

COMPETITIVE GAME ANGLING

Best practice for the safe conduct of game angling competitions in Scotland under COVID-19 restrictions - Phase 3 v2

**Approved by
Scottish Government:
With effect
24 August 2020**

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IMPORTANT:

This guidance has been updated to comply with Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's RouteMap and further relaxation on travel restrictions. It is to be read in conjunction with the Angling Scotland COVID-19 Guidelines which can be found at: <http://www.anglingscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ASL-Covid-Guidelines-for-Anglers-Clubs-Fisheries-Phase-3-v2-24-Aug-20.pdf>

People who are shielding are now permitted to undertake activities providing strict physical distancing is adhered to. Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Staying safe outdoors](#)

People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days; household members for 14 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility/activity.

Introduction

Some sporting activities, including competitive Angling, can now be undertaken outdoors, providing all activity is consistent with current Scottish Government guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene.

- As competitive angling is conducted in a socially distanced manner on an individual basis, **Competitions may take place provided that arrival and departure times are staggered to avoid large groups congregating at the venue at the same time.**
- **Competitions should only be undertaken where all physical distancing and hygiene measures are in place.**



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General Guidance

- As a competition organiser you will also need to make sure that your club, facility and all participants are made aware of, and can adapt to, changes in guidance at short notice. Information on Scottish Governments approach to managing COVID-19 is available at www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/
- It is the responsibility of the organising; club committee, fishery or match organiser to ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined herein. Venues are advised to take time to ensure they reopen safely.
- **Risk Assessment.** It is the responsibility of each Fishery, Club and Match organiser to undertake documented risk assessment, based on their local circumstances, prior to activity taking place and to provide a safety briefing to all participants. Consider safety first, particularly focusing on minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are always protected.
- **Health & Safety.** It is the responsibility of the organising; club committee, fishery or match organiser to ensure that first aid and emergency equipment is maintained correctly, has been updated appropriately for the COVID pandemic and that first aiders have undertaken appropriate additional training.
- **Hygiene.** Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these. Check to ensure that hand sanitizers or wipes are available for use at entrance/exit to venue/facility where possible. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.
- **Health & Hygiene checklist and further Guidance.** A checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#). Further guidance is available at;
 - [Health Protection Scotland: General guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)
 - [Health Protection Scotland: Cleaning in a non-healthcare setting](#)
 - [Health Protection Scotland: Hand hygiene techniques](#)
 - [St. John's Ambulance: Covid-19 advice for first aiders](#)
- **Insurance.** Fishery, Club and Match organisers should check with their insurance company that correct and full insurance cover is in place and valid before any activity takes place.
- **Physical Distancing.** At all times, participants, Fisheries and organisers should adhere to the Scottish Government's physical distancing guidelines of staying at least 2m away from others.
- **Supporting Disabled competitors.** Where a participant with a disability requires functional support to enable their participation in physical activity and sport this can be provided without maintain physical distancing. This support can be provided by a coach or other individual. In such circumstance the responsible 'Covid Officer' should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment. For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in close proximity, or a combination of actions.

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General Guidance continued...

- **Travel Restrictions.** The travel restrictions outlined by the Scottish Government should always be adhered to. While the Scottish Government has removed the travel restriction for recreational and sporting activity from 3 July 2020. We are still strongly encouraging individuals to only travel as far as is necessary to participate in angling competitions. Up to date guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others: Getting Around](#)
- **Facilities.** [sportscotland](#) has produced the [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) guidance to help owners and operators of sports facilities as they prepare for when sport/activity resumes. Clubs and organisers considering running competitions on natural venues are to apply this guidance. The guidance is applicable to all phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 routemap and can be adapted to support other planning-based work being undertaken by sports, clubs and community organisations. Indoor facilities should remain closed to the public including club houses, toilets, locker rooms, storage and activity areas. Organisers are to ensure that all participants are made aware of this prior to arrival i.e. when booking in on-line or by phone
- **Spectators.** No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult. Physical distancing guidance should be followed at all times.
- **Participation Limits.** Limits on the number of participants accessing outdoor facilities should be risk assessed to ensure appropriate social distancing can be maintained. This should take into consideration that in Phase 3, you can meet with:
 - **Outdoor groups:** Up to 15 people, from up to 4 households can gather outdoors, with physical distancing maintained between households.
 - **Indoor groups:** Up to 8 people, from up to 3 households can gather indoors (inc. overnight stays), with physical distancing maintained between households and avoiding creating 'bridges' between households.
- For the purpose of competitive angling, which is conducted in a socially distanced manner on an individual basis, competitions may take place, provided that arrival and departure times are staggered to avoid large groups congregating at the venue at the same time. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of the Scottish Government Covid-19 route map. Current information is available at [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#)

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Organisation of Competitions

- Subject to close season, Riparian owner and fishery specific rules, Competitions will be permitted on all waters provided that social distancing rules in force at the time can be adhered too. This includes; commercial fisheries, lochs, rivers and small stillwaters.
- All competitors will fish on allocated 'pegs' or designated beats or boats. It is the organisers responsibility to ensure that these pegs are appropriately spaced and boats are large enough to ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times.

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Registration, booking in, payment of Pools/Entry fees

- Anglers should 'book on' to a competition as per the organiser's instructions, usually in advance by phone, email or on-line. Where possible and in line with GDPR, a register of participants should be kept in case there is a need to track and trace.
- Pools, permit and entry fees should be paid as stipulated by the organiser. Wherever possible cash transactions should be avoided.

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Travel/Arrival at the venue

- Competitors should travel in accordance with current Government guidelines only. They should travel alone unless travelling with a member of the same household.
- On arrival at the venue vehicles should pay strict attention to signage and park under the instructions of the fishery owner/organiser.
- On leaving the vehicle, strict social distancing measures must be adhered too at all times maintaining a minimum of 2 meters apart. No physical greetings, handshaking etc. to take place.
- Cafes/shops and inside seating areas will remain closed. Pre-book and collect facilities may be available provided that they comply with current Government guidelines.
- Onsite tackle shops should only open in line with Government guidance. Pre-order and collect facilities may be available.
- Organisers are to remind all participants of the requirement to maintain good hand hygiene before and after using any on-site facilities.
- Organisers are to check that sufficient hand washing facilities or hand sanitisers are available for use by all competitors.

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The Draw

- The draw process is to be conducted in a way that ensures that social distancing is maintained.
- Wherever possible the draw should take place on-line.
- Where an on-site draw is necessary, to comply with the rules on organised gatherings, the draw should take place outside and comply with the rules on social distancing.
- If using a 'peg draw/raffle style' approach, it is recommended that the organiser should be the only person to draw names/peg numbers. A suggested system is to have two bags/tubs. One containing the anglers' names and the other the peg, beat or boat numbers. The organiser would then draw an angler's name from one bag followed by a peg, beat or boat number from the other.
- When a peg, beat or boat is allocated the angler should immediately make their way to their peg as normal.

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Loch Style Fishing

- Organisers are to confirm that the fishery has measures in place to ensure that boats and all surfaces have been cleaned down in accordance with Scottish Government Guidance prior to and after use.
- Organisers are to allocate additional time to the event to facilitate stages/phased start and end to the match to ensure social distancing on the jetty/beach.
- Boats should be large enough to ensure the distance between anglers is a minimum of 2 meters at all times.
- Organisers are advised to use a marked holding area around the jetty/beach where boats can await instruction to dock and disembark.
- Anglers are required to be in possession of hand sanitizer and a face mask/covering. Face masks/coverings should be considered by competitors/organisers and worn in accordance with organisers guidance or fishery rules.
- In the event of an issue with an engine, anglers should call for assistance, and safely disembark to allow fishery staff to tend to the problem. All surfaces should be cleaned before the boat is handed over

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Scoring/Weighing in/Results

- Anglers should not exchange score cards during the match.
- Measure & release matches should be avoided to ensure social distancing and competition integrity is maintained.
- At the end of the competition, competitors will be expected to follow the organiser's instructions for weighing in or returning score cards ensuring that social distancing guidance is adhered to at all times. Weighing officials should consider the use of gloves and masks as a precaution and maintain social distancing measures at all times. Hand sanitizer should be used after each competitor's fish are weighed.
- Where competition rules stipulate Catch & Keep as the method of scoring, an appointed match official should weigh all fish to ensure social distancing is maintained. The angler would be required to place fish into a vessel and step back to allow the match official to collect and weigh the catch. The match official should then step away to allow the angler to collect the fish from the vessel and immediately vacate the weigh area. The angler is responsible for the removal of the fish.
- Once weighed in or having returned score cards the angler will return directly to their vehicle.
- **In order to avoid breaching Government rules on organised gatherings, special attention should be made to the announcement of results at the end of the match. Ideally results should be published on-line for competitors to view as soon as possible after the competition.**
- Anglers not receiving payouts should be encouraged not to wait for the results.

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Payouts/Collection of Winnings

- Organisers should consider paying winnings directly into the angler's bank account by BACS transfer
- Cash transactions should be avoided wherever possible.
- Social distancing must be observed at all times.
- Any post-match presentation should take place outside and comply with social distancing guidelines.