

Racquetball Ireland Protocols for Clubs Returning to Play Racquetball

Coronavirus
COVID-19



Always follow the Government Guidelines of
Good Hand Hygiene –Respiratory Etiquette –Social Distancing

Return to Racquetball the Safe Way



RETURNING TO PLAY GUIDELINES

Although we wish to return to playing racquetball as soon as possible, we must ensure that all those participating in the sport can do so within a safe environment. These protocols prepared in line with the roadmap for reopening society, outlines measures Racquetball Ireland would like clubs to implement and maintain to help protect staff and members during the COVID-19 pandemic allowing us to return to the players and clubs to return to the sport safely.

These protocols should be in place until further notice. Please note these guidelines are subject to change.

Do not attempt to play if you:

- Have a cough or flu-like symptoms or are feeling unwell
- Have a high temperature
- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days



1. Club Committee

Racquetball Ireland advises clubs to appoint a COVID-19 Officer (this can be an existing officer of the club) for managing issues and queries relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Clubs Committees and Covid-19 Officer should liaise with Sports Centre management on the correct approach to Covid-19 protocols.

Sport Ireland will soon provide an online training course for Club Covid-Officers.

Clubs and the Covid-19 officer should:

- Ensure they review and confirm that the club can comply with all of the protocols outlined before reopening their club.
- A risk assessment should be carried out with Sports Centre management. Please see Club Risk Assessment form [here](#).
- Ensure that the club & its members adhere to HSE/Public Health advice in all cases.
- Ensure cleaning equipment, disinfectant, hand sanitizer and other necessary items are readily available at each court.
- Ensure that sufficient HSE Covid-19 information Posters are in place.
- Implement a court rotation system that allows for staggered play and allows time between play for players to exit and enter court without interaction. If this cannot be done, players must be informed on the need for physical distancing while entering and exiting the courts and wait in a designated waiting area.
- The club must maintain accurate records of who is playing and when. This should include all persons on court and those in a designated awaiting area (if applicable) awaiting their designated playing time.
- Be responsible for informing all members of the Covid-19 protocols and insist 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.
- Engage with your Sports Centre/Venue provider and ensure they are compliant with government guidelines.
- Be aware of any implications Covid-19 may have on any insurance policies.

2. Venue Access

In the initial period following a club's re-opening, access to the venue/hall should be limited as much as possible. Members should only access courts.

Children should always be supervised and by no more than one parent/guardian.

To access the courts in this phase of the reopening, a player must:

- Be a current member.
- A parent/guardian must accompany any player under 18 years
- Have NOT been out of the country in the last 14 days.
- Have NOT 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
- Not be displaying COVID-19 symptoms.
- Have a pre-reserved court time.



3. Booking & Arrival

- Arranging a court time for players in advance is mandatory, preferably via a court booking system, website, app, or phone.
- All players participating on the night should be recorded in the booking. If there is a change to who is playing, this booking must be updated.
- Club scheduling/Court times should ensure there is a minimum 10-minute layover between one group of players leaving the facility, and the next group of players entering the facility.
- All players should ensure their club has their up-to-date contact details (phone and email).
- Initially players should be limited to solo play or singles (members of the same household) only during phase 3 of the reopening.
- Players should travel to the club alone, or only with a member of the same household.
- Players should arrive in playing attire.
- Players should bring their own sanitiser/disinfectant wipes in case there is none available at the club.
- Players should sanitise their hands before entering club.
- Players should arrive at the court entrance no more than 5 minutes prior to the reserved playing time.
- Players should observe Physical distancing at all times and resist the temptation to mingle.
- Changing rooms should remain closed during this phase.
- Players should head straight to their designated court unless required to check-in.

4. Facilities

- Ensure cleaning equipment, disinfectant, hand sanitizer and other necessary items are readily available at each court.
- Protocols for cleaning the venue facilities should be agreed with the venue provider prior to opening and during operation.
- Ensure that sufficient HSE Covid-19 information Posters are in place.
- Players must use their own racquets and equipment only.
- Clubs should ensure that the facility/venue provider can identify an isolation room in the event of a suspected case.
 - Isolation room should have the following:
 - A closed door
 - Ventilation
 - Tissues
 - Hand sanitiser
 - PPE: Gloves and Masks
 - Clinical Waste bags
 - A no-contact Thermometer



5. To the Courts

- Play should be limited to solo play or singles (members of the same household) only during Phase 3 of the reopening.
- Players should enter the court one at a time.
- Nobody but the players should be allowed on the court.
- Players, parents, members, coaches, etc should wear masks when not in court.
- There should be no spectators present during Phase 3 of reopening
- Parents supervising children should be limited to one.
- Wash your hands promptly before and after play.
- Hand washing is the best defence, but considering keeping a small bottle of sanitizer in your bag to use until you can get to a sink and soap.
- Have one player designated as the 'door opener/closer'.
 - That person opens and closes the door between games and during timeouts.

6. On-Court Playing

- Avoid handshakes, high-fives, etc. before, during or after games.
- Avoid touching your face after making contact with a ball, racquet, wall, etc.
- Players should use two sets of clearly marked racquetballs. These should be alternated for serving with each player only touching his or her individual racquetball.
- When receiving, a player keeps their ball in their pocket or safely in a back corner out of play.
- Do not pick up your opponent's ball with your hands. Use your racquet/foot to pick up balls and hit or kick them to your opponent.
- Keep a 2-metre distance from your opponent and other players in the hallway before, after, and in between games.
- 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 wear must wear masks outside of the court and if they wish while playing.

7. Getting Home Safely

- Once play has finished players should use disinfectant wipes on any of the courts surfaces such as floor, sidewalls and door handles etc after finishing play.
- Once play has finished, players should leave the premises promptly, sanitising their hands on the way out using a courtside dispenser or personal hand sanitiser.
- Clubs should agree the cleaning procedure with the venue provider. It should be ensured that thorough cleaning of accessible areas is done and ensuring that all "touch areas" are cleaned thoroughly daily.



8. Suspected Cases

Initial Response

The COVID-19 Club Safety Officer will be responsible for implementing the response plan for a suspected case once a member identifies themselves to them. The response must be quickly dealt with in a private and confidential manner.

If any person on site, suspects themselves, or is suspected of having symptoms, they must report/be reported to the COVID-19 Club Safety Officer.

The COVID-19 Club Safety Officer must:

- Provide the person with a mask, if one is available.
- If a mask is not immediately available, a disposable tissue should be used and advised to cover their mouth/nose when they cough or sneeze. The tissue should be disposed of accordingly.
- Accompany the person to the isolation room, keeping a two-metre distance between the person and themselves and other individuals. The route to the isolation room needs to be quick and easily accessible with little human interaction as possible.
- Assess whether the unwell individual can immediately be directed to go home.
- If the individual is under 18, call their parent/guardian.
- Call their doctor.
- Carry out a questionnaire as outlined in 'Initial Assessment'.

****Note:** the COVID-19 Club Safety Officer cannot diagnose a member of COVID-19, this can only be done by official testing carried out by a qualified medical professional.

- Arrange transport home or to a hospital for medical assessment. Public transport should not be used. Transport should not be provided by another club member.
- Log the incident.
- Arrange for cleaning of the isolation room, equipment that may have been touched by the person, and pending a risk assessment, any other areas that the person may have had contact.

****Note:** Safeguarding policies and procedures need to be considered when developing and implementing your club response plan.

Isolation Room

An isolation room should be used to quarantine a member who is feeling unwell with the COVID-19 symptoms, to facilitate the person remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home, and to allow them to call next of kin and/or their doctor. The Isolation room should have the following:

- A closed door
- Ventilation
- Tissues
- Hand sanitiser
- PPE: Gloves and Masks
- Clinical Waste bags
- A no-contact Thermometer

The PPE gear should be kept in the isolation room, and/or an agreed secure area to be used for Emergency cases only. The PPE should be locked away so it cannot be taken for daily use. The Covid-19 Officers should have a key for the locked PPE.



Initial Assessment

The COVID-19 Officer cannot diagnose a member with COVID-19. This can only be done by official testing carried out by a qualified medical professional.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to establish the next steps in the response plan. The unwell person must answer the following questionnaire in order to establish if they are a suspected case of COVID-19.

- Has the member been in contact with any suspected cases, to the best of their awareness?
- Has the member travelled to any countries outside of Ireland?

If NO:

- Ask the unwell person to contact their doctor.

If YES:

- The unwell person is to be brought to the Isolating room, if not already there.
- The unwell person will need to contact their next of kin and/or doctor or the HSE/NHS for advice.
- If not already present, notify the COVID-19 Officer.
- The unwell person's contact log to be given to the Safety officer as well as names and details of persons who were training with the unwell person.
- The unwell person must stay in the isolation room until they can get in contact with next of kin and/or their doctor,
- They will be asked to not touch any surfaces and to dispose of their tissues in the bin provided.

Transport of Suspected Case

The member should be advised not to use public transport or a taxi to get home or to go to the doctors. They should use their own personal transport if fit to do so. Alternatively, arrangements can be made that a household member they live with will collect them from training. They should stay in the isolation room until they are ready to depart in their own vehicle or be collected.

Cleaning spaces after the presence of a suspected or Confirmed Case

The isolation room will need to be deep cleaned as well as the areas where the person came into contact with surfaces.

The following should also be completed:

- Where possible close and secure area for 72 hours, if this is not possible then –
 - The area should be well ventilated with fresh air for a minimum of 1 hour.
- The spaces should be carefully cleaned with a neutral detergent, followed by decontamination of surfaces using a disinfectant effective against viruses, as follows:
 - Virucidal Products, or 0.05% sodium hypochlorite (NaClO) (dilution 1:100, if household bleach is used, which is usually at an initial concentration of 5%)
- For surfaces that can be damaged by sodium hypochlorite, products based on ethanol (at least 70%) can be used for decontamination after cleaning with a neutral detergent.
- Cleaning of toilets, bathroom sinks and sanitary facilities need to be carefully performed, avoiding splashes. Disinfection should follow normal cleaning using a disinfectant effective against viruses, or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite.
- All textiles (e.g. towels, curtains, etc.) should be washed using a hot-water cycle (90°C) with regular laundry detergent. If a hot-water cycle cannot be used, bleach or other laundry products for decontamination of textiles need to be added to the wash cycle.



Waste Management

Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues):

- Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full & placed in a second bin bag and tied.
- It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known or for 72 hours (whichever occurs first).
- Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children

Return to Play after Illness

- When a member has been absent due to COVID-19 virus, they may only return to racquetball if deemed fit to do so and meet the following criteria:
- 14 days since their last "close contact" with a confirmed / suspected case and have not developed symptoms in that time, or
- And they have been authorised by their GP that they may return to play.