



FAI SAFER RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

ADULT AMATEUR & UNDERAGE FOOTBALL
INCLUDING UNDERAGE NATIONAL LEAGUES

2nd Edition - Friday, August 21st 2020



CONTENTS

- 1 - Introduction
- 2 - Key Points
- 3 - Before the Game
- 4 - Arriving for the Game
- 5 - Warm-Up for the Game
- 6 - Pre Kick-Off Protocol
- 7 - During the Game
- 8 - Player/Match Official Welfare
- 9 - After the Game
- 10 - Toilet Facilities
- 11 - Changing Rooms
- 12 - Contact Tracing



1 - INTRODUCTION

- This Protocol must be followed in conjunction with the updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- The principles of risk mitigation are identical for training and for playing, please refer to the updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol
- The primary aim is to reduce the risk of transmissibility of the COVID-19 virus to as low a level as possible
- In so doing, we will protect the Health and Safety of our players, coaches, match officials, parents, guardians, volunteers, administrators and spectators
- This Protocol must be utilised in line with all other FAI policy documents including FAI Child Welfare and Safeguarding Policy



2 - KEY POINTS

Monday, June 29th

- Clubs permitted to return to full contact training from this date, including training games between teams from the same club, in accordance with Updated FAI Safer Return to Training Protocol 2nd Edition

Saturday, July 11th

- Clubs permitted to return to playing friendly games from this date, in accordance with FAI Safer Return to Play Protocol

Saturday, July 18th

- Clubs permitted to return to playing competitive matches from this date, in accordance with FAI Safer Return to Play Protocol

Friday, August 21st

- No spectators are permitted at any match under the jurisdiction of the FAI
- Only those essential to a fixture may attend as per these updated Protocols
- In addition to players, coaches, match officials and a home team COVID-19 Compliance Officer, essential personnel can include medical support, grounds maintenance staff, Club Children's Officer, Club Liaison Officer/representative for each team, FAI representative, League representative/tournament organiser, accredited media



3 - BEFORE THE GAME

- A Risk Assessment of the venue must be carried out - [FAI Risk Assessment Template](#)
- All equipment - including goalposts - must be sanitised before and after every game.
- Do not attend the game venue if you are unwell, stay at home and contact your GP if you have symptoms suggestive of COVID-19
- The symptoms include:
 1. Temperature of 38C or greater
 2. Sudden onset of coughing or shortness of breath
 3. Sudden loss of the sense of taste or smell



4 - ARRIVING FOR THE GAME

- Teams should arrive as close to kick-off time as is feasible
- All players should travel to games in line with HSE Guidelines - [HSE Guidelines on Travel](#)
- Travel in your gear
- Bring your own labelled food and water in a sealed plastic bag
- On arrival, observe and obey the COVID-19 signage
- Players and Coaches should observe 2 metres social distancing where possible (warm-ups, meetings, team-talks)
- No hand greetings are permitted (handshakes, fist pumps, high fives)
- One parent or guardian is allowed to accompany any player under the age of 18 to a match and may remain at the venue for the duration of the match
- Any parent or guardian attending a game must strictly observe 2 metres social distancing at all times
- Only essential personnel can attend Adult Amateur and Underage Football – including Underage National Leagues – as per the updated Safer Return to Play Protocol
- In addition to players, coaches, match officials and a home team COVID-19 Compliance Officer, essential personnel can include medical support, grounds maintenance staff, Club Children's Officer, Club Liaison Officer/representative for each team, FAI representative, League representative/tournament organiser, accredited media
- No spectators are permitted at any match under the jurisdiction of the FAI



5 - WARM-UP FOR THE GAME

- Observe social distancing at all times where possible (pre-match activities)
- Practice good coughing and sneezing etiquette
- No hand greetings are permitted (handshakes, fist pumps, high fives)
- Only consume liquids and food from your own labelled supplies
- Use hand sanitizer before and after you have completed the warm-up
- No spitting is permitted
- Pre-game team meetings must take place on the pitch and must not last more than 10 minutes



6 - PRE KICK-OFF PROTOCOL

- The COVID-19 Compliance Officer - or a designated club member - should act as the first point of contact for the Match Officials upon arrival
- The coordination of pre-match protocol i.e. team sheet, equipment check, coin toss should be discussed and agreed upon with the Match Officials at that point



7 - DURING THE GAME

- Players and Match Officials should adhere to social distancing of 2 metres where possible (breaks in play)
- Practice good coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Use hand sanitizer at half-time and before the commencement of the second half
- No hand greetings are permitted (handshakes, fist pumps, high fives, goal celebrations)
- No spitting is permitted
- Substitutes must adhere to 2 metres social distancing during warm-ups
- Substitutes must adhere to 2 metres social distancing on the bench



8 - PLAYER/MATCH OFFICIAL WELFARE

- A Coach or Club Physiotherapist can attend to an injured Player or Match Official on the pitch
- They should wear a face mask and gloves
- A designated room – where applicable – can be used for treating an injured player
- A changing room may be used
- This room must be cleaned thoroughly before and after each match
- Touch points should be wiped down after each individual treatment session
- Physiotherapists must wear PPE - face mask, gloves and apron for prolonged treatment sessions
- These sessions must last no longer than 15 minutes
- A player/Match Official suspected of a new onset of COVID-19 must be given a face mask and be isolated from the rest of the attendees, pending contact being made with a parent/guardian (underage player) or GP (adult player)
- If a player is deemed to be very unwell, an ambulance may be called to transfer them to an emergency department



9 - AFTER THE GAME

- Players and Match Officials must adhere to social distancing of 2 metres at the final whistle and when exiting pitch and venue
- No hand greetings are permitted (handshakes, fist pumps, high fives)
- Practice good coughing and sneezing etiquette
- No spitting is permitted
- Post-game team meetings must be held outdoors and must not last more than 10 minutes
- Use hand sanitizer after the game
- Wash your hands when you get home



10 - TOILET FACILITIES

- The use of toilet facilities is permitted
- The toilet facilities must be thoroughly cleaned before and after each game
- The touch points must be cleaned after each individual use
- Adequate quantities of soap, sanitizer and paper towels must be made available
- Paper towels must be disposed of carefully after each use



11 - CHANGING ROOMS

- Changing rooms can be used but subject to 2 metres social distancing
- They must be cleaned thoroughly before and after each use
- Touch points should be wiped down after each use
- Strict 2 metres social distancing must be adhered to within the changing rooms
- If 2 metres social distancing cannot be adhered to, changing rooms **must not** be used
- Shower facilities **must not** be used until further notice



12 - CONTACT TRACING

- Contact tracing is a key component to all activities around the game
- The home team COVID-19 Compliance Officer must keep a register of ALL attendees, with the exception of the away team's details
- The away team must supply a list of all those travelling to their own COVID-19 Compliance Officer for contact tracing purposes
- The away team COVID-19 Compliance Officer must keep this list on record – there is no requirement to share this with the home team COVID-19 Compliance Officer
- Each club is responsible for providing its own COVID-19 Compliance Officer with a list of attendees for every game, home or away
- This will include name and contact details
- This register should be kept electronically and be updated continually

YOU MUST

- STAY AT HOME IF YOU ARE UNWELL AND CONTACT YOUR GP IF NECESSARY
 - ADHERE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING OF 2 METRES
 - PRACTICE GOOD HAND HYGIENE, COUGHING AND SNEEZING ETIQUETTE
 - ENSURE THE COVID-19 COMPLIANCE OFFICER HAS YOUR UP TO DATE CONTACT DETAILS
- All enquiries can be emailed to covidchecklist@fai.ie

