

KEY ACTIONS TOWARDS A SAFE RETURN TO ACTIVITIES

1. Establish a COVID-19 Safety Team

Clubs are required to establish a COVID-19 Safety Committee, led by a COVID-19 Coordinator who will oversee the planning and implementation of the club's Return to Activities plan. Where clubs offer more than one activity, whether that is different sports training sessions, Young Athletes Programme, Health Promotion or Athlete Leadership activities, it is recommended that a COVID-19 Activity Lead is appointed for each activity.

2. Conduct a Return To Activity Risk Assessment

Any return to activities will involve the undertaking of a risk assessment to determine the risk level for COVID-19 transmission related to the particular activity or sport, and what additional measures are needed to reduce this risk.

The additional measures, called Control Measures, will consist of reasonably practicable measures, to mitigate or eliminate hazards that create risk. The objective is to reduce, either immediately or within a reasonable timeframe, the level of risk completely or to a tolerable or acceptable level. The COVID-19 Safety Plan Template contains a Risk Assessment template that outlines a number of significant areas where control measures will need to be considered.

3. Develop and Implement a COVID-19 Safety Plan

A COVID-19 Safety Plan template has been developed for use by clubs. The COVID-19 Safety Plan should outline how the club will manage training and club activities in order to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and safeguard members from the risk of infection. The COVID-19 Safety Plan allows the club to:

- Demonstrate compliance with Government and Health Authority guidance
- Identify and outline specific arrangements to managing the risks of COVID-19 at their club
- Delineate key roles and responsibility with respect to managing against COVID-19

4. Develop a Suspected Case Response Plan

As part of the COVID-19 Safety Plan, the club will be required to outline how they will respond to a suspected case once an attendee presents or is identified as having possible symptoms. Further guidance and sample plan is provided with the COVID-19 Safety Plan template.

5. Source Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), Supplies and Signage

A list of PPE and supply items is supplied in the Safety Plan Template. Clubs will need to source these items. Posters and information templates will be supplied in electronic format for printing.

6. Engage and Communicate with Athletes, Parents/Guardians/Carers, Coaches and Volunteers

It is recommended that clubs engage with athletes, parents/guardians/carers, coaches and volunteers in advance of the timeframe for the club's return to activities. Some individuals may be anxious, have concerns or may not be in a position to return. Any return should be on an opt-in basis for all individuals. Clubs should afford individuals to take personal responsibility to decide whether or not they are happy to return. By engaging early, clubs will establish the numbers that are likely to return when the club is able to open. It will be critical to establish whether there will be a sufficient number of volunteers available to allow the club to provide the required supervision, as well as manage the new measures required. The club should communicate the new measures that will be in place to help minimise and manage the risks posed by COVID-19.

7. Educate all Stakeholders on COVID-19 Symptoms, Risks and Control Measures and Responsibilities

The COVID-19 Coordinator, COVID-19 Safety Team, including the COVID-19 Activity Lead(s) should complete the [Sport Ireland COVID-19 Return to Sport e-Learning Course](#).

Parents/Guardians/Carers, Athletes (where feasible), coaches and volunteers all need to be made aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and should also complete the [Sport Ireland COVID-19 Return to Sport e-Learning Course](#).

Athletes, Coaches and Volunteers will be expected to comply with a COVID-19 Code of Conduct.

Special Olympics Clubs should ensure that all attendees are educated about those that are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 as well as all procedures and expectations for return to activities. All individuals need to understand the need to immediately self-isolate for 14 days and to phone their doctor in the event of onset of any COVID-19 signs or symptoms or to restrict their movement if they have had recent close contact with a suspect or confirmed COVID-19 case. Further information on when and how to self-isolate and restrict movement are also available on the Health Services Executive (HSE) in ROI and Department for Health in NI websites.

8. Pre-Return Declaration Form and COVID-19 Code of Conduct Form to be Completed

Athletes, coaches and volunteers returning to club activities will be required to complete the two forms found in the appendices of the Protocol or on the SOI website under Resources for Clubs.

The forms can be downloaded by using the link below and are listed under the heading 'Forms': <https://www.specialolympics.ie/sport/return-to-activities/return-to-activity-resources-for-clubs>

If any athlete has tested positive and/or been diagnosed with COVID-19, the athlete must provide written proof of clearance from their healthcare professional prior to returning to sport, fitness or any Special Olympics activity.

9. Maintain a Contact Log for Contract Tracing Measures

A log of all athletes, volunteers or other individuals attending every activity session, with access to contact information for contact tracing purposes must be recorded to enable contact tracing should it be required. This log should be electronic and should be completed in advance where possible. There should be a system in place where this log is updated in real time for any necessary changes. This log should be readily and quickly accessible for contact tracing purposes.

A contact log template can be found in the appendices of the Protocol or on the SOI website under Resources for Clubs. The template can be downloaded by using the link below and are listed under the heading 'Club Activity Documents': <https://www.specialolympics.ie/sport/return-to-activities/return-to-activity-resources-for-clubs>

10. Review COVID-19 Action List/Check List Before and After Each Activity

COVID-19 Activity Lead(s) will be required to carry out routine checks before and after each session. The checks should be completed and signed off by the COVID-19 Coordinator for each training session and provided or made available to the COVID-19 Coordinator for monitoring purposes. Club checklists templates can be found in the appendices of the Protocol or on the SOI website under Resources for Clubs.

The checklists can be downloaded by using the link below and are listed under the heading 'Club Activity Documents': <https://www.specialolympics.ie/sport/return-to-activities/return-to-activity-resources-for-clubs>

11. Confirming Readiness

Clubs will begin in the **Stay at Home** phase. With the Protocol and guidance, clubs can move into the **Preparatory Phase** to develop their club-specific plan. Clubs must confirm their readiness to move into the **Orientation Phase** with SOI prior to restarting activities. Similarly, a move to the next phase will require confirmation in advance of moving.

As this is an ever-evolving situation, affiliated clubs may need to revert back to an earlier phase at different times - [Confirmation-of-readiness-and-compliance](#).