



**Volleyball  
Ireland**

# **Return to Volleyball**

**Protocols until  
February 2022**  
updated November 24 2021

## Volleyball Ireland – Return to Sport Protocol

### 1.0 Introduction

The guidelines in this document relate to the easing of restrictions as set out by Government in their COVID-19 plan: *Reframing the Challenge; continuing our recovery & reconnecting*.

These measures are part of a phased approach of lifting the public health restrictions that were put in place to protect us all from COVID-19 and will only occur if the National Public Health Emergency Team says that the conditions are right for a further relaxation of the restrictions in place.

The plan was originally broken down into three phases:

- Now until September 20
- September 20 to October 22
- October 22 & beyond

**However, due to an increasing number of cases, hospitalisations and deaths from Covid 19, the Government has extended the phase ending October 22nd into February 2022.**

Summary of Restrictions	
Until September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor training and play only in pods of 15</li> <li>• No Indoor team training</li> </ul>
Sept 20 – Oct 22 (Now February 2022)  <b>CURRENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only patrons with proof of immunity can return to full team training</li> <li>• Patrons aged under 18 can return to full team training or competition regardless of vaccination status</li> <li>• All people involved in match or full training, including referees and/or coaches must have vaccination certificates or recovery certificates (unless they are under 18 years old)</li> <li>• Spectators at indoor matches must have vaccination certificates or recovery certificates.</li> <li>• For sessions with participants that have mixed-immunity status, pods of 6 must apply;</li> </ul> <p>Pods of up to 6 participants will be permitted (excluding adult leaders/teachers). Number of pods will have regard to the size of venue and social distance between individual pods. Pods cannot interact with each other, nor can they share equipment such as Volleyballs.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patrons with Immunity are defined as ‘fully vaccinated or recovered from Covid-19 in the last six months’</li><li>• Restrictions lifted on outdoor activities</li></ul>
--	---

These Protocols cover all our members including our members who have a disability and may wish to return to their club. The return of participants with a disability should be considered on a case by case basis depending on the nature of the activity, the environment, and if the participant has any underlying health conditions. It is important to note that not all people with disabilities will have an underlying health condition that may pose an added risk to their health and wellbeing in relation to COVID-19.

## 2.0 General Principles

Current restrictions that are in place are directed by Sport Ireland and Government. The general principles are:

- 2.1 Maximum capacity within a venue is variable dependant on the size of the venue
- 2.2 Social distancing off court to be adhered to, this includes a no handshake or High5 policy.
- 2.3 All other HSE / Govt guidelines should be adhered to
- 2.4 A Covid 19 officer must be present at every session or match. The Covid lead must have completed Sport Ireland’s online Covid awareness training course for Covid officers.
- 2.5 All players should have completed online Sport Ireland Covid Awareness training.
- 2.6 The needs of members with a disability should be considered when planning activities or facility access.
- 2.7 If some players declare that they are unvaccinated or refuse to declare their vaccination status then activity must happen only in pods of 6. This means that competitive matches or 6v6 training cannot take place.
- 2.8 Pods should operate independently of each other with no sharing of equipment or interaction with each other. Pods should not stray into each other’s playing space.
- 2.9 Clubs should be inclusive and respect a person’s right not to be vaccinated or their right not to declare their health status.
- 2.10 Covid Checklists (fit to play survey) should be used for activities/sessions that has mixed immunity status.
- 2.11 Players should not participate in training or matches if they have any symptoms of Covid 19 or have been in close contact with a person who has Covid19.

- 2.12 All participants in a full Volleyball session (not pods), including Coaches, Referees and Players should present either a Certificate of Vaccination or a valid Certificate of Recovery to access the activity.**
- 2.13 Continue to advise masks to be worn where appropriate and sanitising of balls/no handshakes etc.
- 2.14 No restrictions on outdoor activity.
- 2.15 **Host clubs or venues should check for proof of vaccination or recovery before access is granted to spectators or people involved in competitive matches. Clubs have the right to refuse access to matches of full training sessions to anyone that does not have proof of vaccination or recovery from Covid 19.**
- 2.16 People aged under 18 can participate, coach or referee in matches or full training, regardless of their vaccination status.
- 2.17 **Volleyball Ireland will be carrying out spot checks throughout the season. Clubs not compliant with these protocols will face penalties and disciplinary action.**

### 3.0 The Facility & Equipment

The club appointed Covid-19 Officer must complete a risk assessment for the training or playing venues.

- 3.1 All **equipment** will be cleaned with disinfectant before and after each session.
  - 3.1.1 Volleyballs must be cleaned before and after each session.
  - 3.1.2 Clubs must allocate time before and after each session to clean equipment.
  - 3.1.3 A system for separating and identifying newly cleaned and uncleaned equipment should be in place.
  - 3.1.4 The Clubs Covid Officer should oversee the cleaning of equipment.
  - 3.1.5 Any waste produced from equipment cleaning must be disposed of safely securely.
- 3.2 Clubs should not organise the usage of 'communal' water bottles. Players must bring their own clearly marked water bottles and/or snacks.
- 3.3 Ensure access to accessible toilets and changing rooms when appropriate. This includes Changing Places, ambulant accessible and accessible options.

### 4.0 Participation Eligibility

To participate in any Volleyball session all participants must:

- 4.1 Follow Government guidelines on International travel and subsequent restrictions
- 4.2 Not have been around anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 in the last 14 days.
- 4.3 Not be in a period of self-isolation and/or cocooning under the current Health Policy Rules
- 4.4 Not be displaying Covid19 symptoms, such as a high temperature or feeling unwell.

- 4.5 Participation in sessions is of an 'opt-in' basis. Participants should take responsibility for their own decision on whether to return to sport at this stage.
- 4.6 Have completed the return to play Covid 19 awareness training through the Sport Ireland website > <https://www.sportireland.ie/covid19/course>
- 4.7 Players should bring their own hand sanitisers to sessions.
- 4.8 Players should not share drinks nor snacks.
- 4.9 If all patrons including coaches and referees, do not present a certificate of vaccination or a certificate of recovery then activity must only occur in Pods of 6.

## 5.0 Safeguarding

It is acknowledged that some parents/guardians may wish to attend training in a supervisory capacity. In such cases, parents/guardians are not classified as spectators. Each club will need to determine if they can facilitate such attendance. Clubs who choose to permit attendance should ensure that strict adherence to social distancing and public health guidelines is maintained at all times. At a minimum, the following measures should be implemented by organisers:

- No more than 1 designated individual attending the session per child/family/group of children.
- Overall numbers are kept to a minimum and in line with the space available in the venue.
- Fit to Attend surveys are completed by parents/guardians in advance of attendance and register their attendance with the club.
- No congregation is permitted.

## 6.0 Before the Session

- 6.1 Session booking is required for all activities.
- 6.2 Sessions must be planned to take into account the additional needs of attendees with physical or intellectual disabilities. For example, the adaptation of facility access routes and/or the inclusion of carers in participation numbers should be considered.
- 6.3 Players should where possible, wear face masks.
- 6.4 Any player repeatedly not adhering to these guidelines will be asked to leave the session and may be prohibited from participating in future events.

## 7.0 During the Session

- 7.1 Hand shaking and high fives are not advised.
- 7.2 Equipment such as towels, food and drink must not be shared amongst players.
- 7.3 Players should avoid touching their face after handling a ball or other equipment.
- 7.4 Players should bring a small bottle of sanitiser with them to keep for personal use.

- 7.5 Caution is advised for those who intend to engage in high intensity activity following a recovery from Covid19. All individuals should seek medical advice prior to a return to training.
- 7.6 Advice on performing CPR during Covid 19 can be found here >  
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/media/pressrel/covid-19-hse-advice-on-performing-cpr-cardiopulmonary-resuscitation-cpr-in-the-community.html#:~:text=Perform%20chest%20compressions%20only,early%20defibrillation%20until%20help%20arrives.>

## 8.0 After the Session

- 8.1 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 step.

## 9.0 Other Protocols

Mental Health: Infectious disease pandemics like coronavirus (COVID-19), can be worrying. This can affect your mental health. But there are many things you can do to mind your mental health during times like this. Please see the HSE's dedicated webpage for more information; <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html>

If you require any further support or assistance please contact [gm@volleyballireland.com](mailto:gm@volleyballireland.com)