

Restarting Grassroots Football



Introduction & Welcome

Welcome from the Manchester FA Team

- **Colin Bridgford**, CEO & Senior Safeguarding Lead
- **Andy Baker**, Football Development Manager
- **Sarah Cummings**, Football Development Officer (Clubs and Leagues)



Manchester FA



Key Considerations & Timescales

The UK Government has given approval for competitive grassroots football and training sessions to re-start as follows:

- **Until 31st July** – When ready, you can begin competitive training, with the overall group size (inclusive of coaches) being limited to 30 people;
- **From August** – Competitive matches to begin, for example pre-season fixtures, festivals and small sided football competitions;
- **From September** – Grassroots leagues, men's National League System, Women's Football Pyramid tiers 3 to 6, and FA Competitions can commence.

Detailed guidance has been produced by The FA in relation to football in England. It applies to 11-a-side youth and adult football, as well as the small-sided game. **For now, indoor football and futsal are not permitted.**



Local Lockdowns

- **Local authority football guidance will supersede any FA issued football restart guidance.**
- North West region are co-ordinating an approach to sanctions imposed by leagues through Covid-19 non-fulfilment.
- Insurance validation will be compromised if local lockdown guidance is breached.
- Local lockdown will affect geographically all participants - players, coaches, officials and club location.
- We need to work together to respond appropriately to ongoing changes – communication internally within clubs and with opposition is critical.



Before Activity

- Everyone should self-assess for **Covid-19 symptoms**.
- Clubs/facility providers should appoint a Covid-19 officer and conduct a thorough **risk assessment** before re-opening or re-starting competitive activity. They should also follow current '**NHS test and trace**' protocols, such as keeping an attendance register.
- Personal hygiene measures should be carried out by everyone and hand sanitisers brought and used at the training/match venue.
- The sharing of kit and equipment should be avoided, but where equipment is shared, it must be cleaned before use by another person.
- Goal posts and corner poles should be wiped down before matches, after matches and at half time.



Before Activity

- Follow Government guidance for travel, including minimising use of public transport.
- Active participants should arrive changed and ready to take part.
- Youth team coaches should re-acquaint themselves with all safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Meet-up times should be adjusted to avoid time spent congregating at a venue.
- Use of clubhouses, hospitality facilities, changing rooms and toilets must adhere to **Government guidance.**

Anyone who is deemed vulnerable in respect of Covid-19 is reminded to follow the Government's guidance, only returning to football when it's right for them to do so.



During Activity

- Competitive training can take place for all participants, in an outdoor setting provided this takes place in groups of no more than 30 (including coaches).
- Competitive match play is permitted, with social distancing in place before and after the session, and in any breaks in play.
- The sharing of kit and equipment should be avoided and participants should bring their own drinks or refreshments, in named containers.
- When the ball goes out of play, it should not be retrieved by non-participants and should be retrieved using the feet rather than the hands where possible.
- Participants must not spit and should avoid shouting or raising their voices when facing each other, as detailed in The FA Covid-19 Code of Behaviour.



During Activity

- Set plays: players are encouraged to avoid unnecessarily long set-up or close marking.
- Other modifications apply to specific situations, such as goal celebrations being discouraged.
- Youth football coaches are encouraged to limit persistent close proximity of participants during match play and training.
- Observing rigorous hygiene standards, injuries can be treated.
- Spectator groups should be limited to six people per group and spread out in line with wider **Government guidance**.
- Match fee payments should be cashless – consider using **The FA Matchday App**.
- Small-sided football should include more regular hygiene breaks in activity and players discouraged from touching or tackling against boards



After Activity

- Hands should be washed at the earliest opportunity and personal equipment should be wiped down with a disinfectant.
- Unless absolutely necessary, participants should take their kit home and wash it themselves, or by family members. Post-activity showers should be taken at home.
- Everyone must continue to maintain **social distancing** including in any facilities where groups of people congregate (e.g. clubhouses).
- Everyone should leave following the traffic-flow system the club or facility provider has put place.
- Anyone who becomes infected after training/matches should report this to the **NHS test and trace system**.



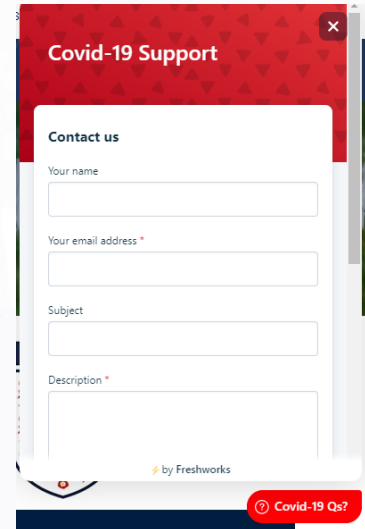
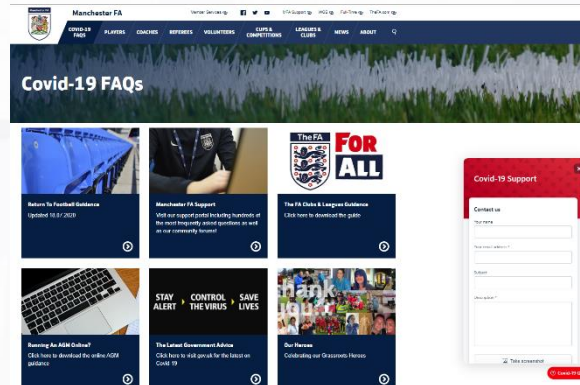
Other Considerations

- Season flexibility or extension
- NLS guidance
- Insurance – covered as long as affiliated and adhering to guidance
- Coach : player ratio
- Leagues & competitions – central venue implications?
- Multi-pitch sites
- Changing facilities and access
- Disability football



Further Support

- Manchester FA will continue to communicate updates to FA guidance as the situation changes
- Manchester FA Covid-19 specific page
- Covid-19 Support 'Ask a Question' tab
- Weekly newsletters keeping Clubs / Leagues updated
- Referee guidance to be shared with match officials



Questions

- Please use the raise hand function or type your question into the chat



Raise Hand

