

Return to Play FAQs

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1. Requirements to Play

Q: Where do I consent to the England Hockey Participation Agreement in order to return to playing hockey?

A: In order to return to playing hockey, all participants must first consent to the England Hockey Participation Agreement [here](#).

Q: If I want to add organisations to my Participation Agreement, what do I do?

A: Just simply complete another Agreement and add the clubs as required – please use the same Name / Email though!

Q: If I made a mistake (mis-spelt name) on the Participation Agreement, how do I correct it?

A: Complete another agreement, but please also email clubs@englandhockey.co.uk so we can remove the incorrect record.

Q: My Club/University/Player Pathway/Coaching Camp squad does not seem to appear on the Participation Agreement – what should I do?

A: There is an outside chance your club will not appear in the first clubs' list – however, once a club has completed the online Club Agreement within the Club Portal, this is triggering a process to ensure your club does appear on the form. So, the first thing to do is check whether your club has actually completed this agreement.

Secondly, the form is set up in a specific way with Clubs and Officiating Bodies in the first dropdowns, and then further clubs and Coaching Agencies in the second set of dropdowns, and then finally Player and Talent Pathway (so County squads, Performance Centres, EDP and NAGS) in the last set of dropdowns. Please read carefully before entering any free text in other areas. Also, Universities that play Saturday hockey are ALL listed – but some are named University of And some others have different naming conventions e.g. Nottingham Trent University HC, Lancaster University HC – please check all versions of the University name before entering free text.

Thirdly, if the Coaching Agency you attend is not listed, that is because they have NOT signed up to our agreement, and hence are NOT covered by England Hockey's agreement

with DCMS and Public Health England about playing hockey whilst breaking the national social distancing restrictions.

If, having checked all of the above the club name is still not there, please email clubs@englandhockey.co.uk and we will rectify very quickly for you.

Q: What is the minimum age that an individual can consent directly? (ie a junior without needing a parent/guardian)

A: Best practice would be anyone U18 should gain consent from parent / guardian in addition to individual.

Q: Please can you provide some guidance on how we deal with new members just turning up to sessions? The guidance makes sense for existing members but we would appreciate some advice on how it applies to new people?

A: A new member can fill in a Participation Agreement using the link provided and they will receive an email confirmation. This email confirmation can be used by clubs to ensure that the player will be registered on your club list when next updated.

Q: Please can you provide some clarity surrounding the symptom check prior to sessions. Can players carry out a self-assessment and in turning up to the session and marked as attending, they are confirming that they have completed the self assessment and are symptom free? This would save paperwork?

A: Yes – players have to self-declare they have no Covid-19 symptoms.

Q: When it comes to matches, do we have to complete an attendance register for visiting clubs and their officials/coaches or just for our own?

Just your own.

Q: Is there a way to download the Participation Agreement List from the Club Portal?

A: We are adding one soon.

Q: Where do I register to be a Covid Officer on behalf of my club/organisation?

A: In order to return to playing hockey, all affiliated clubs must have a Covid Officer in place. It is the club's responsibility to appoint and register a Covid Officer, not the individual themselves. Covid Officers can be registered via the Club Portal [here](#).

Non-affiliated bodies (including Player Pathway activity deliverers that are technically 'members' rather than affiliated bodies) looking to deliver hockey activity must also have a Covid Officer. For more information about how to sign up a non-affiliated body Covid Officer, please contact clubs@englandhockey.co.uk.

Q: Can a club have more than one Covid Officer?

A: Yes, although we would recommend one being a lead officer and we will only hold details for the lead, and they will be our main point of contact if we need to inform the club of any Covid incidents. We can arrange for more than one person to have access to the Club Portal to view the Participant Agreement Lists; or you can share the weblink with anyone you wish if you are a non-club organisation.

Q: We want to change the details of our Covid Officer – how do we do that?

A: There is no direct way, so please email clubs@englandhockey.co.uk with the details of Club / Outgoing Officers / Incoming Officer and we will process for you.

Q: Where can I find a template Attendance Register?

A: You will need Attendance lists after every hockey session capturing all participants (name), location, date, match/ training session times. This needs to be emailed to track.trace@englandhockey.co.uk within 24 hours of the session. You can download a template attendance register [here](#).

Q: Are there security issue with sending data via email?

A: As there is no sensitive information being shared via email, we do not believe there are major security risks BUT we are looking at alternative ways to share attendance registers with us – however, we were simply trying to find the most accessible and customer-friendly solution we could given the short period of time we had to propose a solution. We are aware that email transfer is not completely secure, but we balanced this up against ease of use for the clubs / organisations (as anyone can send the registers in currently – it does not have to be just the Covid Officer who may well be busy with other things) and the risks associated with simply sharing a list of names with no other details and opted for this option. We will update if we are able to propose a better solution.

Q: What about clubs affected by local lockdowns? Are we able to play according to Step 4? What if we live in lockdown but training is out of the lockdown area?

A: This depends on the nature of the specific lockdown that your area is under. At the time of writing most lockdowns would permit activity at Step 4 to be able to happen. We recommend that clubs check with England Hockey (clubs@englandhockey.co.uk) in the event of a lockdown and we will advise as soon as the government advice is clear enough. Generally, only if the lockdown specifically mentions sport would the circumstances change from the wider national picture.

Q: Do the Covid guidelines apply to Universities that affiliate to England Hockey?

A: Yes

2. Access to Pitches

Q: We can't get on our pitch yet. Are we the only ones?

A: The picture in terms of access to pitches is currently very varied and inconsistent. In general, many leisure centre and school pitches are not yet open. We expect that the picture with leisure centres will improve as they open in coming days. Education is a mixed picture and largely a decision of individual schools. The new guidance for sport is very recent and it may take time for the new information to permeate out, so we recommend that clubs share our guidance and continue to pursue conversations with facility providers.

If you are continuing to have problems in coming weeks, please email facilities@englandhockey.co.uk

3. Activity

Q: Can you provide a definition of what you mean by "local match play" please? Is there a cap on how far we are able to travel for matches?

A: There isn't a set definition in terms of miles/time travelled. At Step 4 we recommend that people take reasonable decisions and do not travel unnecessarily far. At some levels and for some groups travel is a necessity to play against another team or suitable standard of opposition to prepare for the season. If you can get a suitable friendly match close to your home venue, then aim to do so.

Q: Can we play matches involving two squads of 16 or more?

Yes. In this scenario as long as there are never more than 30 people involved on the pitch in the match at one time. In an 11-a-side game the number would therefore never be more than 24 (two teams and two umpires). Everyone outside of the pitch would be expected to be socially distanced at all times.

Q: When will Player Pathway activity start up again?

A: We expect that Academy Centres and Performance Centres will be delivered on the dates set in the centralised calendar for 2020-21. Depending on the timing of the restart of activity, decisions will be made on the implications for the calendar. If the delay is only minor, dates that are not able to be used will be cancelled and not be rescheduled later in the cycle. Development Centre activity is organised by local county associations and happens in different ways in different places. Please contact your local county administrator to find out when Development Centre activity will take place.

We are issuing specific advice for Player Pathway administrators.

Q: Please can you provide some further guidance around League scenarios. I think your suggestions are very good however if the leagues are curtailed or teams cannot or will not complete their fixtures some guidance and regulations may also have to be considered for those teams that may benefit from a curtailed season and not completing their fixtures.

A: Shortly we intend to issue guidance on revised rules and regulations for leagues that will help to mitigate for alternative approaches to the season as well as managing the risks associated with Covid-19 to league rules and the impact of these on clubs. We will strongly recommend that leagues adopt these rules.

Q: What about the 2019-20 Adult, Masters, U16 and U18 club championships? Is there any news on whether these can be completed?

A: Teams in the Championships that were postponed from 2019-20 have been contacted and asked about proposals developed for completing the competitions in September 2020. We are continuing to work with the proposed venues and communicate with teams involved about the possibility of these events still going ahead.

Q: Will you be running Adult, Masters and Junior Club Championships in 2020-21?

A: Yes, and entries are now open! Find out more about the Championships [here](#).

We would encourage teams to enter but entry fees will not need to be paid until a competition and format is confirmed so teams may withdraw without penalty, if they feel that circumstances mean that they are unable to compete. This will also be the case for national-entry Schools Championships where some deadlines have now closed.

However, if we have a delayed, revised or shortened season in line with our Return to Play policy we may revise the dates or formats of some Championships or ultimately not run them depending on the time available within the calendar.

Q: Will these guidelines apply to school hockey sessions?

A: Currently, not for sessions that are run where the school have responsibility for hosting it. All intramural and extramural hockey provided by schools will fall under the Government strategic framework for schools overseen by the Department for Education. Where extramural hockey might be provided by clubs or hockey providers who are insuring the activity then these guidelines and procedures will apply. Pupils and other participants in the sessions would need to complete the Participation Agreement before taking part.

Q: Are Umpires included in the maximum of 30 people to be involved during a match?

A: Yes, they are but anyone not involved at one time (e.g. substitutes) is not included so the maximum number of people involved in a game at one time should be 24 (2 teams of 11 plus 2 umpires). Everyone else is outside the field of play and socially distanced.

Q: Do we have to record Spectators, and are they included in the 30 people to be involved during a match?

A: England Hockey's guidance is specifically related to playing hockey and breaking the government guidelines for general life of social distancing due to the nature of playing the game. Spectators have no need to break this social distancing regulation and hence should adhere to it at all times. Therefore, they do not need to be involved in the club's monitoring of hockey being played. However, a club may want to implement its own solution if parents/spectators are using a clubhouse/indoor space on site.

Q: How will the decision be made to progress to Step 5?

A: England Hockey will shortly issue more information on progression to Step 5. In a previous article we have reference the need to know that the sport is compliant, that there is the capability to play (e.g. access to pitches) and that people involved are confident in the approach we are taking. We are continuing to assess this.

Q: Can I be involved in more than one training session / match per day?

A: Yes. There must be a clear difference between sessions. A session must end and a new one start after. You should not join a session after it has already started. There must be time to complete post session procedures (leave pitch, wash hands) and undertake pre session procedures (symptom check, wash hands) between sessions.

Q: Are clubs able to hold events like hockey weekends or mini hockeyfests providing they stick to their groups of 30 and other guidance? Eg could we have 7 a side and 4 teams on half a pitch?

A: The guidance does allow for groups of 30 to train or play together and more than one group to use a pitch. However, at Step 4 we would not advise significant large-scale competitive events being held unless a detailed consideration of the risks has been undertaken.

England Hockey is not holding larger scale events at this stage having carefully considered the risks associated with them. The space needed to socially distance large numbers of teams when off the pitch, the access and transport issues associated with the event and the the lack of access to indoor spaces in the event of poor weather at many venues means that this isn't a reasonable exercise at this time.

Matches where people arrive at pitches and leave are more viable at this stage.

4. Insurance and Safety

Q: Please can you advise on what is meant by appropriate Insurance?

A: If you have insurance via Howdens they state that during the current pandemic, when the Government confirms the time is right for members to recommence activity, the liability insurers have advised that the insurance cover will continue to apply provided that England Hockey coaches/clubs are adhering to the Government guidelines and any additional supporting guidance provided by England Hockey to its coaches/clubs concerning safety and social distancing.

If you do not have insurance cover from Howdens, please check with your insurer.

If you use insurance via Howdens (England Hockey's insurance partner) please see here for further guidance / advice: <http://www.ps-hockey.co.uk/>

Regarding your coaching insurance, if you are insured with England Hockey through Howden then your cover will continue to apply, providing you adhere to the Government guidelines and any additional supporting guidance provided by England Hockey. Risk assessments must be carried out and risk management put in place around Covid-19 requirements as these are key to evidencing that the risk is being assessed and managed. This is something that the Government has highlighted must be taking place. It is essential that coaches record and evidence that they are working to and controlling the social distancing measures expected by the Government.

Q: Can you provide a Covid-19 specific risk assessment?

A: England Hockey advises all clubs to consult the 'Returning to Play' guidance and perform their own risk assessment prior to the commencement of hockey activity. As the guidance regarding Covid-19 is ever changing, clubs are advised to regularly assess all activity in line with current government guidelines. A template risk assessment can be found at <http://englandhockey.co.uk/covid19>

Q: Can you update the H&S guidance so that it takes into account the wider Covid-19 guidance?

A: England Hockey regularly reviews and updates the Health & Safety guidance provided to clubs through the [Safety FAQs](#). As the government guidance regarding Covid-19 is regularly updated, all H&S updates directly relating to Covid-19 will be included within the 'Returning to Play' guidance alongside any additional guidance from the FIH.

Q: Gumshields

A: Gumshields are obviously strongly recommended for hockey and participants are encouraged to use them where possible but keep them in for the duration of the session, whilst also adhering to the Covid-19 hygiene advice. As with all other equipment they should be cleaned and disinfected between sessions.

Q: What advice would you give for travelling to games when social distancing is lifted? And what about the use of changing rooms/hospitality facilities at matches?

A: This is now included in our Step 4 guidance.

Q: Can you give any advice on maintaining pitch hygiene during this time?

A: There is some advice from the FIH on safely returning pitches to play [here](#). The Groundmanship website also has some advice [here](#).

5. Safeguarding & GDPR

Q: What age can young people train without the supervision of the adult?

A: England Hockey strongly recommends that all hockey activity involving those under the age of 18 is supervised. In line with EH guidance regarding [supervision ratios](#), the following ratios should be observed:

Children under 8 years old: one adult to 8 young people (with a minimum of 2 adults)

Children over 8 years: one adult to twelve young people (with a minimum of 2 adults)

Please ensure that government guidance regarding social distancing and group sizes is observed.

Clubs must also ensure that first aid provision is in place before allowing members to take part in hockey activity.

Q: *One-to-one coaching of young people*

A: All coaches should closely follow the England Hockey safeguarding advice on one to one coaching as covered in the document [here](#).

Q: *Why do we have to sign Participation Agreements?*

A: The Participation Agreement is designed to ensure that everyone participating in hockey (players, coaches, officials) are aware of their obligations related to Covid-19 and to the associated changes in the England Hockey Code of Ethics and Behaviour that all participants are expected to follow. As the National Governing Body for hockey in England responsible for the discipline and disrepute processes within the sport it is a reasonable and legitimate interest for England Hockey to take this approach. We have aimed to make this process as simple and quick for participants and clubs as possible and will listen and respond to your feedback on how to improve it.

Q: *Why do we have to send registers?*

A: All clubs have to comply with expectations around track and trace. Unfortunately through a number of recent issues related to Health and Safety in hockey we are aware that many clubs do not regularly take registers, particularly for adult sessions, which have had serious consequences in some cases. We need to be sure that there are proper practices in place at clubs to ensure the sport is compliant with Covid guidelines. The aim is to support clubs to get into a regular routine to ensure that clubs remain Covid-19 compliant. Our approach has been approved as part of the government sign off process.

Q: *How are you using the register data?*

A: The register data will be used for a number of purposes. Firstly to help understand the readiness of the sport to progress to Step 5 of the Return to Play plans. Secondly to ensure that clubs continue to properly dispense their responsibilities related to Track and Trace. England Hockey will look at the broader trends in the data and ensure that the sport is doing enough to remain compliant.

Q: *How does this sit with GDPR?*

In terms of the Participant Agreement this is appropriate data for England Hockey to collect as National Governing Body as per the previous question.

The register data does not include information that is considered to be personally identifiable information (PII) data. We are simply collecting basic information including a name that is public record data. Like clubs England Hockey is obliged (as are clubs) to delete the data after 21 days.

Q: *We are using an app or check in system – do we still have to send info within 24 hours of a session?*

A: *We are happy to discuss the need for such regular updates when clubs that organise lots of activity can demonstrate that they have effective and robust processes in place. Email clubs@englandhockey.co.uk and we can agree the best approach according to your circumstance.*

Q: Does the Covid Officer have to send the data?

A: No, any suitable officer from the club can share the register data with EH in the format requested.

6. Other

Q: Will there be any changes to affiliation fees if hockey has not been able to return fully come September?

A: At this stage we have not taken any decisions on any alternative arrangements for next season. As we continue to plan for next season running normally (or near normally) so we are not currently planning any changes. We will keep the membership informed over coming weeks and aim to make decisions at appropriate times.