



**COVID-19
Route Map Phase 3
Valid from 31st
August 2020**

**Return to Indoor
Cheerleading
Guidance**

**Updated 5th
November 2020**



INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure the safest possible return to cheerleading activity SportCheer Scotland, in consultation with **sportscotland** and in line with Scottish Government regulations, has provided the following guidance for indoor Cheerleading training.

SportCheer Scotland is recognised by the world governing body for cheerleading; the International Cheer Union (ICU) as the National Governing Body for the sport of cheerleading in Scotland. Cheerleading is a SportAccord recognised sport, and an International Olympic Committee provisional member sport.

The following guidance intends to outline the next steps towards the return to cheerleading in Scotland and the necessary controls, checks and balances required to ensure that this is achieved with the health and safety of all athletes, coaches and staff at the centre of any decision-making.

Programme owners are advised to consider the safety of athletes as the primary factor when deciding whether to proceed with indoor sessions.

The close contact nature of cheerleading presents a unique challenge limiting the potential risk of transmission of COVID-19. We must progress with caution as we return to cheerleading and we urge programme owners and coaches to have patience throughout this process. We appreciate that the restrictions placed on indoor cheerleading and performance cheerleading classes may cause difficulty for your team or programme, however they are essential to limit further spread of the virus to athletes' households and communities.

Full guidance on preparing your facility can be found in the **sportscotland** document [Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport](#). Indoor cheerleading and dance classes are permitted to resume on Monday, August 31st.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the responses of the Scottish Government, **sportscotland** and Public Health Scotland remain fluid; data and recommendations will change. SportCheer Scotland will continue to update this document as new guidance becomes available: please check the date on the front cover to ensure you are viewing the most current version.

This document is intended to be used in its entirety. Individual sections should not be used alone without consideration of the document as a whole. This guidance does not constitute legal advice or replace any government or Public Health Scotland advice; nor does it provide any commentary or advice on health-related issues.

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1: GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS AND COACHES

1.1. Cheerleading clubs across the country operate differently according to their individual and local needs. Assessing whether indoor cheerleading sessions can be run safely will depend on a combination of these factors, which will differ between clubs and at each venue/location. It is the responsibility of each programme owner to put together a detailed risk assessment based on these individual factors to ensure a safe environment for all coaches and athletes.

1.2. For the purposes of this guidance 'organised cheerleading activity' refers to activities which are undertaken in a structured and managed way following specific rules and guidance of SportCheer Scotland, local authorities or businesses who in turn have fully applied related Scottish Government and **sportscotland** guidance. All organised activity should be overseen by a Covid Officer with documented risk assessments undertaken and mitigating actions put in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants, coaches and officials.

1.3. From the 31 August 2020 indoor sport and leisure facilities are able to open if Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented.

1.4. Programme owners and coaches should consult with their insurance provider that correct and full cover is in place for all planned activities prior to your scheduled return to classes. It is imperative that you stay in regular contact with your insurance provider at this time to ensure you are adequately covered for any activities you are undertaking. With guidance continually changing it is important to confirm your policy is up to date.

1.5. Cheerleading Clubs must nominate a COVID-19 Officer who will be responsible for completing documented risk assessments and ensuring all appropriate mitigations are put in place. The COVID-19 Officer should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined herein. The COVID-19 Officer will be contacted by NHS Scotland Test and Protect should an athlete test positive for COVID-19 and should only provide contact tracing details directly to the National Contact Tracing Service. They are not responsible for contacting athletes, spectators, staff or volunteers that may have come in contact with a positive case. An e-learning module for COVID officers is available [here](#).

1.6. Athletes, coaches and staff should adhere to Scottish Government guidelines on physical distancing at all times. This is set at a minimum of 2m with the exception listed in section 2.1. for athletes aged 17 years and under. Any parents and carers supervising their child should adhere to 2m physical distancing and not congregate during the session.

1.7. In planning your return to indoor cheerleading sessions coaches should be mindful that many athletes may have been participating in lower levels of physical activity for an extended period of time. The emphasis should be on a gradual return to training fitness, conditioning, jumps and rebuilding current skill level rather than progression to new skills

1.8. Program owners are responsible for informing athletes, coaches and staff on all protocols prior to the athletes' return to your training hall or facility.

1.9. Program owners should be aware that not all facilities have reopened and may close on short notice. They should therefore remain in regular contact their venue directly for further information. Owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities/ venues and put plans in place to re-engage staff and to set up operations

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that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers. This is a difficult time for everyone so please be patient.

1.10. Shielding was paused from August 1st. Further information can be found in the Scottish Government resource [COVID-19: Shielding Support and Contacts](#).

1.11. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 10 days and household members for 14 days as per the latest [Test & Protect Guidance](#). No one who is self-isolating should attend a cheerleading facility or activity.

1.12. To manage a safe return cheerleading and performance cheerleading activities it is a mandatory requirement that all clubs, facility operators, coaches and participants follow the latest Test & Protect guidance to help break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is available within this guidance and at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#) and in section 9 below.

1.13. No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Physical distancing guidance should always be followed.

1.14. Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, not all of the changes above will apply. Details of local restrictions are available on the Scottish government [website](#). Details on the impact this has on cheerleading activity can be found [here](#).

1.15. Programme owners and coaches must remember that there can never be risk free cheerleading and any cheerleading activity will come with inherent COVID-19 risks until there is a proven vaccine or treatment and a significant reduction of the disease in the population. All decisions should be made with the health and safety of all athletes, staff and coaches as the highest priority.

1.16. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 routemap. Current updates from the Scottish Government can be viewed at [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#).

1.17. Facility operators, organisers and coaches should note that the situation around COVID-19 is fluid and activities may need to be cancelled at short notice should there be a change in local or national restrictions. In such circumstances plans should be in place to notify participants of event cancellation and to ensure they do not attend the venue.

2: LOCAL RESTRICTIONS

2.1. On Monday 2nd November at 06:00, Scotland's Strategic Framework with various protection levels came into force across the country.

2.2 The Levels range for 0 (near normal) to Level 4 (closing of indoor sports facilities).

2.3 These level will be allocated to each local authority and will be updated on a weekly basis by the Scottish government.

2.4 Information on which Level your club is operating under can be found using the postcode checker available here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#)

2.5. It is the responsibility of the relevant facility operator / COVID officer to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any sport or leisure activity takes place and to check if the activity is in an area which is subject to additional Scottish Government localised measures and restrictions.

2.6. Be aware that the Scottish Government may update or change measures and restrictions at any time, including the local areas subject to them. Therefore the programme's COVID-19 Officer should regularly check Scottish Government advice and guidance relating to local outbreaks and measures at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local advice and measures](#).

3: PHYSICAL DISTANCING

3.1.1. Children aged 17 and under are not required to physically distance at any time, as set out by Scottish Government guidance. While athletes aged 17 years and under do not need to physically distance, any unnecessary contact or close proximity between athletes should be discouraged.

3.2. Adults aged 18 years and over must remain 2m distant throughout the cheerleading session, including during any breaks. Risk assessments should, where possible, consider mitigating actions to reduce the likelihood of participants encroaching within 2m of each other.

3.3. Coaches and staff supporting cheerleading activity should attempt to keep physically distant where possible, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible. In such circumstances the responsible COVID-19 Officer should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment.

3.4. Specific consideration should be given to supervision of children under the age of 5 years as it is not appropriate for young children to maintain physical distancing, either practically or in terms of child development. You may, for instance, ask a parent or carer to be present.

3.5. In general, young people find it harder than adults to stick to physical distancing rules. Special attention should be given to how you communicate physical distancing rules to young people.

3.6. Where a participant with a disability requires functional support to enable their participation in physical activity and sport this can be provided without maintaining physical distancing. This support can be provided by a coach or other individual. In such circumstance the Covid-19 Officer should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment. For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in close proximity, or a combination of actions.

3.7. Circulation routes around your gym or facility should be clearly marked to ensure a minimum of 2m physical distancing. In any areas – such as corridors and entranceways – where physical distancing cannot be facilitated you should consider risk mitigators including, but not limited to: a one-way system; traffic light system; the wearing of masks and/or face shields.

3.8. If possible, mark the floor to aid physical distancing both in the hall/studio space and for anyone queueing to enter. If using spot markers to show athletes where to stand then these should be placed 3m apart to allow movement during practice whilst maintaining a minimum of 2m distance.

3.9. Sufficient space should be allowed to ensure 2m distancing between coaches and participants when moving around the facility or during the Cheerleading session.

3.10. All participants should have left the facility prior to any participants in the next session being allowed in. A one-way system, traffic-light system or controlled queueing system should be implemented to avoid the athletes of one session mixing with another. There should also be a 20- 30 minute gap between sessions to allow for the venue to be sufficiently cleaned between sessions and to avoid contact between participants arriving and departing.

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3.11. Car parking may also need to be managed to prevent mixing of participants or a build-up of traffic and people.

3.12. Parents and carers who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.

4: INDOOR SESSION GUIDANCE

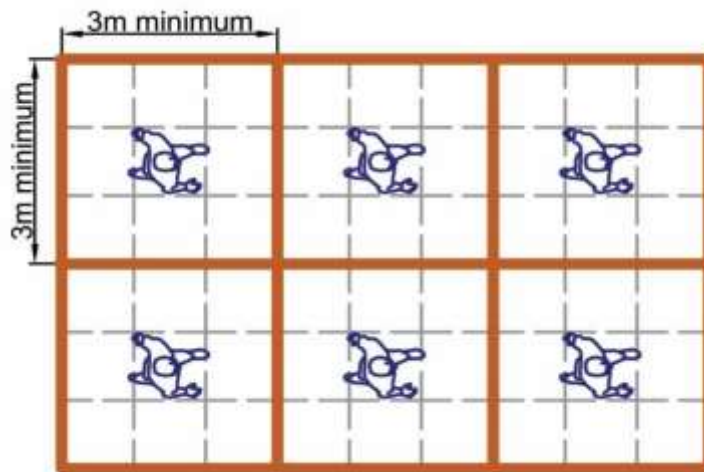
Participant Numbers

4.1. SportCheer Scotland recommends a focus on delivering cheerleading sessions with as few participants as is possible and for the minimum amount of time, while still allowing for the session to be run effectively.

4.2. Session participant numbers should be risk assessed to ensure physical distancing can be maintained and adhere to ratios agreed by your insurers.

4.3. The exact number of participants at an indoor cheerleading session should be based on the Scottish Government requirement for physical distancing, the ventilation and overall configuration of the training space, and with consideration given to the nature of the activities to be undertaken.

4.4. Each athlete should be allocated a 3m x 3m training box. However where contact is permitted they can move out with this box.



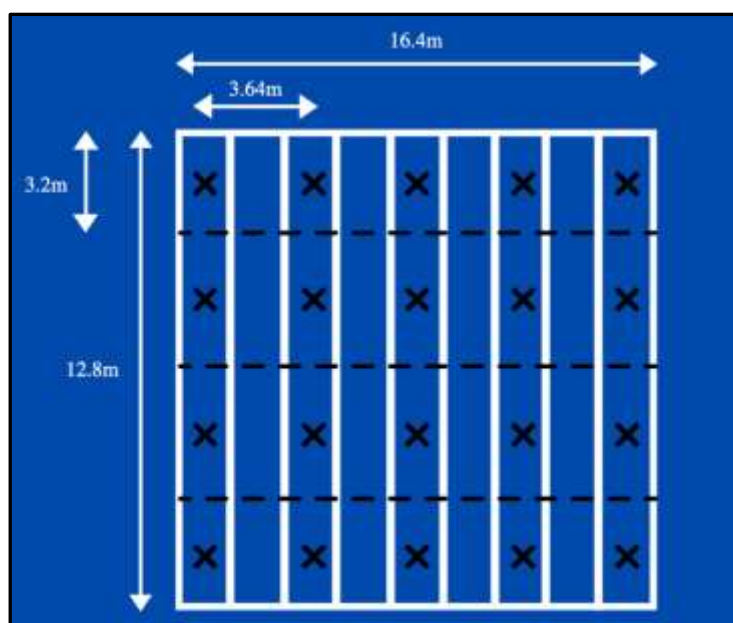
4.5. A cheerleading roll mat measures 1.82m x 12.8m and can be divided into four rows of 3m training boxes. Please note that sizes are indicative and that your mats' dimensions may differ.

4.6. Training boxes should face in the same direction where possible and avoid athletes training face-to-face. Coaches may face the athletes when leading the session but should remain at least 2m away from all participants.

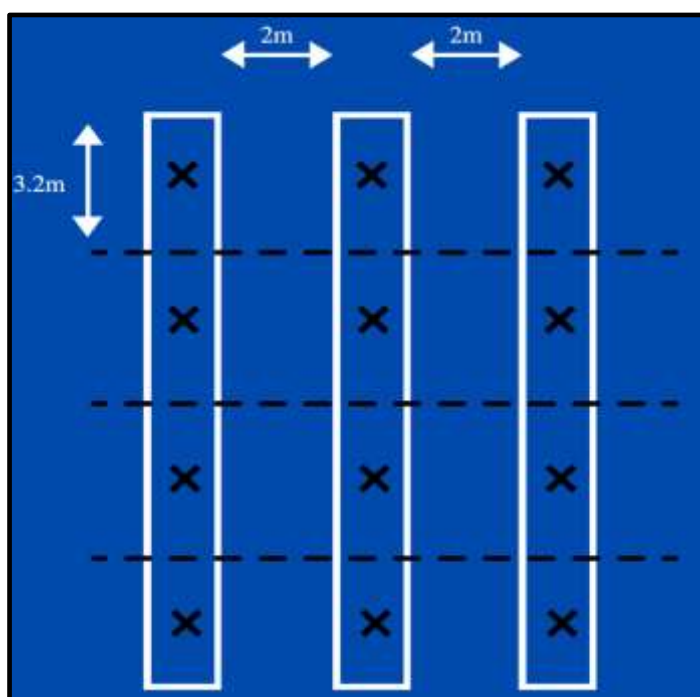
Example layouts for teams can be found on the next two pages.

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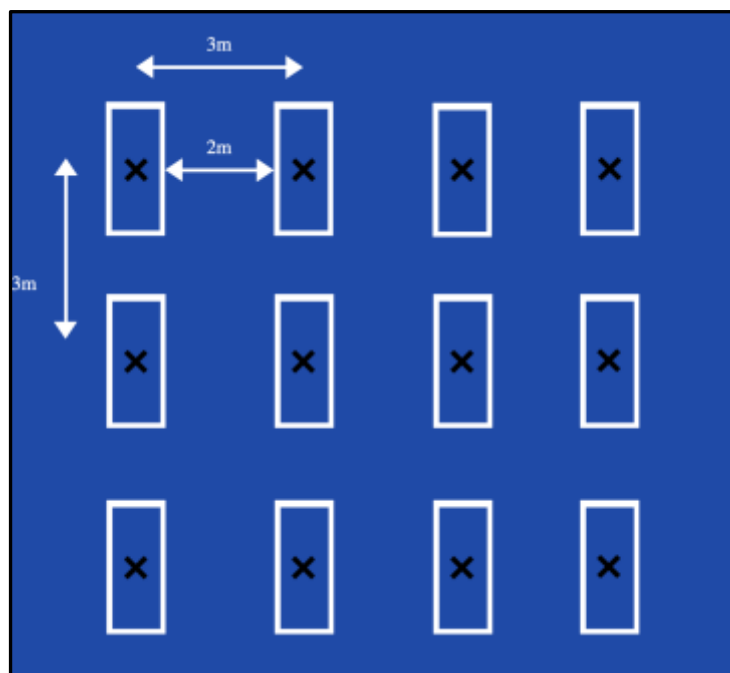
Example layout for a team with a full-sized cheer floor accommodating 20 athletes:



Example layout for a team with three roll mats in a larger hall space and accommodating 12 athletes:



Example layout for a team using panel mats and accounting for 12 athletes:



4.7. Athletes aged over the age of 18 years should remain within their designated training space for the duration of the session.

4.8. For classes with athletes aged 18 years and over the maximum class participant number is set by how many 3x3m training spaces can be fit safely into your training hall or cheerleading floor and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.

4.9. For classes with athletes aged 17 and under the maximum participant number is calculated by dividing your total training area by 9, accounting for a minimum floor area of 9m² per person. The total training area may take into account changing rooms, toilet facilities and reception area provided that all areas are connected and well ventilated with fresh air circulating freely between these spaces. The maximum number should include any coaches and staff present and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.

4.10. For classes with participants under 5 years, it is recommended that parents are also in attendance to support and minimise physical contact. The maximum capacity for the session is set by how many 3x3m training spaces can be fit safely into your training hall or cheerleading floor and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.. The maximum number should include any parents/carers, coaches and staff present.

4.11. Participant numbers should adhere to any maximum athlete to coach ratio as required by your club's insurance policy.

4.12. If you hire a hall or facility you should contact your venue operator who will be able to provide details on your maximum training numbers. Coaches should be aware that this number may need to be lowered depending on the planned activity: the capacity of a hall may be higher than your cheer mats/floors permit.

4.13. If your risk assessment identifies that a facility or a specific space within a facility cannot be opened safely, or identifies activities that are not safe for staff, coaches or participants, then the facility or spaces must remain closed or activities suspended.

Stunting and Dance Lifts

4.14. Cheerleading stunting, pyramid skills and dance lifts are activities that have a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission from athlete to athlete. This risk level has been determined by the prolonged level of close contact and in particular face to face proximity. COVID-19 is spread primarily through respiratory droplets in the saliva or nasal discharge when coughing or sneezing. During a training session there is a high moisture level where there is sweat, saliva and moisture rich breath. In activities such as stunting where physical distancing cannot be maintained the risk of transmission between athletes and/ or coaches is elevated.

4.15. For these reasons SportCheer Scotland permits the reintroduction of stunting, and dance lifts but only for a set period of time depending upon the club's current protection level. Please note pyramid skills are not permitted at this time.

4.16. Due to prolonged break in stunting, coaches should therefore plan to rebuild athletes' strength and stamina in this area. They should also be considerate that a level of detraining will have taken place, particularly in stunting as these skills will not have been practiced via online classes. A plan for the incremental increase in training intensity with a focus on skill competency should therefore be considered in line with the sessions' risk assessment and SportCheer Scotland's guidance.

4.17. Due to the close proximity between coach and athlete and the higher transmission risk that it presents the following risk mitigators will be required:

- Athletes may only stunt for the time determined by their protection level;
- Athletes can only stunt in groups of up to 6, forming a contact bubble. Athletes can only be part of one contact bubble per day. This may include a spotter under 18 years for younger age groups.
- Athletes should aim to regain strength and skill by practicing fundamental skills and those in which they are already competent and not look to develop new skills.
- Face coverings must be worn by all coaches, unless exempt under [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#);
- Coaches may only make contact with athletes in a "rescue" situation to prevent injury or an unplanned fall. "Rescue spotting" allows coaches to protect the safety of athletes without continuous contact and whilst maintaining the recommended 2m distance unless required in an emergency situation.
- The session must be thoroughly risk assessed for the inclusion of stunt training;
- Coaches should communicate clearly with participants and their parents/ carers the intention to reintroduce stunt training. Communications should clearly set out what the club is doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after stunting activity.

4.18. It is recognised that cheerleading clubs across the country operate differently according to their individual and local needs. Each club should assess these local factors when determining the duration of their stunt sessions. It is the responsibility of each programme owner to put together a detailed risk assessment based on these individual factors to ensure a safe environment for all coaches and athletes. Indicators of elevated regional risk may include local population density, any local lockdowns, known R rate,

ventilation and layout of cheerleading facility and the inclusion of any high-risk athletes in the activity.

4.19. Programme owners and coaches should consult with their insurance provider that correct and full cover is in place for the planned level of stunt activity.

4.20. In planning a stunting training session coaches should be mindful that we have had many months without cheerleading activity, therefore a level of detraining has taken place. A graduated plan for training and session content needs to be considered in line with the session's risk assessment.

Crossover Athletes

4.21. The focus should be on restricting any possible risk of COVID-19 transmission between sessions, therefore it is recommended that crossover numbers are minimised as far as is possible for your club and that athletes only attend one session per day therefore only be in one contact bubble per day.

4.22. Programme owners should be aware that should a crossover athlete display symptoms of COVID-19 then all other athletes who have been in close contact with that individual may be required to self-isolate in line with Test and Protect procedures.

4.23. SportCheer Scotland recommends a return to training approach focussing on fitness, conditioning, jumps and rebuilding current skill level rather than progression to new skills. Grouping athletes by age or ability rather than teams would lower the need for athletes to attend multiple training sessions and in turn lower the risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19 within your programme.

Session Duration

4.24. SportCheer Scotland recommends a maximum session duration of 3 hours.

4.25. A recommended buffer period of 20-30 minutes should be scheduled between sessions to allow for adequate cleaning and for participants to leave before the next session's athletes arrive.

4.26. Immediately following the session all participants must leave and not congregate outside the venue.

Tumbling Skills Training

4.27. At this stage, any hands-on spotting or supporting athletes during a tumbling skill is only permitted in a "rescue" situation to prevent athlete injury or unplanned fall. This applies to all age groups.

4.28. As per equipment guidelines all tumbling equipment (crash mats, wedge mats, etc.) should be spaced a minimum of 2m apart and at a recommended distance of 3m. Equipment should be properly cleaned and sanitized between use. Physical distancing should be maintained when queuing for using a piece of equipment. This applies to all age groups.

4.29. Coaches are not permitted to support athletes of any age performing tumbling skills.

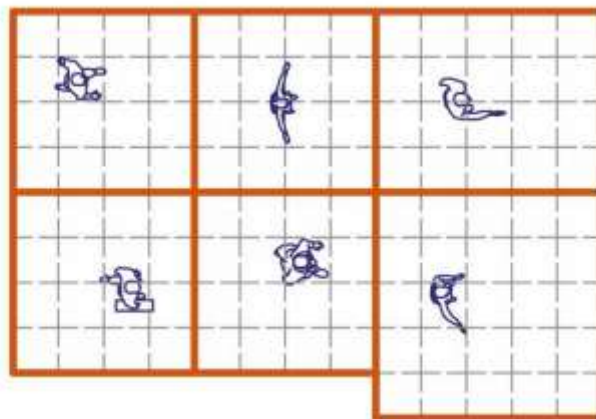
Standing Tumbling

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4.30. If possible, it is recommended that athletes stay within their 9m² area when performing standing tumbling drills or skills.

4.31. If necessary, it is recommended that an athlete's individual training area is extended to allow for performance of more dynamic skills (for example, standing back handspring), exceeding the 9m².

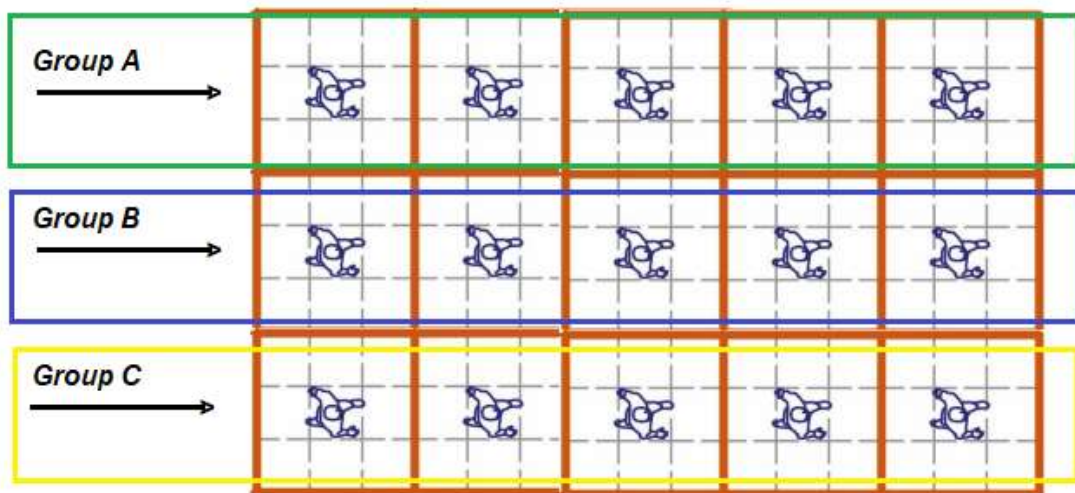
4.32. Coaches should take into account the need for expanded training areas when determining how many athletes their venue can safely hold during any given training session. A taller athlete would require an extended training area to complete a back handspring without encroaching within 2m of another athlete. See example of extended separate training areas:



Running Tumbling

4.33. As far as reasonably practicable, coaches should minimise the number of athletes sharing a running tumbling strip at any given time.

4.34. If venue space and equipment allows, consideration should be given towards the formation of 'tumbling bubbles.' Athletes whose individual areas fall within a tumbling strip should remain in that group for running tumbling to decrease the number of athletes having contact with that area of the floor. See example o next page.



4.35. Athletes should maintain physical distancing when queuing for a running tumbling strip, and consideration should be given to the time between each individual athlete's tumbling pass.

Background and Routine Music

4.36. Music volume should be kept to a minimum to avoid coaches or participants raising their voice to communicate.

4.37. Athletes should be discouraged, where reasonable, from shouting their counts over the music.

4.38. Music should be turned off when a coach is providing any instruction to the athletes.

5: GUIDANCE FOR GYM / FACILITY OPERATORS

The following guidance has been provided for program owners and coaches operating indoor sessions at their own gym or facility.

5.1. Indoor sport and leisure facilities can reopen from the 31 August 2020 subject to Scottish Government guidance being followed as outlined at Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#).

5.2. **sportscotland** has also produced the resource [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) to help Cheerleading facility operators prepare for reopening. The resource supports Scottish Government guidance by providing further detailed checklists for the reopening of a range of sport specific facilities.

5.3. Changing rooms and shower facilities should remain closed where possible. These may be opened for athletes with disabilities or special needs.

5.4. Athletes should be instructed to arrive at the session in their training kit where possible.

5.5. Club toilets can be opened in line with the Scottish Government [Public Toilets Guidelines](#)

5.6. From the 31st August 2020 access to indoor locker rooms and storage areas is permitted for the dropping off and collection of sports equipment or clothing. The cheerleading facility operator should ensure mitigating actions are put in place to minimise the risk of virus transmission including physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning measures.

5.7. Facilities can open indoor bar/clubhouse facilities providing that they adhere to Scottish Government guidelines for hospitality, found [here](#).

5.8. For cheerleading programmes operating an in-house retail space, for example for the sale of food, drinks or team clothing: these spaces must adhere to the Scottish Government guidelines for retail, found [here](#).

For detailed facility guidance including a checklist that covers use of changing rooms, showers and toilets visit Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on the Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities](#)

Maximum Venue Capacity

5.9. The maximum capacity of a cheerleading gym or facility should be limited to a minimum floor area of 9m² per person.

5.10. For this figure, the area is the net usable indoor facility space available to occupants to use, including all changing rooms, corridors, halls, reception areas and toilet facilities.

5.11. To calculate your maximum building capacity you should divide your total useable floor space by nine. The total number of athletes, coaches, staff and any supervising parents cannot exceed your maximum venue capacity.

Ventilation

5.12. Evidence continues to suggest that, in poorly ventilated indoor spaces, airborne aerosols are a possible transmission route. This is why ventilation is an important part of mitigating against the transmission of COVID-19. Ventilation throughout the venue and into the training space should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided and increased wherever possible. Particular attention should be given to spaces where high-intensity exercise activity takes place.

Venues with natural ventilation

5.13. Doors and windows to the facility should be opened 15 minutes prior to any planned activity and remain open throughout the session.

5.14. It is an important risk mitigator to indoor cheerleading sessions that windows and doors are opened even if external temperatures are lower and cause discomfort. Athletes should be instructed to wear more layers or warmer training kit where practical.

5.15. During colder months the wind and indoor/outdoor temperature difference are greater, therefore any doors and windows do not need to be opened as wide to create the same airflow.

5.16. Where the training space only has windows on one side of the room consideration should be made to areas where air can become stagnant. Rooms can be well ventilated if the depth of the room is less than half its height. In deeper-plan rooms it is advisable to use a local recirculation unit or fan at the back of the room to enhance air disturbance and reduce the risk of stagnant air.

5.17. The guidance on physical distancing will inform how many people can safely be involved in activity in each space. Consideration should also be given to reducing the numbers or removing from use any activity spaces that do not have windows, doors or vents to allow natural ventilation.

For further details see section 4 in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation Guide](#).

Venues with mechanical ventilation

5.18. A target ventilation rate of 20 litres per second per person is advised for indoor sports facilities. This may be achieved in one of three ways:

- Adjustments to ventilation systems to increase fresh air intake.
- Increase natural ventilation by opening doors and windows in line with the guidance above for natural ventilation.
- Controlling numbers by limiting the overall maximum capacity in your building to 9m² per person, irrespective of age.

5.19. Reducing occupancy in this way whilst sustaining ventilation flows will increase the typical current 10 litres per second per person flow rate of ventilation to at least 20 litres per second per person as fewer people are being served by the ventilation system. To use this figure, first check that your system is operating at a minimum of 10 litres per second per

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person, then calculate the net useable indoor facility space available to participants to use – including changing rooms, toilet and wash facilities – before dividing by nine.

5.20. All coaches, staff, athletes and any supervising parents must be accounted for in your maximum occupancy.

For further details see section 4 in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation Guide](#); you can also contact a specialist engineer.

6: HEALTH AND HYGIENE

6.1. Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained and has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and that first aiders have appropriate training. We recommend that you also contact your first aid qualification provider for advice regarding any change to first aid protocols.

6.2. In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognised that a suitably qualified person, coach or supervising adult may be required to attend to the injured participant. The COVID Officer should consider processes for managing this as part of their risk assessment. This could include but not be limited to;

- Provision of suitable PPE (A minimum of face mask and gloves should be considered)
- Training of coaches/supervising adults
- Presence of one parent/guardian being required at the activity for children/vulnerable adults.

6.3. Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these.

6.4. Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. For instance, common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) should where possible be left open but if not possible, regular cleaning with disposable gloves should be undertaken.

6.5. Make hand sanitisers or wipes available for use at the entrance/exit to the venue/facility where this is possible. Access throughout training venue will also encourage more regular sanitising. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.

6.6. It is the responsibility of the club to provide appropriate hand and surface sanitisers.

6.7. Athletes should be instructed to wash their hands for 20 seconds before leaving home to attend the session.

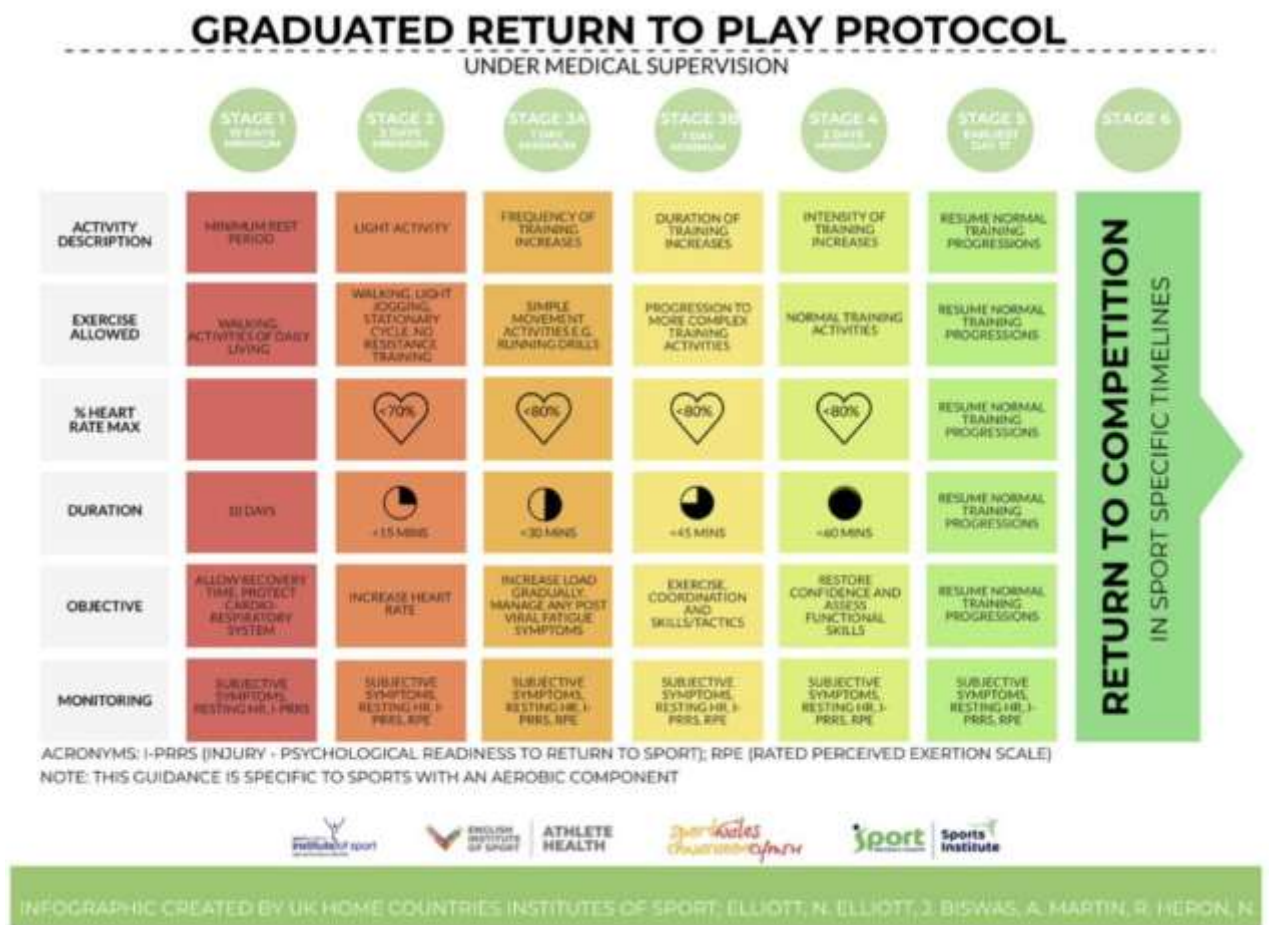
6.8. Be aware that disabled people may face greater challenges implementing regular handwashing because of additional support needs. Some disabled people may need to use touch to help them get information from their environment and physical support. It is important they are not prevented from doing this, but operators should be aware that this increases the likelihood of virus transmission.

6.9. All coaches and participants should be encouraged, where possible, to avoid touching equipment, surfaces, and their face and mouth.

6.10. Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.

6.11. If an athlete has displayed COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 they must follow the UK Home Counties Institute of Sport Return to Play Protocol:

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A checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)

Additional resources on health and hygiene can be found on the following websites:

- Health Protection Scotland: [COVID-19: Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings](#)
- Health Protection Scotland: [Hand Hygiene](#)
- St. John's Ambulance [COVID-19 Advice for First Aiders](#)

7: EQUIPMENT

7.1. Non-essential sharing of equipment should be discouraged i.e. poms/ training mats. Where a tumbling aid is being used only one athlete should use it at a time, and it must be sufficiently cleaned between athletes. Shared equipment should be cleaned before, during and after each session. For further information on cleaning requirements the UK Government has provided the resource [COVID-19: Cleaning in Non-Healthcare Settings Outside the Home](#).

7.2. Coaches should remove any additional equipment including crash mats, poms and tumble aids that are not essential as part of the planned activity.

7.3. All training mats, markers and equipment should be put out prior to the start of a class by the session coach to avoid participants touching them unnecessarily.

8: CLEANING

8.1. A cleaning plan should be in place with provisions for facilities and equipment and with particular notice of any high frequency touch points i.e. door handles and gates.

8.2. A buffer time of 20-30 minutes should be included between sessions to allow for adequate cleaning and for participants to leave without classes overlapping, as appropriate to your venue and planned activity.

8.3. Clear guidance should be provided to staff and coaches on any cleaning responsibilities you expect of them.

8.4. Should an athlete develop symptoms while participating at a cheerleading session you should clean all public areas that the individual occupied with detergent and disinfectant. This should include any potentially contaminated high contact areas such as door handles or grab-rails. Once this process has been completed the area can be put back into use.

8.5. Any public area that a symptomatic individual passed through (spent minimal time in) e.g. corridors, and which are not visibly contaminated with any body fluids, do not need to be further decontaminated beyond your routine cleaning processes.

8.6. Environmental cleaning and disinfection should be undertaken using disposable cloths and mop heads using standard detergent and disinfectant that are active against bacteria and viruses. All cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags.

Additional resources on cleaning can be found on the following websites:

UK Government: [COVID-19: Cleaning in Non-Healthcare Setting Outside the Home](#)

Health Protection Scotland: [COVID-19: Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings](#)

9: SAFEGUARDING

9.1. All adults involved in coaching children or vulnerable adults in an organised cheerleading environment should have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

9.2. Cheerleading coaches and programmes should always ensure appropriate ratios of coach/adult to child/vulnerable adult.

9.3. Health, safety and welfare policies should always be risk assessed and implemented.

9.4. Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by Children 1st: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

10: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Covid-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to Covid-19:

- Older people
- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities
- Women
- People from deprived communities

10.1. There is evidence that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups have a higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. COVID-19 patients who are admitted to critical care or who die in hospital have included a disproportionately large number of people from ethnic minorities. In the UK, one third of patients admitted to critical care with COVID-19 were from an ethnic minority group, despite constituting only one eighth of the UK population.

10.2. The elevated risk to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups has not yet been explained: further research will determine what combination of factors leads to higher coronavirus infection rates and/or more severe outcomes of COVID-19 among ethnic minorities. Programme owners and coaches must consider the higher risk level to athletes from these groups when completing the return to cheerleading risk assessment.

10.3. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and cheerleading coaches should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

10.4. The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include:

- Communication – Digital exclusion is a key issue. With so many services and so much information moving online it risks worsening the health impacts of the pandemic. Cheerleading programmes and coaches should think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people in a manner that is mindful of digital exclusion.
- Accessibility – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and facilities re-open it is important to build understanding of any athletes with disabilities and their specific accessibility needs. Consideration may include, but is not limited to, hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings.
- Anxiety, mental health and wellbeing – The COVID-19 pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health. Participation in sport and physical activity is known to have significant benefits for mental health, therefore it is vital that clubs continue to promote those benefits and encourage people to get involved.
- Confidence – Confidence to return to sport is a big issue across all groups. We know that some groups are at higher risk from Covid-19 than others (including some ethnic

RETURN TO INDOOR CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

minorities, disabled people and households experiencing poverty). These groups may be even more nervous about returning to cheerleading. Pressure must not be placed on athletes from any of these groups to return to cheerleading immediately: clubs should instead ensure there is still a place on the team for these athletes when they feel it is personally safe to return and/or they have an agreement from their doctor to do so.

Additional resources can be found on the following websites:

Scottish Disability Sport: [Principles for Participants with Disabilities Returning to Physical Activity and Sport in Scotland](#)

Scottish Government: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Evidence Gathered for Scotland's Route Map - Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact assessment](#)

Mental Health Collective: <https://mentalhealthcollective.org.uk/>

11: FACE COVERINGS

11.1. Athletes are not required to wear a face covering while participating in physical activity including contact activities such as stunting, however no athlete should be discouraged from wearing a face covering should they decide to do so. Individual clubs may wish to enforce their own policies surrounding face coverings.

11.2. When indoors, face coverings should be worn before and after the activity and when in “non-cheerleading” areas of the training venue e.g. reception, toilets etc. This is a mandatory requirement unless an individual has a ‘reasonable excuse’ not to wear a face covering. For example, if you have a health condition or you are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia or a learning disability. Good practice is for clubs should ensure all athlete medical records are up to date.

11.3. Face coverings are not mandatory for coaches leading an indoor cheerleading session except in circumstances of elevated risk i.e. administering first aid to an athlete, “rescue” spotting for stunting and tumbling. While face coverings are not required, masks are scientifically proven to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Coaches should wear a face covering at their own discretion.

11.4. It is recommended that coaching staff wear face coverings where they cannot reasonably maintain physical distancing.

11.5. Coaches should remain 2m distant from athletes at all times when a face covering is not worn.

11.6. Babies, toddler and children under 5 years of age are not required to wear a face covering.

11.7. Athletes aged 5 – 12 years must be supervised when wearing a face covering.

11.8. The Scottish Government has provided the following exemptions for those who are not required to wear a face covering [here](#). Those exempt under the guidance and regulations do not have to prove their exemption and should not be made to wear a face covering or denied access to your gym or facility.

11.9. Individual discretion should be applied in considering the use of face coverings for children including, for example, children with breathing difficulties and disabled children who would struggle to wear a face covering.

11.10. Programmes and coaches should be aware that face coverings discriminate against some deaf people who need to look at lips to help communicate. Staff in facilities should be made aware that it is okay to remove their face coverings to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading and facial expressions.

11.11. Face coverings guidance varies when using hospitality services such as cafés, bars and restaurants. For further information refer to [Scottish Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).

12: NHS SCOTLAND TEST AND PROTECT PROTOCOLS

12.1. [Test and Protect](#) is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.

12.2. Containing outbreaks early is crucial to reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect the NHS and save lives and avoid the reintroduction of social and economic lockdown. This will support the country to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life.

12.3. It is a mandatory requirement that coaches and/or programme owners work with their nominated COVID-19 Officer to keep records of attendance at each session and ensure contact details for athletes are up to date. Should an athlete test positive for COVID-19 following one of your sessions you will be required to assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service to identify and contact individuals who may have been exposed to the virus. Those individuals may be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

12.4. A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#).



12.5. If an athlete or coach contacts to say that they, or a member of their household, have displayed COVID-19 symptoms you should encourage the athlete or parent book a test. You should not contact anyone to inform them that they may have come into contact with a positive case: this is the sole responsibility of NHS Test and Protect. Full guidance on how to book a test is available at [NHS Inform](#).

12.6. If an athlete or coach tests positive for COVID-19 the National Contact Tracing Service will help identify who they have been in close contact with and will contact your Club's COVID-19 Officer. At this point you will be required to provide the details outlined below. You should not contact anyone whom this individual came into contact with directly.

If you are made aware of a potential positive case or contact within your sessions and are unsure of how to proceed you can contact NHS Test and Protect at 0800 030 8012

12.7. Information to collect:

12.7.1. Coaches and Staff

1. The names of all coaches and staff at the session
2. A contact number for each coach and staff member
3. The date and times that each coach and staff member were working

12.7.2. Athletes

1. The name of each athlete, or if multiple athletes attend from the same household then nominate a lead athlete, taking note of the size of the household group.
2. Contact details for each athlete or lead athlete of a household group.
3. Date and times of attendance. Where possible record the arrival and departure times.

12.8. If any athlete/parent does not have a contact number you are permitted to accept either a postal address or email address.

12.9. There is no legal requirement for individuals to provide their contact details for the purposes of NHS Test and Protect. In this instance clubs and coaches are entitled to refuse entry of any individual to a session or into their facility if they do not share their contact details for the benefit of Test and Protect.

12.10. Storing Data Securely

12.10.1. The COVID-19 Officer should keep class attendance records and contact details in a secure place and in line with your club's data protection policy. More information on data protection for the purpose of Test and Protect can be found in the Scottish Government resource [COVID-19 Test and Protect: Multi-Sector Guidance on Collection of Customer and Visitor Contact Details](#).

12.10.2. Data collected must not be shared with any individual or organisation that is not listed in your club's privacy policy.

12.10.3. Club management should not use the contact data to directly contact staff or athlete, even in the event that an athlete tests positive for COVID-19.

12.10.4. Data should be stored for 21 days to cover the full duration of the typical incubation period and some additional time in which a person may become infectious.

12.10.5. In order to gather and store customer information securely, sports facility operators may need to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This will be the case if you are using an electronic system to gather and store data.

12.10.6. If you are unsure whether you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113, or visit www.ico.org.uk.

12.11. How to Dispose of Data

12.11.1. After the 21 day period attendance records should be destroyed. If paper records have been kept then these pages can be destroyed through secure shredding or other destructive process. Where records are stored online Clubs should ensure that data collected is not stored longer than the 21 day period and are not used for any marketing or external resource.

What should someone do if they have coronavirus symptoms?

12.12. If a person has a continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change in taste or smell, they should self-isolate and request a coronavirus test right away. Further information is available at www.NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect or by calling **0800 028 2816** if they cannot get online.

12.13. The Coronavirus (COVID-19): Test and Protect information leaflet provides information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland.

Protect Scotland App

12.14. NHS Scotland has launched a free mobile app designed to help with contact tracing efforts and slow the spread of COVID-19. The app will alert users if they have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus.

12.15. Supported by a dedicated Protect Scotland website, the app is an extra tool complementing existing person-to-person contact tracing which remains the main component of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect system.

12.16. Further information on the Protect Scotland app is available at www.protect.scot.

13: FURLOUGHED STAFF

13.1. It is for each club and/or programme owner to decide when it is the appropriate time to return staff to work from the Coronavirus Government Job Retention ('furlough') scheme.

13.2. A furloughed employee can take part in volunteer work if they do not provide services which generate revenue for, or on behalf of, your organisation or a linked or associated organisation.

13.3. Changes to the furlough scheme took effect from 1 August 2020. Further information is available at UK Govt: Job Retention Scheme Changes.

14: BOOKINGS AND PAYMENTS

14.1. Online or phone bookings should be taken where possible. Contactless or online payment options should be made available where possible to avoid handling cash. However please be aware that a proportion of athletes will not have a bank account or have access to online banking in these cases cash should be allowed.

14.2. A register of class participants should be maintained for each session, in line with data protection legislation. Further information on data collection for the purpose of Test and Protect can be found [here](#).

14.3. Where bookings and payments cannot be made online additional risk mitigators should be in place i.e. face coverings and 2m physical distancing.

15: COMMUNICATIONS WITH ATHLETES, STAFF AND PARENTS

15.1. Programme owners and coaches should communicate clearly and regularly what the club is doing to mitigate the risks of transmission at cheerleading classes and give clear advice on what is expected of athletes before, during and after training.

15.2. Ensure all coaches and staff are aware of any changes to operations and any additional expectations you may have of them.

15.3. Update all athletes and parents with clear information on all changes to their normal procedures including any changes to access, class times and payment methods. Programme owners and coaches should ideally publish an action plan detailing their plans to re-open safely.

15.4. Ensure up to date signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are displayed clearly.

15.5. Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.

15.6. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

15.7 The Scottish Government has advised that the protection level within each area will be reviewed weekly and as such may change frequently, at short notice and have an impact on your sessions. You should therefore ensure that your staff, athletes and their parents/carers receive updates in a timely fashion to allow them to plan.

16: GUIDANCE FOR COACHES AND INSTRUCTORS

16.1. From the 3rd August 2020 restrictions were lifted on the number of households (or extended households) that can be coached per day.

16.2. During indoor group training sessions appropriate risk assessed physical distancing and hygiene measures should be put in place to protect participants.

16.3. Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by Children 1st: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#)

16.4. Further **sportscotland** guidance specific to coaches, leaders, personal trainers, and instructors is available at [Getting your coaches ready for sport](#) .

17: SCREENING

17.1. Due to the close contact nature of cheerleading, SportCheer Scotland recommends the screening of all participants to ascertain whether individuals are able to train safely.

17.2. Before leaving the house to participate in cheerleading, athletes should be asked to consider the COVID-19 Screening Form, available on page 29.

17.3. Any positive responses to questions on the COVID-19 Screening Form will mean that the individual cannot attend the session and they should be advised to return home to self-isolate as per Scottish Government and NHS Scotland guidance.

17.4. There should be no pressure placed upon an athlete to attend a training session or competition if they have symptoms or they feel like the environment is unsafe for them.

17.5. If at any time an individual feels uncomfortable with the management of the session, then there should be no pressure placed on that individual if they decide to opt-out of that session.

17.6. Clubs should ensure that where screening takes place it is conducted in a suitable area away from venue entrances, ensuring good social distancing practices.

17.7. Staff and coaches should be provided with education on COVID-19 and in identifying any potential symptoms. These have been identified as:

- High temperature over 37.8°C
- New and persistent cough
- Loss of taste or sense of smell

In addition, other symptoms can include:

- Shortness of Breath
- Hoarseness
- Sneezing
- Wheezing
- Tiredness
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose

17.8. Any information recording in screening participants should be securely stored for 21 days before being destroyed.

17.9. Screening forms should not be collected by the coach or programme owner.

COVID-19 SCREENING FORM

Club/ Programme Name:

Athlete:

Date:

Please answer all questions accurately and honestly:

Are you experiencing any of the following?

- A high temperature? Yes / No
- A new continuous cough? Yes / No
- A loss of taste and/or smell? Yes / No

Are you awaiting a Coronavirus test result? Yes / No

Have you been told by NHS Scotland Test and Protect service that you have been in contact with a person who has Coronavirus within the last 14 days? Yes / No

Have you travelled from outside the UK in the last 14 days? Yes / No.

Has anyone from your household displayed any of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined above?

If you have answered yes to any of the above, you should NOT attend the session.

You should self-isolate as per NHS Scotland advice and avoid contact with any other participants for 14 days from time of return. If you are symptom free for 14 days you may return to cheerleading activities



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