



INFORMATION FOR COACHES - RETURN TO FOOTBALL (COVID-19)

We are pleased to welcome everyone back to football activity ahead of the 2020/21 season following the break due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As with most areas of our lives, you will appreciate that things will be different to before, with a few additional requirements compared to last season. Please be aware that, as guidance changes, our requirements may also change. We will inform you of any changes at the earliest possible opportunity.

As you will no doubt be aware, COVID-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease. A resumption of contact sports is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection. While the risks in sport cannot be completely eradicated, with caution and care they can be greatly reduced.

Parents throughout the Club have been sent a similar document relating to their role in maintaining a safe environment, so they should be familiar with these measures and supportive of them. However, as coaches and role models you should be aware that it is vitally important to lead by example and exhibit good practices and behaviours yourselves.

Please note, it is not mandatory for anyone to return to training and matches at this time. If somebody has concerns about resuming football activity, we urge them to speak to the Club Welfare Officer in order to discuss options for a later or more gradual return.

Completing the Risk Assessment

Please read the Risk Assessment also forwarded with this document. It has been completed at a whole club level, but we require coaches to review this and ensure that it covers any specific risks associated with your group.

Should there be anything you think is missing, please let us know. If there are specific risks associated with your group, please add them and date appropriately for your team and return a copy to [Elizabeth Manning](#) and [Denise Wells](#) via email.

Ensuring A Safe Return to Football

Please use the information below and the other documents provided to support the return to football activity while minimising the risk of COVID-19 transmission. There is lots of guidance and we would recommend you take some time to review it. If there is anything which you do not understand please do not be afraid to ask for clarification.

For further information about the impact of COVID-19 on football and the measures required to allow its return, please [visit the Hertfordshire FA website](#).

The main points are

- Keep equipment clean. Bibs should be washed between sessions and all equipment cleaned thoroughly after each session
- Do not share equipment during sessions
- Sessions should be held, in the main, at social distance, working on individual ball skills and fitness, with some contact/game time allowed within the sessions – plan and design sessions with this in mind. Work should be done with the ball at feet, with minimal handling
- Players should maintain social distance (2 metres) before and after sessions, and also during any breaks in play
- Players should apply sanitiser before, during and at the end of sessions
- Prior to attendance at any training session or match, everyone should self-assess for COVID-19. If anyone is symptomatic or living in a household with a possible or actual COVID-19 infection, they must NOT participate or attend. If any of the following symptoms are present in your household, please remain at home:
 - A high temperature (above 37.8°C)
 - A new, continuous cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - A sore throat
 - A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste
 - Feeling generally unwell
 - Been in close contact with/living with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the previous two weeks

Parents will sign players into sessions, confirming that they do not show any of the above symptoms. If they do, they should return home and not participate. If a player develops symptoms during the session, you will need to separate them from the wider group and they should be taken home immediately.

At the end of training sessions, we ask that your players and parents leave the venue promptly as other groups will be arriving for sessions shortly after.

Our Club procedures and requirements

- New signing in sheets will be supplied for all sessions. At the top of each is the self-screening checklist. We are asking parents to sign in their child acknowledging that they exhibit none of the symptoms listed before they can take part in any activity.
- You will need to submit the attendance register from all sessions (matches and training) to Denise Wells and Elizabeth Manning (via Whatsapp or email) as soon as possible after the session – this enables us to comply with the NHS Test and Trace processes
- The Club Data Protection Policy has been updated to state that the Club will comply with any requests from NHS Test and Trace to help control the spread of COVID-19.
- Players should arrive at sessions ready to play. They are required to bring their own named water bottle and named alcohol-based hand sanitiser to every session, along with any medication they might need during the session (such as asthma inhalers) as well as any sunscreen required. Ideally these items should be in a clearly named gym sack.
- There should be no chewing gum, spitting or goal celebrations

- Parents have been asked to attend all sessions should be prepared to offer First Aid to their child in the first instance. If the incident requires greater intervention, the coach (or first aider) will need to kit up in mask, apron and gloves to attend to anyone outside of their own household (or support bubble). Records of any required intervention by coach or first aider should be taken and submitted with participant details after each session to Elizabeth Manning and Denise Wells.
- PPE kit will be provided (5 masks, 5 aprons, 5 pairs of gloves, bottle of hand sanitiser, sanitising wipes, and nappy sacks for safe disposal of materials used. These are single use items and further supplies are available when required from the COVID-19 Officer)
- Follow best practice for travel including minimising use of public transport – players should travel to training and matches in household bubbles or support bubble groups where possible. If this is not possible, players should:
 - Share the transport with the same people each time
 - Keep to small groups
 - Open windows for ventilation
 - Face away from each other
 - Ask the driver and all passengers to wear a face covering
 - Consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
 - Exhibit good personal hygiene with regular handwashing and sanitising on arrival
 - The car used should be cleaned between journeys using standard cleaning products – including door handles and other areas people may touch

Requirements for matches

Once matches resume, there are additional requirements to ensure the safety of both teams:

- Prior to kick off, a safety briefing must be completed to remind both sets of players and officials about their responsibilities regarding distancing, good hygiene and behaviour
- Goal posts and corner flags should be cleaned before matches, at half time and at full time
- The ball should be disinfected during breaks in play
- No pre-match handshake – instead get players to sanitise their hands
- No pre-match huddles – team talks at social distance are allowed
- Warm ups and cool downs should observe social distance
- Coaches and substitutes should observe social distance from each other and the pitch
- Free kicks, corners, goal kicks and any other set plays should be taken in a timely manner to reduce the time when players are in closer proximity to each other
- No goal celebrations
- Interactions with referees and officials should take place at social distance

Any questions?

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about the above arrangements. Your child's wellbeing is always our first concern.

Elizabeth Manning	Club Welfare Officer and COVID-19 Officer	07795 364663
Dave Mitchell	Chairman	07881 298145
Denise Wells	Club Secretary	07903 636705