



Guidance for hill walking and climbing during COVID-19

Updated: 9 August 2021

INTRODUCTION

Most legal restrictions relating to Covid-19 were lifted on the 9th August 2021 when Scotland moved to 'Beyond Level 0'. This includes restrictions on physical distancing and the size of social gatherings. Additionally, no businesses will have to legally remain closed.

The latest information on Coronavirus in Scotland can be accessed on the Scottish Government website at [Coronavirus in Scotland](#).

MOVING 'BEYOND LEVEL 0'

As restrictions are eased, the emphasis will continue to be on personal responsibility, good practice and informed judgement.

Whilst these changes will signal the end of most restrictions for sport and physical activity it will not however signal the end of the epidemic. Covid-19 is a disease that will need to be managed for the foreseeable future and to maintain progress in returning to more normality, it is important that people continue to abide by a set of baseline measures covered by Scottish Government guidance and where relevant legislation. This includes:

- Maintaining hand hygiene and surface cleaning
- Continued promotion of good ventilation
- Wearing face coverings in indoor sport and leisure facilities when not taking part in physical activity
- Applying and adhering to the 'give people space' messaging
- Continued compliance with Test and Protect, including self-isolation when necessary.

If you have symptoms of Covid-19

People who are symptomatic, including close contacts, should self-isolate for 10 days as per NHS Scotland guidance. From the 9th August 2021 close contacts 18 years of age or over who have been double vaccinated for more than 14 days or 5 to 17- year-olds, with no symptoms, will be able to take a PCR test and end self-isolation if the result is negative. This approach will be encouraged but not required for children under 5 years.

No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

FURTHER MONITORING

Scottish Government are also continuing to monitor the UK wide and International Covid-19 position. Further information on restrictions applicable between Scotland and other parts of the UK and internationally is available on the Scottish Government website at Coronavirus (COVID-19): travel and transport

GUIDANCE FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN HEADING OUTDOORS

- **Be COVID aware** – follow the public health advice for physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene, travel and meeting with others.
- **Be prepared:** Plan your activity and check the status of car parks, toilets and other facilities before you go.
- **Be safe:** Plan ahead and stay well within your limits - whatever your activity - to avoid the need for rescue and emergency services.
- **Be considerate:** Think about how your actions might impact on others, be responsible and follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code at all times

Clubs and participants should, where applicable, be aware of their local area protection level and associated restrictions which may be in place and should consider this as part of risk assessment planning.

Broad guidance for sporting activity which should be followed within is set out in the table below.

TABLE A

Update: 5 August 2021, FINAL

		Beyond Level 0	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
OUTDOOR SPORT Organised outdoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview No field of play bubble restrictions apply beyond Level 0, although limits on participation numbers at competition and events are applicable. For Levels 0-4 outdoor sporting 'field of play bubbles' apply for organised sport as noted below. At Levels 0-2 figures exclude coaches and support staff*. Multiple bubbles can be used for training, events, and competition if appropriate guidance, set out within this document, is followed. Indoor and outdoor stadium, or equivalent events/competitions, involving spectators are subject to relevant Scottish Government guidance.						Local training / competition only. U12s: max 30 including coaches. Over 12s / adults: max 15 including coaches.
		No bubble restrictions Total Daily Limit: 5000 participants	Maximum bubble size: 500 participants* Total Daily Limit: 5000 participants	Maximum bubble size: 100 participants* Total Daily Limit: 1000 participants	Maximum bubble size: 50 participants* Total Daily Limit: 500 participants	Maximum bubble size: 30 participants Total Daily Limit: 200 participants	
	Children & Young people (u18 years)	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	U12s: Contact sport & PA permitted 12-17 years: Non-contact sport & PA permitted.
	Adults (18+ years)					Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited	Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited
INDOOR SPORT Organised indoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview Organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government Covid-19: sport and leisure facilities and sport specific SGB Guidance . 'Group' activity refers to adults, who take part in organised sport or physical activity, where the number of participants is larger than allowed under normal household rules. 'Individual exercise' refers to organised sport or physical activity which takes place within household rules i.e. 1:1 coaching. For further information see definitions within this guidance.						
	Children & Young people (u18 years)	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Contact & non-contact sport & PA permitted	Indoor sport & PA prohibited: Leisure Centres, gyms and other indoor sports facilities closed.
	Adults (18+ years)			Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited	Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited	Indoor <u>individual exercise only</u> No contact or non-contact group activity	

COACHING	General guidance is available within this document for coaches, leaders, personal trainers, deliverers, and instructors, <i>herein referred to as coach/es</i> . In addition, Getting Coaches Ready for Sport provides a 4-stage approach/checklist to further support coaches to plan and deliver safe sessions.		
	The local protection Level in place for sport and physical activity will dictate what activity can be coached, indoors and outdoors and to whom in that area. Coaches can take multiple sessions per day, however the numbers allowed in each session will depend upon the protection Level in place.		
PERFORMANCE SPORT	Elite sports with Resumption of Performance Sport guidance in place and approved by Scottish Government or sportscotland is permitted at all Levels.		
TRAVEL	For further information please refer to Travel Guidance within this document.		
HOSPITALITY & RETAIL	Clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance. Further information is available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector guidance . Retail units operated by sports facility operators may reopen provided all specific Scottish Government guidance for retailers is in place and adhered to. Further information from the Scottish Government is available at Retail Sector Guidance .		
TOILETS, CHANGING & SHOWER ROOMS	Where changing rooms and showering facilities are to be used specific guidance relating to use of 'Changing and Showers' is available at Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport . This is applicable at all levels where facilities remain open.		Indoor sports facilities closed. Changing rooms closed.
	Operators may open public toilets if they follow the guidelines outlined on the Scottish Government website Opening Public Toilets Guidelines		Public Toilets open.
INDOOR FACILITIES (can open up to Level 3)	Overview	Specific information relating to indoor sports facility guidance is available at Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport . Below is a summary of overarching guidance for operators regarding occupancy limits, physical distancing, and appropriate ventilation / CO2 levels (ppm) which should be monitored. Test & Protect procedures should continue in all indoor settings.	
	Beyond Level 0	Level 0	Levels 1 – 3
	Return to normal facility occupancy levels but focus on good ventilation and 'Give people space' messaging. <u>Ventilation</u> : Monitor to maintain levels at 800-1000ppm. No physical distancing required. Face coverings must be worn out with activity. Maintain hygiene and surface cleaning measures.	Restrict maximum occupancy in buildings to 7sqm per person to achieve enhanced ventilation (equivalent to 15 l/s/p). <u>Ventilation</u> : Monitor to maintain levels at 800-1000ppm. 1m physical distancing out with activity. Face coverings must be worn out with activity.	Restrict maximum occupancy in buildings to 9sqm per person to achieve enhanced ventilation (equivalent to 20 l/s/p). <u>Ventilation</u> : Monitor to maintain levels at <1000ppm. 1m physical distancing out with activity. Face coverings must be worn out with activity.
WORKFORCE	Sports facility operators must ensure that Scottish Government guidance on workforce planning in sport & leisure facilities is followed for contractors and staff and ensure existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned. This should be detailed in the risk assessment. Although gym and leisure facilities can open to Level 3, we would encourage providers to consider whether meetings and training must be completed in person or whether these can be completed online or via telephone. If it is essential that meetings and training takes place in person, Scottish Government guidance for general workplaces must be followed and a risk assessment should be completed.		

KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN HEADING OUTDOORS

BE COVID AWARE:

- Follow the public health advice including use of face coverings, hand hygiene, travel and meeting with others where applicable.
- If meeting or passing other walkers or climbers, respect other people's space, especially at pinch points such as summits, trig points, gates, stiles and enclosed narrow paths, and at car parks and other entry points.
- Avoid sharing food, drink or equipment with other people.

BE PREPARED:

- Plan your activity and check the status of car parks, toilets and other facilities before you go.
- Choose activities that you know and have done safely for some time at a level well within your experience and competence, and that of anyone else you are with.
- Think about your intended route or activity in advance - make sure you are clear where you are going, what you will encounter and identify any potential hazards and exit routes.
- Car sharing and public transport - follow the current guidelines on the [Transport Scotland website](#)

BE SAFE:

- Stay well within your limits outdoors - whatever your activity - to avoid the need to call for rescue volunteers and emergency services.
- If you are new to hill walking in Scotland, check out [Sofa 2 Summit](#), a free online course from Mountaineering Scotland to guide you through some basic skills and information to help you get the most out of your trips to the hills.
- Navigation errors are a major cause of mountain rescue call outs, so refresh your navigation skills before heading out – find out more [here](#).
- Download the free [OS Locate app](#) to help you find your grid reference if needed.
- Check the [mountain weather forecast](#) and ensure that you have appropriate equipment, footwear and clothing for what you plan to do and to look after yourself in case of an accident or injury. For more information visit the [Mountaineering Scotland website](#) (Hillwalking – Getting Started)

- Tell someone where you are planning to go, when you expect to return, and what to do if you aren't back when expected.
- Take your own first aid kit and include a COVID kit with sanitiser/soap, gloves, mask/face covering.
- Plan to be self-reliant and should you need assistance be prepared to wait several hours for rescue.

If you are lost or injured and unable to get yourself to safety, call 999, ask for Police and then Mountain Rescue.

BE CONSIDERATE

Think about how your actions might impact on others, be responsible and follow the Scottish Outdoor Access Code at all times

- Familiarise yourself with the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) and the rights and responsibilities that exist for the public and for land managers.
- Park with consideration for others and avoid blocking roads, driveways and access for other vehicles – read more about [parking and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#).
- Be considerate of the sensitivities of local communities who may be wary of visitors from other areas and the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Respect the health and safety of farmers and others working the land and be mindful of livestock and their young – follow all reasonable requests and signs to avoid particular areas, such as farmyards, and other busy working areas. Be aware of disturbing sheep during lambing season and keep dogs under control.
- If you need to go to the toilet outdoors, be sure to know how to do it responsibly - for more information, visit the [Mountaineering Scotland website](#) (Outdoor toileting)
- Avoid lighting fires or using disposable BBQs, especially during dry weather.

OVERNIGHT STAYS AND ACCOMMODATION

- **Wild camping and campsites:** If you are considering wild camping please do it responsibly and with consideration for others. Avoid busy areas, follow any travel guidance and rules on meeting others outdoors, and always adhere to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code. If you are planning to camp at a formal site, we advise contacting them in advance to check they are open and that pitches are available for tents.

- **Bothies** re-open for “responsible use” from the 9th of August. Bothies are unregulated spaces and you should always make your own risk assessment before deciding to visit. Before visiting a bothy please read the Covid – 19 guidance on the Mountain Bothies Association website www.mountainbothies.org.uk or [Facebook group](#).

CLUBS AND HUTS

See separate guidance for affiliated clubs and club huts on our website:
www.mountaineering.scot/clubs

COACHES, LEADERS AND GUIDES

Paid and volunteer qualified coaches, leaders, instructors or guides should refer to their specific professional association guidance on good practice during this phase of the Scottish Government route map. Mountain Training Scotland have developed specific COVID-19 advice for leaders, coaches and instructors:

- www.mountain-training.org
- www.ami.org.uk
- www.bmg.org.uk/
- sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/getting-coaches-ready-for-sport/



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