RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS

UPDATED: 4/1/22

Based on Welsh Government Coronavirus guidance (available here)
WELSH GOVERNMENT KEY MESSAGES:
• get both jabs and when invited, get your booster
• limit your contacts
• outdoors is safer than indoors
• do a lateral flow test before seeing others
• if you have symptoms, self-isolate and book a PCR test
• wear a face covering

WELSH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE:
• 2 metre social distancing will be required in offices and all public premises.
• A maximum of 30 people can attend indoor events and a maximum of 50 people at outdoor events.
• A maximum of 50 spectators can attend outdoor team sports (and 30 spectators for indoor team sports) – this applies to junior and adult football
• If changing rooms are to be used, then a risk assessment must be carried out to confirm that social distancing measures can be adhered to. If social distancing is not possible, the changing rooms should not be used.

KEY CHANGES TO RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS:
• Changes to self-isolation guidance (click here)
• All matches apart from those scheduled to be played in the Cymru Premier, Adran Premier, Cymru North and Cymru South can resume from Saturday 8th January
• Clubs and leagues will need to be led by the facility provider on the number of people permitted to train at an indoor or outdoor venue.

• Based on WG guidance, we would still deem the following training numbers appropriate providing groups are separate and don’t mix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age categories</th>
<th>Indoor sports hall</th>
<th>Half-pitch (min. 45 x 45m)</th>
<th>Full-size pitch (min.90x45m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All age groups</td>
<td>1 group of 20 players</td>
<td>1 group of 40 players</td>
<td>2 groups of 40 players</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• All persons involved must complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms check prior to every training session.

• Take regular lateral flow tests prior to training.

• Coaches, officials, first aiders and COVID Officers are exempt from this number.

• 1:16 (qualified coach:player) ratio must be adhered to at all times for U18s.

• All training equipment – including goalposts – must be sanitised before and after every training session or fixture.

• Clubs should follow guidelines on cleaning in a non-healthcare setting here.
Matches can be played, providing FAW match-day protocols are adhered to, within the following limits set by Welsh Government:

- Up to 50 players, coaches, officials and volunteers **outdoors per fixture**
- Maximum 50 spectators **outdoors per fixture** (in addition to persons involved in the match)
- Up to 30 players, coaches, officials and volunteers **indoors per fixture**
- Maximum 30 spectators **indoors per fixture** (in addition to persons involved in the match)
- There are currently no set limits on the numbers of children under 18 that can take part in these activities

- The number of people that can be involved in a match will also have to consider any regulations in place by the facility provider, if using private facilities

- Teams won’t be sanctioned if they request a fixture postponement due to
  - positive cases of COVID-19 affecting a team’s ability to fulfil a fixture
  - unavailability of changing rooms either if they are closed or if 2m social distancing cannot be maintained safely during their use
  - being unable to manage spectators safely within the permitted number as set out by Welsh Government
**MATCH-DAY PROTOCOLS**

1. We would advise all persons involved to complete a lateral flow test and be temperature tested prior to being allowed entry into the playing area.

2. The host club must ensure, upon arrival, that all persons involved have completed a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms check. Entry should be refused to anyone who is unable to provide assurance that they have done so and that to the best of their knowledge it is safe for them to take part. Anyone refused entry on this basis must be instructed to immediately self-isolate.

3. Clubs should strictly limit the time spent congregating at a venue before activity begins. Meet-up times should reflect this.

4. **Changing rooms can be used, if necessary, provided 2m social distancing is maintained and changing room protocols are followed.** We would encourage players to arrive and depart in their playing kit to limit their use given the increased risk of infection in indoor venues.

5. Where possible, avoid travelling with people from other households in private cars, however if this cannot be avoided the guidance issued by Welsh Government should be followed at all times.

6. No-one should leave home to participate in the match if they have been informed to self-isolate or they are awaiting the results of a PCR test after someone within their household has tested positive or has symptoms.

7. 2 designated areas should be marked pitch-side – these should be used to house home and away team players and coaches during match-play

8. Water bottles or other refreshment containers, should in no circumstances be shared. Participants will need to bring their own, in a named container.

9. The coach/COVID officer is responsible for disinfecting each ball when it goes out of play.

10. Toilets should be opened for pre-match, match and for 30 minutes following. Toilets should be cleaned regularly in line with Welsh Government guidance for sports, clubs and facilities. Toilet capacity should be managed via entry and exit with face coverings worn whilst indoors.

11. All equipment – including goalposts – must be sanitised before and after every fixture. Clubs should follow guidelines on cleaning in a non-healthcare setting [here](#).

12. Ground staff are permitted on the pitch before the warm-up and 15 minutes after the conclusion of the match.
1. Changing facilities may only be used providing 2m social distancing can be maintained which should be determined by a formal risk assessment. If a risk assessment determines social distancing can’t be adhered to, players must arrive and depart in playing kit to limit their use.

2. If social distancing can be maintained, the following measures must be followed:

3. Where mains water has been turned off or unused since the close of the premises at lockdown, when it is reconnected it will need running through to flush away any microbiological or chemical residues built up while the water supply was disconnected (see additional Welsh Government guidance, ‘Principles to prepare for safe management of indoor and outdoor facilities’) This should also be included within the Risk Assessment.

4. Ensure players and visiting teams are aware of restrictions, procedures and responsibilities before entering the changing facilities Only essential personnel should access changing rooms (players, medical staff, coaches/ team managers and safeguarding officers for junior and youth matches)

5. Ensure face coverings are worn in all indoor technical facilities such as changing rooms and medical room areas in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines

6. Existing player welfare and safety policies should not be compromised

7. Allow more time for players to change, stagger changing times and spend the least possible amount of time in the changing rooms.

8. Changing rooms and showers to remain closed to players and officials during game including half time - access to medical room and toilet facilities only during match

9. If changing rooms need to be used, maximise ventilation available in the rooms

10. Ensure washing facilities are available to wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser

11. Use signage to increase awareness of hygiene practices including i.e. Increased frequency of hand washing

Additional considerations:

• Utilise other rooms or temporary space to minimise the amount of players in one space – consider closing space where social distancing may be difficult

• Apply floor markings and mark spaces on benches and showers to encourage social distancing

• Participants should be encouraged to shower at home and be encouraged to only use the changing room showers in inclement weather
Following the Welsh Government announcement, a maximum of 50 spectators can watch a match outdoors (maximum of 30 spectators indoors). This 50 person limit (30 for indoors) applies to both adult and junior football.

Home team are responsible for implementing all reasonable steps to manage spectators within the permitted number (50 outdoors and 30 indoors) for each match. Differentiated guidance is in place for enclosed and non-enclosed grounds.

We would encourage teams to limit the number of family members present to 1 parent / guardian per player.

The following measures will need to be adhered to:

- Consult with facility provider, if using private facilities
- Risk assessment completed by the club or organization - when confirming the risk assessment, clubs must give due consideration to all pinch points where there may be close contacts and clubs must encourage distancing within these areas of the stadium. For example;
  - When queuing to enter or exit the stadium;
  - When queuing for refreshments;
  - When queuing for sanitary facilities or inside the sanitary facilities;
  - When walking along narrow walkways and paths inside the stadium;
  - When passing other fans;
  - Encourage spectators to apply social distancing when choosing their place to watch the match in the stands or terraces.

- Home team will need to put measures in place to ensure they can capture contact details for all spectators for track, trace and protect service purposes.
Playing or training on an enclosed ground or pitch:

If playing or training on an enclosed ground, clubs will need to follow the FAWs Return to Spectating Regulations available [here](#) and adhere to the spectators limits set out by Welsh Government for outdoor and indoor team sports.

Playing or training on a non-closed ground or pitch e.g. public park:

- Clubs should consult with their facility provider to determine if the number of spectators permitted at the venue is less than the number permitted by the FAW / Welsh Government.

- Clubs should consult with their facility provider to determine what level of responsibility the club has in managing spectators at a non-enclosed ground or pitch and this should be agreed by both parties prior to the return of matches.

- The FAW would advise that the club’s responsibility related to managing spectators should be the pitch perimeter of a non-enclosed ground.

Once this has been determined, clubs must

- Complete an updated risk assessment and share this with the facility provider.
- Put measures in place to ensure spectators maintain 2m social distancing from each other and be at least 2m away from the field of play.
- Ensure that any person(s) present on premises occupied by the Club are reasonably safe by communicating this guidance clearly.
SELF-ISOLATION AND CONTACT TRACING

If you’ve tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), you must self-isolate for 7 days.
• You can leave self-isolation after 7 full days (on day 8 of your self-isolation period). You should take a lateral flow test (LFT) on day 6 of your self-isolation period and another lateral flow test 24 hours later.

If you are a fully vaccinated adult or aged between 5 and 17 you do not need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact but you are strongly advised to:
• take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before you leave the house every day for 7 days or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier.
• upload all tests results on GOV.UK even if negative or void. This helps improve our understanding of infection rates across the UK and helps inform how we manage the pandemic to keep people safe whilst keeping life as normal as possible.

If you are 18 and over and not fully vaccinated, you must self-isolate from the day you were last in contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 and for the next 10 days.
• You should also take a PCR test on day 2 and day 8. It is important that you take the tests even if you feel well as you may have COVID-19 even if you do not have symptoms.
• Even if these tests are negative, you should complete the isolation period. This is because if you have been infected, it can take time for symptoms to develop or to become infectious to others.
Maintaining records of players, coaches, volunteers, officials and supporters is one of the reasonable measures you can take to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19 at your club/organisation. The following information should be captured:

• The names of individuals
• A contact telephone number for each individual
• Date of visit and arrival and departure time

By sharing these records with the NHS Wales Test, Trace, Protect service when requested, you can help to identify people who may have been exposed to the virus.
Club management committees should meet to review the latest Return to Play protocols and supporting guidance

A NEW COVID-19 risk assessment must be completed by all clubs

If clubs are accessing private facilities, they should consult the facility provider and share their risk assessment which will be considered alongside providers own risk assessment

A risk assessment must be completed by the club at each training and fixture venue used by the club

The risk assessment must be reviewed regularly and kept up to date at all time

The FAW has developed a risk assessment guide and template for clubs and is available here

Clubs/organisations should visit Coronavirus (COVID-19) | Topic | GOV.WALES for more information

A club risk assessment does not need to be shared with, or approved by FAW