the injured participant. The Club Covid– 19 Officer should consider processes for managing this as part of the risk assessment. This could include but is not limited to:
 - Provision of suitable PPE
 - Training of coaches / supervising adults
73. After contact with an injured participant, medics, physios or first aiders are encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. Records should be kept of any injury treated and passed to the Covid-19 Officer or Covid-19 Team Lead so there is a record of the participants medics, physios or first aiders have come into close contact with for Test and Protect purposes.
74. 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.
75. Avoid touching your face and ensure to clean your hands with at least 60% alcohol gel when you finish participating.
76. Further guidance is available at:
 - [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)
 - [St. John's Ambulance: Covid-19 advice for first aiders](#)
 - [HSE: First Aid during the coronavirus](#)

MORE INFORMATION

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

[Scottish Government Coronavirus guidance and routemap](#)

[Test and Protect](#)

[NHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) General advice](#)

[NHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) check your symptoms](#)

[sportsotland Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information and resources](#)

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

kyle.taylor@britishamericanfootball.org – for queries relating to 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 EQUIPMENT FITTING

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

- Equipment must be fitted outdoors.
- Strong hand hygiene should be used prior to equipment fitting and post equipment fitting. Disposable gloves can be worn but if so must be changed between each individual.
- Both the participant and fitter must 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 must be thoroughly sanitised with appropriate disinfectant wipes or spray before being tried on by another participant or returned to storage.
- Equipment must 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 must 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.
- 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, face coverings to 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

- By law, everyone aged 12 and over must wear a face covering, unless exempt, in [most indoor public spaces](#). This includes indoor stadia, changing rooms, meeting spaces, and private hire coaches. If playing indoors, this includes before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility. This is a mandatory requirement except where an exemption applies or where there is a 'reasonable excuse' not to wear a face covering e.g., if you have a health condition or are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia, or a learning disability.
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 JustGo 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 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.