

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE ON THE PHASED RETURN OF SPORT

As a follow on to our briefing note "*Key Legal Considerations Before Any Return To Sport*" accessible [here](#), the government has announced specific guidance on the phased return of training, sport and recreation in England.

Elite Sport Return to Training Guidance: Step One

- All elite sport clubs and organisations and elite training centre venue hosts and operators should comply with the recommend minimum practice set out in this guidance, as they prepare for the return to training of elite athletes.
- The guidance sets out a detailed classification as to who an "elite athlete" is but includes an individual who derives a living from competing in sport, an individual nominated to compete at the next Summer or Winter Olympics/Paralympics or the next Commonwealth Games (in those sports which are not part of the Olympics/Paralympics programme), or an individual aged 16 years or above on an elite development pathway.
- Step One permits:
 - individual training in a performance facility;
 - groups of individual athletes training in the same facility/space (providing they adhere to social distancing); and
 - travelling to training venues.
- The guidance sets out various minimum standards to be adhered to, including:
 - identifying a COVID-19 officer (with responsibility for risk assessments and risk mitigations) and a COVID medical officer (with responsibility for medical aspects and oversight, including managing suspecting or confirmed COVID-19 cases);
 - only resuming training where government guidelines on social distancing can be followed;
 - carrying out a risk assessment and risk mitigation plan beforehand. This documentation should cover a minimum of 17 areas, including:
 - Regular screening before entry
 - Managing symptomatic persons
 - Returning from isolation
 - Access to PPE
 - Adequate levels of medical staffing
 - Cleaning and disinfection of equipment and areas (at a minimum, following government guidance for non-hospital facilities cleaning)
 - Social distancing and hygiene measures; and
 - ensuring that all athletes and staff undergo a 1:1 check-in prior to training to ensure they understand the risks, mitigations and training protocols, are physically and mentally well and have "opted in" to the training environment (it must be free to "opt out" at any time).
- Note that clinically extremely vulnerable athletes or staff should follow government advice - at the time of this note by continuing to "shield" and not return to training outside their home.
- Step Two will allow a level of social clustering within the training environment allowing much closer contact (for example teams sports tackling, combat sport sparring and sharing of equipment). The government will only move to this step once it is safe to do so.

Other Government Guidance

At the same time, the government also announced the following guidance relevant to grassroots sport and outdoor activity:

- Guidance for personal trainers and coaches on the phased return of sport and recreation in England which can be accessible [here](#).
- Guidance for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation in England which can be accessible [here](#).
- Guidance for the public on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation in England which can be accessible [here](#).

This note has been prepared on 21 May 2020. Given the live and rapidly evolving nature of events, we will provide further updates as and when things may change.

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