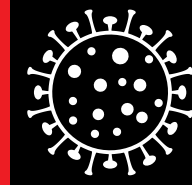




**Tennis
Ireland**
Sport For Life



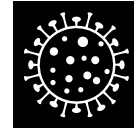
Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

Framework for Playing Tennis during Level 5 of the COVID-19 Restrictions

Level 5

October 2020





Level 5

Introduction

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to extraordinary demands on everyone of us as individuals, as parents, as families, as workers, as business owners, as players and as clubs.

We have never had to deal with the demands and complexities which COVID-19 brings to even one area of our lives, not to mind all areas of our lives at the same time.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been characterised by the European Centre for Disease Protection and Control as a “marathon and not a sprint”.

There is no real precedent on how to deal with a global pandemic of this nature and scale. Governments and consequently National Governing Bodies of Sport here and all over the world are making decisions based on the best information available at a given point in time. It is changing constantly.

While, at the beginning, it was arguably “easier” to focus on the disease suppression and containment, life is more complicated than that. The longer this disease is with us, the more complex the issues and the higher the impact of the ongoing restrictions on every aspect of our lives.

Safe every step of the way

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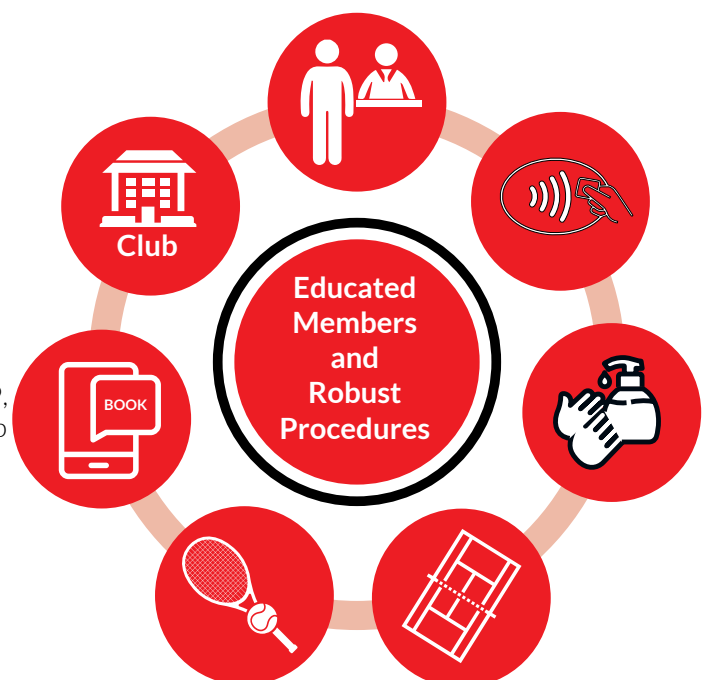
This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with medical experts and in line with Government requirements, outlines the robust measures Tennis Ireland would like clubs to implement and maintain to help safeguard staff and members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

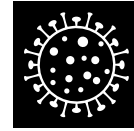
This will allow all of us to get back on court, safely, improving the wellbeing of members across the country.

The measures, which relate to Level 5 of the Governments Framework for Living with COVID-19, cover each step of the journey from home to the club gate and back home again.

These measures should be in place seven days a week and until further notice.

Our measures and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the movement between levels as outlined by Government.





Summary of Changes

Facilities should close with exceptions for:

- **Structured coaching and training for school aged players under the supervision of a Designated Coach*.**
- **High Performance/Professional players as defined below.**

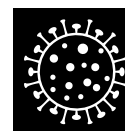
1. Club COVID-19 Committee

Tennis Clubs must have an assigned COVID-19 Officer and committee responsible for managing issues and queries relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. This committee must:

- Ensure facilities are not utilised during Level 5 with an exception for:
 - School aged Children i.e. those 18 years and under. It must occur outdoors in pods of no more than 6 players per court. A maximum of 4 players can operate on the court at any one time while remaining in their own sections of the court, with up to 2 other players rotating in and out as required.
 - Or
 - In pods of no more than 8 red ball players per court whilst utilising 4 Mini Red Nets.
- All activities are subject to strict social distancing and those players not on court must always maintain a clear 2m distance from others.
- Tennis Camps for school aged players can continue to be run once all Tennis Ireland Level 5 and *The Safe Operation of Tennis Camps* Guidelines are followed.
- Designated Professional / High Performance Players which are defined as follows:
 - Professional sports people and those who participate within professional competition
 - A member of a high-performance team funded by Tennis Ireland e.g. Davis and Fed Cup, Team Ireland programme recipients
- Those who compete at major international events including European and World Championships, Olympic and Paralympic Games, Grand Slam, ATP, WTA, ITF Men / Women's World Tour.
- Check with their insurers if any amendments to their policies are required to cover Covid19 or security issues.
- Ensure they review and that the club can comply with all of the protocols outlined
- Ensure that the club and its members adhere to HSE / Public Health advice in all cases.
- Ensure that sufficient HSE Covid-19 information Posters are in place
- Continue the operation of a court booking system for permitted High Performance players and coaching purposes only, that if possible, allows for staggered play and perhaps allow 10 minutes between booking slots for players to exit and enter without interaction. If this cannot be done it would be advisable that players understand the need for social distancing while entering and exiting the courts and wait in a designated waiting area.
- Ensure that the club maintains accurate records of who is playing and when. This should include all persons on court and not just the one making the booking. This must be carried out for coaching sessions as well, and in the case that a parent/guardian is present in the club that must also be recorded. This will help with contact tracing if necessary.
- Be responsible for informing all members of the Covid-19 guidelines and insisting on full cooperation
- Ensure that the contact details for all members are up to date as this will assist with contact tracing should it be necessary
- Listen to feedback and contact Tennis Ireland if there are issues not covered under these protocols

*A Designated Coach is defined as those who:

- Are Garda Vetted and have completed the Safeguarding 1 course.
- Have submitted or are abiding by a risk management plan agreed by the club.
- Ideally, hold a recognised national / international coaching qualification and be licensed by Tennis Ireland.



■ 2. Club Access

As they are not recognised as essential services, the decision of Government is that all gyms, leisure centres, swimming pools and other sports facilities including Tennis Clubs and courts must close during the Level 5 restrictions.

This includes both indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

It is permitted to open facilities, including indoor and outdoor tennis courts for training by High Performance Players as defined by Tennis Ireland.

It is also permitted to open outdoor courts for structured training sessions by school aged children, i.e. those aged 18 years and younger, as per the recommended pod system. This must be conducted under the supervision of designated coaches and in compliance with approved COVID-19 protocols and all relevant public health guidance.

During these training sessions it will only be permitted for participants and relevant coaching and support personnel to be present.

In the case of children's sport, parents will be permitted to attend for child safeguarding purposes, however, they will be required to comply with social distancing and other public health advice.

To access the courts in Level 5, a player must:

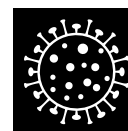
- Not have been out of the country in the last 14 days
- Not have been around someone with symptoms of Covid-19 in the last 14 days
- Not be in a period of self-isolation and/or cocooning under the current Health Policy Rules
- Not be displaying COVID-19 symptoms
- Have a pre-reserved playing time

Travel

- While the general public must only exercise on an individual basis within 5km of their home, High Performance Players and Children partaking in designated training activities can travel beyond the 5km limit.
- Car Pooling should continue to be avoided.
- **Club Coaches can travel beyond the 5km radius to work within a club.**

3. Booking and Arrival - High Performance Players

- Booking a court time in advance is required, preferably via a court booking system, website, app, or phone. This will assist should contact tracing be required subsequently.
- Permitted players should ensure their club has their up-to-date contact details (phone and email).
- Permitted players should travel to the club alone, or only with a member of the same household.
- Ample car parking spaces should be available to ensure social distancing. If players must park next to another car, they should wait for the other person to exit or enter before doing so themselves.
- Permitted players should arrive at the court entrance no more than 5 minutes prior to the reserved playing time. It is important that players maintain social distancing and wait in a pre-designated waiting area that allows for social distancing
- Permitted players should observe social distancing at all times and resist the temptation to mingle
- Locker rooms should remain closed during this phase. Players should arrive in Tennis attire and change footwear at the car or at home
- Players should sanitise their hands using dispensers provided at the entrance to the club and courts
- Players should head straight to their designated court unless required to check-in
- Players should ensure that they utilise toilet facilities in their home before travelling.



4. Check-in Protocol

- Two-metre queue markers should be in place at any single-entry point whether at the clubhouse reception or at the entrance to courts
- Only one person at a time should be permitted inside the reception area
- A two-metre exclusion zone should be in place at the service desk and, if possible, a protection screen should be fitted.
- If your club has a shop for essential tennis items that are available to purchase these should be gathered by staff upon request
- Food and beverage items should not be available, and people should be encouraged to bring them from home if required
- Club vending machines should be placed out of commission during this phase
- Any Purchases should be paid for by contactless card payment only

5. Clubhouse Facilities

- Protocols for cleaning clubhouse facilities should be in place prior to opening and during operation.
- Clubhouse access for permitted players should only be when necessary and be limited to the Club Reception if required to check in.
- Toilets can be open but subject to a strict one in one out system.
- Changing rooms, restaurant, function rooms and, where relevant, the club bar should remain closed during this Phase of reopening
- Players must provide their own racquets and equipment
- Chairs should be removed from the reception area in order to prevent people congregating

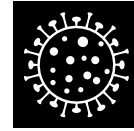
6. To the Court

- There should be an emphasis on social distancing at all times.
- Courts that are side by side can be utilised.
- Players should enter the court one at a time
- Entrances / Gates to courts should remain open, if safe to do so, perhaps tied back to prevent use of handles
- Rubbish bins should be removed, and all items brought on court should be taken home afterwards.

- Other court furniture should be removed including scoreboards, chairs/benches and net winders.
- Shoe cleaners should be removed
- Any player(s) repeatedly not following the club directives should be asked to leave the club
- Nobody but the players should be allowed on the court. There should be no spectators present during this phase of reopening
- Parents supervising children should be limited to one

7. On the Court - Playing

- Physical distancing should be observed throughout the period of play, particularly on change of ends and entering and exiting the court. Players should change ends at opposite sides of the net.
- Children's training / coaching must occur outdoors in pods of no more than 6 players per court. A maximum of 4 players can operate on the court at any one time while remaining in their own sections of the court, with up to 2 other players rotating in and out as required.
- Players must refrain from handshakes and high fives
- Equipment such as towels, food, and drink must not be exchanged between players. Players should be encouraged to bring their own drinks and towels.
- Players should avoid touching their face after handling a ball, racquet, or other equipment.
- Players should ideally bring a small bottle of hand sanitizer with them and keep it in their pocket or bag for use.
- Players should use two sets of clearly marked tennis balls. These should be alternated for serving with each player only touching their individual tennis balls.
- Players should remain apart from other players when taking a break.
- If a ball from another court comes across, players should send it back with a kick or with a racquet.



8. On the court - Coaching for school aged members

- Coaches should prepare and present a Risk Assessment document and get approval to coach from the Covid 19 Committee
- Coaching sessions should be booked and recorded.
- Coaches should brief their students and/or their parents of the protocols that should be followed in advance of the session
- Coaching should only be provided to School aged members i.e. those 18 years and under.
- Coaches should ensure a player has registered their contact details with the club.
- As much as possible, coaches must try to remain on the same court and adjust their schedules in order to stay on-site for the minimum amount of time required.
- Exercises that require continuous play are recommended.
- Coaches should limit the use of equipment such as cones, drop lines and targets.
- Do not let players manipulate the practice equipment.
- Players should use their racquet or their foot to push balls back

9. Getting Home Safely

- Once play has finished players should leave the premises promptly, sanitising their hands on the way out using a courtside dispenser.
- Restaurant and bars should remain closed until restrictions are eased so there should be no congregating in these areas
- Clubs should make provision for thoroughly cleaning accessible areas and ensuring that all “touch areas” are cleaned thoroughly daily
- If a player becomes unwell after playing, they should first contact their GP/HSE and then inform their club. The club should contact the HSE and follow the advice provided to them on the next steps.



***Tennis
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