

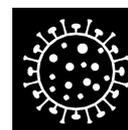


Plan for Playing Tennis during Level 2 of The NI Executive's Pathway Out of Restrictions

Effective from May 24th 2021

Version 1.4





Return to Tennis - May 24th 2021

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to our country and our sport. The pandemic is not over and the disease has continued to evolve and generate new challenges for us all.

While the various vaccines and their delivery provide a clear pathway for us, we must continue to be mindful of the risks involved in everyday life and the need to:

- wash hands properly and often
- practice social distancing
- cover coughs and sneezes

We must continue to be agile and flexible in our response while recognising that one year on, imposing and adhering to restrictions places an enormous burden on us all.

This document which references the NI Executive's [Pathway Out of Restrictions](#) outlines the protocols that should be implemented in clubs during this level of reopening society during COVID-19.

Northern Ireland as a country is moving to reopen society once again.

To this end, a Pathway out of Restrictions has been developed and released by the NI Executive to help us to go about our daily lives as much as possible, while managing the behaviour of the virus.

The plan recognises the need for society and business to be allowed to reopen albeit with restrictions. The Executive's strategy, in line with the public health advice, is suppression.

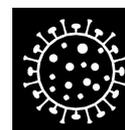
In response to the Executive's plan our team, in consultation with Sport NI and the Department of Culture have developed a framework of restrictive measures that is specific to Tennis in Northern Ireland.

The protocols and restriction are easing slowly and as we move through the levels there are clear differences in how sporting activity can take place.

The NI Executive issued updated guidance to Sporting Organisations.

The key items in this phase of reopening can be summarised as follows:

- The restriction on "pod" or group sizes for outdoor sporting activities have been removed
- For indoor tennis activities, singles and doubles play is allowed.
- Indoor coaching activities should be limited to a pod of 6 players per court. Coaches should prepare a risk assessment which should be presented and signed off by the club COVID Committee
- Contact details for all players must still be recorded.
- Changing rooms and showers can open for use but clubs should encourage participants to shower at home.



We are asking that clubs make themselves aware of and implement the measures contained within the framework to help safeguard staff and members. This will allow all of us to play safely and keep our communities safe while the threat of COVID-19 exists.

It is designed to allow individuals, families, coaches, and club administrators to better understand, anticipate and prepare for and implement the measures to prevent an escalation in the transmission of the disease.

Our measures and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the gradual lifting of social restrictions.

Safe every step of the way

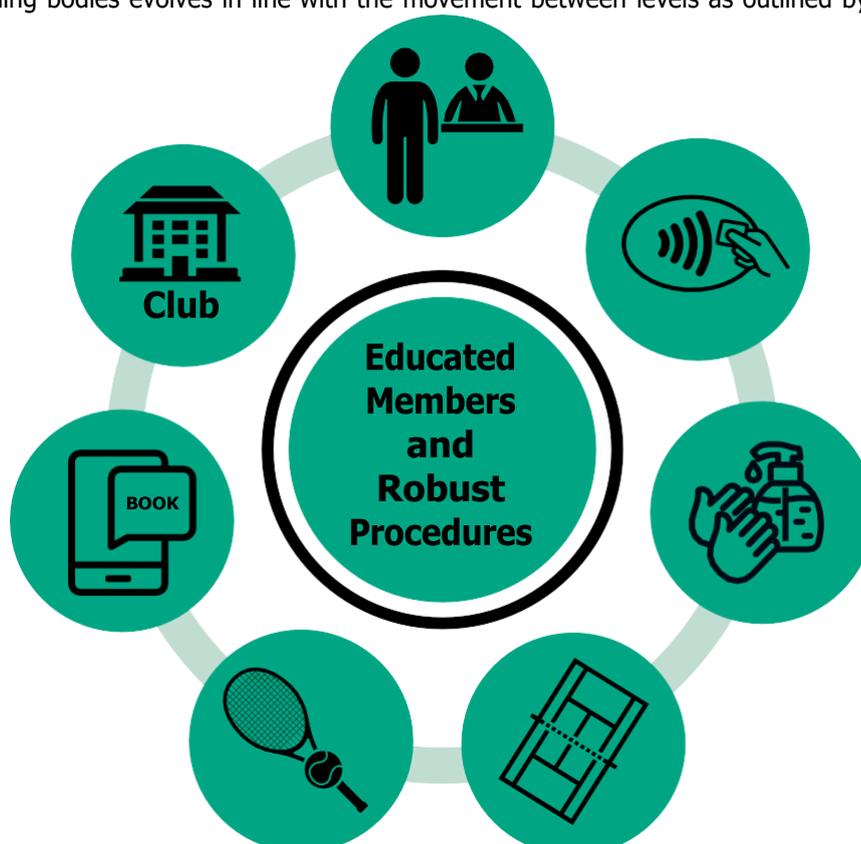
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| 1. Club Committee | 4. Check-in Protocol | 7. On Court - Playing |
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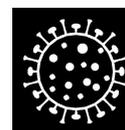
This practical guide, prepared by our team in line with NI Executive Guidelines, outlines the robust measures Tennis Ireland and its Ulster Branch would like clubs to implement and maintain to help safeguard staff, members and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow all of us to get back on court safely and improve the wellbeing of members across the country.

The measures, which relate to the NI Executives Pathway out of Restrictions, cover each step of the journey from home to the club gate and back home again.

These measures should be in place from May 24th 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.





1. Club COVID-19 Committee

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

- Check with their insurers if any amendments to their policies are required to cover COVID-19 issues.
- Ensure they review and that the club can comply with all the protocols outlined before reopening their club
- Ensure that the club and its members and visitors adhere to NHS / Public Health advice in all cases.
- Ensure that sufficient NHS / Covid-19 information Posters are in place
- Operate a court booking system and 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 aware that club competitions can be held in this phase of reopening. Spectators are allowed to attend events but venue operators should be mindful of the need for social distancing.
- Be responsible for informing all members of the Covid-19 guidelines and insist on full cooperation
- Listen to feedback and contact Tennis Ireland if there are issues not covered under these protocols
- Prepare a Risk Assessment for the use of indoor courts. This assessment should consider a range of items including;
 - Access and Egress
 - Cleaning protocols for all touch points
 - Numbers permitted to access the facility
 - Protocols for coaching activities
 - Posters and signage

2. Club Access

During this phase of reopening, the clubhouse can reopen.

Facemasks must be always worn when indoors.

Children should always be supervised during play.

To access the courts during this phase, a player must:

- Not have been around someone with symptoms of Covid-19 in the last 10 days
- Not be in a period of self-isolation and/or quarantine under the current Health Policy Rules
- Not be displaying COVID-19 symptoms
- Have a pre-reserved playing time.



3. Booking and Arrival

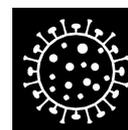
- Booking a court time in advance is required, preferably via a court booking system, website, app, or phone. This will assist should contact tracing be required subsequently.
- All players should ensure their club has their up-to-date contact details (phone and email).
- Indoor and Outdoor singles and doubles play is allowed during this phase of reopening.
- All players, and not just the player making the booking, should be included in the booking notes. If there is a change to who is playing, it is advisable to make sure the booking is updated.
- Players should still 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.
- It is important that players maintain social distancing and wait in a pre-designated waiting area that allows for social distancing
- Players should observe social distancing and resist the temptation to mingle
- Locker rooms and showers can be utilised during this phase, but players are encouraged to change and shower at home if possible.
- Players should continue to 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

4. Check-in and Club Shop Protocol

- The Clubhouse can reopen.
- Two-metre queue markers should be in place at any single-entry point whether at the clubhouse reception or at the entrance to courts.
- Social distancing should be encouraged in the reception area.
- A protection screen should be fitted on reception counters.
- Club shops can open subject to the required retail protocols.
- Food and beverage services can resume subject to following hospitality protocols.
- Club vending machines should be placed out of commission during this phase.
- Contactless card payments should be encouraged where possible.

5. Clubhouse Facilities

- Protocols for cleaning clubhouse facilities should be in place prior to opening and during operation.
- Changing rooms and showers can reopen during this Phase of reopening but players should be encouraged to change and shower at home where possible.



6. To the Court

- Singles and doubles play, indoors and outdoors is permitted.
- Courts that are side by side can be utilised.
- Players should enter the court one at a time
- Rubbish bins and court furniture can return, subject to cleaning protocols
- Any player(s) repeatedly not following the club directives should be asked to leave the club
- Parents supervising children should be mindful of social distancing and should not gather in groups to watch activities

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.
- Players should continue to refrain from handshakes and high fives
- Equipment such as towels, food, and drink must not be exchanged between players.
- Players should, ideally, bring a small bottle of hand sanitizer with them and keep it in their pocket or bag for use.
- Players should remain apart from other players when taking a break.
- Caution is advised for those who intend to engage in high intensity training following a recovery from COVID-19. Individuals should seek medical advice prior to a return to playing / training.

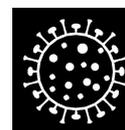
8. On the Court – Coaching

- Coaches should prepare and present a Risk Assessment document and get approval to coach from the Covid 19 Committee.
- Coaching sessions should be booked in advance with the participants contact details recorded by the club and coach.
- For outdoor coaching sessions, there are no restrictions on pod or group sizes, within recommended safeguarding protocols.
- For indoor coaching sessions, a pod, up to a maximum of 6 players per court can be coached.

- A pod of 8 players per indoor court is allowable for red ball activities, subject to social distancing protocols being implemented
- Coaches should brief their students and/or their parents of the protocols that should be followed in advance of the session
- Coaches should continue to limit the use of equipment such as cones, drop lines and targets.
- All activities are subject to strict social distancing and those players not on court must always maintain a clear 2m distance from others.

9. Getting Home Safely

- Once play has finished, players should sanitise their hands on the way out using a courtside dispenser.
- Restaurant and bar facilities should operate in compliance with hospitality protocols.
- 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/NHS and then inform their club. The club should contact the NHS and follow the advice provided to them on the next steps



10. Dealing with a suspected case

IF A CLUB MEMBER HAS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

They should not attend the club and should self isolate and contact their GP.

The Club can continue as normal at this stage.

IF A CLUB MEMBER IS SENT FOR A TEST

The club member with symptoms must inform their GP if they have taken part in club activity and seek advice on what action, if any, the club is required to do. The club member should then contact the club COVID Officer and outline to them what has been recommended.

IF A GP ADVISES THERE IS NO COVID-19 CONCERN

Both the club member, their playing group or pod and the club can continue as normal.

IF A CLUB MEMBER TESTS NEGATIVE

In line with Health advice, the club member can return to activity 48 hours after the symptoms abate.

The club members playing group or pod can return to play.

IF A CLUB MEMBER TESTS POSITIVE

The club members playing group or pod must remain away from the club and await advice from the Public Health Authority.

Dealing with a player showing symptoms at the Club

- Ideally the designated Covid-19 Officer should take care of the management of any persons with Covid-19 symptoms
- Immediately separate any person displaying or complaining of Covid-19 related symptoms from others
- Ask this person to wear a facemask, if possible
- Provide the unwell person with tissues and hand sanitizer and ensure that all tissues are disposed of in a waste bag. This waste bag then needs to be tied inside a second waste bag and clearly marked. It will need to be stored securely for 72 hours before it can be disposed of in general waste.
- The designated person managing the situation should try to maintain at least 2m from the person with the symptoms and should wear a face mask and wash their hands regularly.
- If the person is well enough to go home, arrange for them to be transported home by a family member, as soon as possible and advise them to inform their GP by phone of the symptoms.
- If they are too sick to go home or advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect.
- All persons who have been in close contact with the suspect case will need to be informed to restrict their movement until further information is available. i.e. a negative test result of the suspect case.
- No reusable medical equipment should be returned to service without being cleaned/disinfected. Disposable PPE and any waste should be disposed of appropriately, as above.
- Keep record of individuals who have been isolated, due to suspected COVID-19 and notify the Lead COVID-19 Officer
- For other useful info, please check https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/c_lose-contact-and-casual-contact.html



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Sport For Life

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