



COVID-19

Phase 2 (ROI) / Step 2 (NI)

Safe Return to
Training Directives

GUIDE FOR COACHES



RETURN TO TRAINING – A GUIDE FOR COACHES

PHASE 2 (ROI) / STEP 2 (NI)

Sport provides great mental and physical health benefits for our society, and cricket is no exception. However, we all have a duty of care to ensure that our cricket clubs operate within a safe environment.

This practical guide for coaches has been developed in consultation with medical experts and in line with both ROI and NI Executive Government Guidelines. It outlines the robust measures Cricket Ireland and the Provincial Unions strongly recommend clubs to implement and maintain to help safeguard all members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This will allow all of us to get back to training safely, improving the wellbeing of members across Ireland.

The guidelines in this document relate to Phase 2 of the Irish Governments Roadmap for Reopening Society and Step 2 of the Northern Ireland Executive Approach to Decision Making.

The key to success will be the collective approach to compliance with the protocols, and there is no obligation for clubs to re-open if they feel they cannot meet their health and safety obligations.

***As always follow the Government Guidelines of
Good Hand Hygiene – Respiratory Etiquette – Social Distancing.***

Whilst all coaches and players will be extremely keen to start playing it is imperative that coaches set an example and follow these guidelines to ensure that the risk of infection/transmission of the virus is minimised.

COACHES

Before return to any activity please remember you must stay at home if you:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have flu-like symptoms or are feeling unwell.
- Live outside a 20km radius of the club (ROI only).

You must:

- Check with your GP prior to playing if you are in a high-risk health category.
- Find out what protocols are in place at the club.
- Ensure your club has up-to-date contact details for you.

Before you Coach

- Prepare a risk assessment and consult with your club how a session can be delivered safely.
- Ensure that you get permission from the club to carry out your sessions.
- Coaching must only be provided to club members or approved users of the facility.
- Coaches must ensure a player has registered their contact details with the club.
- Coaching sessions should be booked and paid for in advance by bank transfer or contactless card payment – no cash transactions.
- Schedule sessions at least 15 minutes apart to avoid or limit any crossover of players.

Preparing for a Coaching Session

- Sessions should only take place outdoors during this phase of the reopening.
- Coaching should take place only where full social distancing is possible.
- Coaches should have access to a supply of hand sanitiser, antiseptic wipes and cleaning materials for their own use.

Informing Players and Parents

- Let the players know, preferably in writing, before the session how you expect them to act to help ensure a safe environment for themselves and others, and what precautions you have put in place.
- Advise parents in the case of younger players. Parents should be asked to reiterate the advice to their children pre-training.
- The club house will not be available in the event of bad weather. Players/Coaches etc should return to cars or should have their own appropriate wet weather gear.

The following must be adhered to:

- Only people core to your session can be in attendance.
- Quarantine waiting area must be set up and sign posted as a designated waiting area.
- Players should arrive and leave as close as possible to when you need to be there.
- Only one parent/guardian should accompany younger players (U16).
- Players should arrive ready to train as changing room access will not be possible.
- Players and coaches should wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitiser when available, before and as soon as possible after the training session.
- Players should carry a bottle of hand sanitiser and antiseptic wipes at all times.
- If coaches witness poor practice it should be addressed immediately in a polite fashion and ongoing disregard for protocols should be reported to the club as soon as possible.
- Ensure all health and safety and emergency first aid guidelines are followed.

During the session:

- Establish a quarantined waiting area for parents.
- Only one-to-one cricket sessions are permitted – no group sessions are permitted in phase 2 /step 2 of reopening, the only exception being where players are from the same household then the maximum number is 2.
- Where possible, clubs/coaches should issue their bowlers with a ball each to work with and it is the responsibility of the bowlers to look after the ball for the foreseeable future.
- If this is not possible bowlers should have a designated ball for the session – they must use this ball for the entire session and must not touch any other ball.
- Cricket balls should be wiped with an alcohol-based wipe after use.
- Batters should either hit the ball back to a bowler or push with their foot. Batters at no time should touch the practice balls.
- Coaches MUST NOT stand in the umpire's position at the nets.
- If delivering a small group family session coaches must maintain social distancing at all times.
- Maintain social distancing at all times including when giving feedback and while players are resting.
- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as cones, stumps, etc.
- Do not let the players/parents handle any coaching equipment if possible. The coach should pick up any equipment used e.g. cones.
- Coaches to wear latex gloves if handling any equipment is required.
- Be aware of what surfaces you or your players(s) touch and if you touch the equipment such as stumps, cones, etc. you must clean these before you leave. Coaches should always have access to disposable disinfectant wipes.
- If it is a bowling session, player to use their own balls/designated ball or coach is to use plastic balls which have been washed/dried prior to the session.
- Coaches should be the sole operator of the bowling machine.
- The bowling machine operator must wear appropriate hand coverings when feeding the bowling machine.
- If bowling machines are used, please ensure they are cleaned thoroughly between uses, all balls used are cleaned with disinfectant. This is the responsibility of the bowling machine operator.
- Bowling machine balls must be put in buckets of disinfectant solution after each session, removed and left to dry before next session.
- When training finishes Coaches must leave the club promptly.
- If coaches witness poor practice it should be addressed immediately in a polite fashion and ongoing disregard for protocols should be reported to the club as soon as possible.

SPECIFIC TRAINING SCENARIOS

BOWLING

Bowling into an empty net

- A bowler may bowl into an empty net.
- The bowler should pick their own balls up.
- No saliva or sweat should be applied to the ball.

Bowling into a mitt

- Bowlers should use their own balls. Coaches should wear their own mitt, with a disposable glove on the other hand.
- Coaches should use their own mitt to catch the ball and return the ball to the bowler using their gloved hand.
- No saliva or sweat should be applied to the ball.
- Mitts should be cleaned with disinfectant or detergent wipes between bowlers.
- Latex gloves should be disposed of after every bowler.

Bowler against batter

- Maintain wide social distancing.
- Bowler should use their own balls and is responsible for collecting them.
- Batter should not handle the balls at all.
- Batter should move to the back of the net – they can kick/knock balls back towards the bowler but minimum of 2m social distancing needs to be maintained.
- No saliva or sweat should be applied to the ball.

BATTING

Batting against bowling machine

- A batter can bat against a bowling machine.
- Coach feeding – the coach should pick the balls up at the end and place into a bucket – and not the batter.
- The batter should not be handling the balls.
- All balls should be disinfectant cleaned at the end of each batter's session and the bowling machine, its frame and stand should be wiped down with disinfectant.

Batting against sidearm

- Batters should not handle the balls at all.
- Coach to use own sidearm and collect balls.

- Batter should move to the back of the net – they can kick/knock balls back towards the coach but minimum of 2m social distancing needs to be maintained.
- Sidearm should be cleaned with disinfectant between each player.
- The coach should keep the assigned balls as his/her sidearm balls.

Batter against bowler

- Maintain social distancing.
- Batter should not handle the balls at all.
- Bowler should use their own balls – and is responsible for collecting them.
- Batter should move to the back of the net – they can kick/knock balls back towards the bowler but minimum of 2m social distancing needs to be maintained.
- No saliva or sweat should be applied to the ball.

FIELDING AND WICKETKEEPING

Clubs may reopen their cricket pitch in a way that maintains social distancing.

Zones can be assigned for use. A club may set up a middle net and a number of zone areas around the outfield. Each zone is must be treated as an individual booking. Players under 16 must be accompanied by parent/guardian/coach in a zone.

Fielding – throwing into net

- A player may throw into an empty net.
- The player should pick their own balls up.

Fielding – throwing into mitt

- Fielder sessions 1 v 1 is permissible – plastic/incrediballs should be used.
- Coaches should wear their own mitt, with a disposable glove on the other hand.
- Coaches should use their own mitt to catch the ball and return the ball to the thrower using their gloved hand.
- Avoid touching face for the session.
- Mitts should be cleaned with disinfectant or detergent wipes between fielders.
- Gloves should be disposed of after every fielder.
- Balls should be placed in bucket of disinfectant after ever session.

Fielding – Catching and throwing to Coach who is using a bat

- Coaches should use their own bat to hit catches one-handed, wearing their own mitt on the other hand to catch and feed the hit.
- Coaches who use a batting glove and fielding bat should wear a disposable glove inside their batting glove.

- Plastic/incrediballs should be used.
- Coaches should not directly touch balls.
- Fielders should use their own balls.
- Mitts should be cleaned with disinfectant or detergent wipes between fielders.
- Wicketkeeping gloves should be cleaned with disinfectant or detergent wipes after use.

FITNESS SESSIONS

Training groups should be controlled and managed to ensure social distancing is maintained at all times. Group sizes must be in accordance with Government Guidelines – Clubs have the responsibility to ensure these guidelines are met.

- Avoid high intensity physical exercise where possible.
- Training groups should be controlled and managed to ensure social distancing is maintained at all times. (no more than 3 players + 1 coach in ROI sessions) (small group sessions are permitted up to a maximum of 10 athletes/staff in NI).
- Players running must ensure they can leave 2m between them.
- Fitness equipment must not be shared.
- Cones and any other touch points must be sanitised between each session.
- Any player(s) repeatedly not following the club directives should be asked to leave the club.
- There should be no spectators present during this phase of reopening.
- Parents supervising children should be limited to one and maintain ample distance from the session.

EQUIPMENT & CLEANING

- Practice caution with all equipment and avoid letting the players touch equipment unnecessarily.
- Clean all equipment with a disinfectant spray prior to and after use.
- Place bowling machine balls in the buckets of disinfectant solution provided.
- Cricket balls can be wiped down with an alcohol based wipe. Using an alcohol-based cleaning wipe on the cricket ball after use should destroy any pathogens on the ball and should dry quickly having a minimal effect on the ball.
- Although there is no specific evidence that equipment can spread COVID-19, we know that contamination by respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive on hard surfaces for up to three days.
- Clean all equipment with a disinfectant spray at the conclusion of your session.

- Disposal of cleaning materials/wipes and other materials must be done so in a safe manner. If biohazard bags are not available all materials must be double bagged for disposal.
- All players/coaches/individuals should bring their own rubbish home with them when leaving.

WHEN TRAINING FINISHES

- Hands should be washed and sanitised as soon as possible.
- Ensure equipment is cleaned thoroughly after use.
- If player or coach becomes unwell after training, they should first contact their GP/HSE (ROI)/HSC (NI) and then inform their club. The club will then follow advice provided to them by the HSE (ROI)/HSC (NI) on the next steps and the club should inform the Provincial Union.
- Members should be encouraged to remind other members of the guidelines, in a gentle way, when they witness poor practices.
- Repeated poor practice should be reported to the club as soon as possible.



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