

COMPETITIVE GAME ANGLING

Best practice for the safe conduct of game angling competitions in Scotland under COVID-19 restrictions - Phase 3 v5

**Approved by
Scottish Government:
With effect
5 January 2021**

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IMPORTANT:

Scottish Government has introduced a new [strategic framework document](#) for managing COVID-19 which became effective from 2 November 2020. This provides a 0-4 Level approach to restrictions with each local authority area (or sub-area) placed in a relevant protection Level depending upon its COVID-19 status which will be reviewed weekly.

Clubs, operators and participants should 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 each Level is set out in Table A at Annex A. With effect from midnight on 4 January 2021 much of Scotland was moved into Level 4 with certain extended 'stay at home' restrictions imposed. It is important that all Anglers, Fisheries and Clubs are aware of and comply with these restrictions. More detailed information on them and exemptions applicable for sport and physical activity is available at [Appendix 1 to Annex A to this guidance](#).

Further information on protection levels that will apply in each local authority area are available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): allocation of protection levels to local authorities](#). A local post code checker is also available at [COVID restrictions by protection level in areas of Scotland](#).

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/2021/01/Angling-Scotland-Covid-Guidelines-for-Individuals-Clubs-and-Fisheries-Phase-3-v5-5-January-2021.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 and household members should self-isolate for 10 days as per NHS Scotland guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

Introduction

Some sporting activities, including competitive Angling, can now be undertaken outdoors, providing all activity is consistent with current Scottish Government guidance.

- As competitive angling is conducted in a socially distanced manner on an individual basis, **Competitions may take place provided that they are run in accordance with this guidance and arrival and departure times are staggered to ensure competitors can arrive and depart from their pre-determined peg without having to meet other anglers.**
- Competitions should only be undertaken in line with the Scottish Government's strategic framework document and where all physical distancing/hygiene measures are in place.

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1

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/
- To manage a safe return to organised sport and physical activities organisers should put in place Test & Protect procedures to help break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is available at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#).
- It is the responsibility of the organising; club, 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 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, 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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1 Cont

General Guidance continued...

- **Travel Restrictions.** Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on travel and transport](#).
- Information for each local government area, including their level is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#) including a post code checker.
- [Specific information on car sharing is available from Transport Scotland: advice on how to travel safely.](#)
- Sport & Physical Activity Participation
 - Participants can take part in organised sport and physical activity within their own local government area based on Level as detailed in Tables A and B at Annex A. Such activity is subject to exemption from household rules as detailed within this guidance.
 - When a participant travels out with their home local government area they should follow the travel guidance detailed below. Travel regulations are now legally enforceable.
 - Participants should, where possible, avoid any unnecessary travel out of area and keep journeys within area to an absolute minimum.
- Children & Young People (17 years or under)
 - Participants aged **17 years or under** can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2 and 3 areas (but not Level 4) to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training and competition.
 - Children and young people living in a Level 4 area should only travel locally (within their local government area) to take part in organised sport as outlined in Table A at Annex A.
 - Children and young people living in a Level 4 area should only travel out with their local government area (up to 5 miles) to take part in informal exercise such as walking, running or cycling which starts and finishes at the same place. Such activity should follow [Scottish Government 'Stay at Home' guidance](#).
- Adults (18 years or over)
 - Participants aged **18 years or over** can travel to and from Level 0, 1 and 2 areas (but not Level 3 or 4) to take part in organised sport, physical activity, training and competition as outlined in Table A at Annex A.
 - Adults living in a Level 3 or Level 4 area should only travel locally (within their own local government area) to take part in organised sport or physical activity as outlined in Table A at Annex A.
- Adults living in a Level 3 or Level 4 area should only travel out with their local government area (up to 5 miles) to take part in informal exercise such as walking, cycling or running that starts and finishes at the same place. Such activity should follow [Scottish Government 'Stay at Home' guidance](#).

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1 Cont General Guidance continued...

- **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 and the activity is in line with the level approach restrictions.
- 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](#)

2 Organisation of Competitions

- Subject to close season, Riparian owner and fishery specific rules, Competitions will be permitted on all waters provided that all current Scottish Government guidance applicable for the Protection Level (See Tables A and B at Annex A) in force for the area 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. Under Scottish Government Extended Level 4 'Stay at Home' rules on two anglers are permitted per boat.

3 Registration, booking in, payment of Pools/Entry fees

- Anglers should 'book on' to a competition as per the organiser's instructions, in advance by phone, email or on-line. A register of participants in to be kept, in line with GDPR, for track and trace purposes.
- Pools and peg fees should be paid as stipulated by the organiser. Cash transactions should be avoided.

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4

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.
- Organisers should introduce buffer periods between sessions and stagger arrival/departure times so that participants do not all arrive/leave at the same time.
- 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 should only be open in line with Government guidance. Pre book and collect facilities may be available.
- 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.

5

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 fishing position as normal.

6

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. Under Scottish Government Extended Level 4 'Stay at Home' rules on two anglers are permitted per boat.

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- 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

7

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 use 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 depart immediately.

8

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. Under Scottish Government Extended Level 4 'Stay at Home' rules post match presentations should not take place.

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ANNEX:

- A. Table A: Sport & Physical Activity Protection Levels
- Table B: Travel Summary

APPENDICIES:

1. Level 4 Guidance (Stay At Home)

Table A: Sport & Physical Activity Protection Levels

		Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
OUTDOOR SPORT Organised outdoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview	An outdoor sporting 'field of play bubble' can consist of a maximum of 30 people including coaches, officials and other support staff at any one time. Multiple bubbles, each with up to 30 people, can be used in training, competition or small-scale sporting events if all guidance is followed (200 max per day unless with exemption).				Scottish Government household number rules apply for exercise, sport and recreation
	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	Non-contact sport & PA permitted Contact sport & PA prohibited Exemptions available for professional /performance sport (ALL Levels)
	Adults (18+ years)				Contact sport & PA prohibited	
INDOOR SPORT Organised indoor sport, competition, events and Physical Activity (PA)	Overview	The number of participants allowed to take part in organised indoor sport or physical activity should follow Scottish Government guidance on the opening of sport and leisure facilities and sport specific SGB Guidance . 'Group' activity refers to adults, from more than 2 households (6 members) who take part in organised sport or physical activity. 'Individual exercise' refers to organised sport or physical activity 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	Indoor sport & PA prohibited: Leisure Centres, gyms and other indoor sports facilities closed. Exemptions available for professional/performance sport (ALL Levels)

Table A: Sport & Physical Activity Protection Levels

		Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	Adults (18+ years)		<p>Non-contact sport & PA permitted</p> <p>Contact sport & PA prohibited</p>	<p>Non-contact sport & PA permitted</p> <p>Contact sport & PA prohibited</p>	<p>Indoor <u>individual exercise only</u></p> <p>No contact or non-contact group activity</p>	As above
COACHING	Overview	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.				
	Indoor & Outdoor coaching	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. See indoor / outdoor above for further information. Coaches can take multiple sessions per day, however the numbers allowed in each session will depend upon the protection level in place.				
PERFORMANCE SPORT	Professional & Performance	Professional & performance sports with Resumption of Performance Sport guidance in place and approved by Scottish Government or sportscotland is permitted at all Levels.				
TRAVEL	Indoor / Outdoor Sport & Physical Activity	For further information please refer to Travel Guidance within this document.				
HOSPITALITY & RETAIL	Clubs & Sports Facilities	<p>Clubhouses and sports facilities which provide catering and bar services, can operate providing they adhere to Scottish Government guidance appropriate to the protection level in which they are operating. Further information is available at Coronavirus (COVID-19): tourism and hospitality sector guidance.</p> <p>Retail units operated by sports facility operators may reopen provided all specific Scottish Government guidance for retailers appropriate to the protection level in which they are operating is in place and adhered to. Further information from the Scottish Government is available at Retail Sector Guidance.</p>				

Table A: Sport & Physical Activity Protection Levels

		Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
TOILETS, CHANGING & SHOWER ROOMS	Clubs & Sports Facilities	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.
WORKFORCE	Contractors & Staff	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.				
	Meeting Rooms	Although gym and leisure facilities can open, 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.				

Table B: Travel Summary

Age Group	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
U18s	✓	✓	✓	✓	Local Travel Only
18+ (Adults)	✓	✓	✓	Local Travel Only	

Level 4 Guidance (Stay at Home)

Introduction

The guidance within this appendix is applicable to sport and physical activity facilities and activities where Scottish Government have identified the requirement for **enhanced Level 4 'stay at home'** restrictions to be applied.

This guidance is not applicable to professional or performance sports activity which is approved through the 'Resumption of Performance Sport' process by Scottish Government or **sportscotland**.

The information outlined below should be used in conjunction with, and where appropriate supersede, the '[Return to sport and physical activity guidance](#)' to inform the development of sport specific information which will be shared with participants, clubs, local authorities/trusts, third sector and other sports facility operators within Level 4 areas.

It is the responsibility of the relevant facility operator / COVID officer to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any sport or leisure activity takes place and to check if the activity is in an area which is subject to additional Scottish Government localised measures and restrictions.

Where a local outbreak has been reported, sports facility operators and deliverers should review their facility/operational risk assessment and consider if additional mitigating actions should be put in place to reduce risk. This may, for example, include; suspending activity, enhancing hygiene and physical distancing measures or introducing additional activity restrictions.

Be aware that the Scottish Government may update or change Levels and restrictions at any time, including the local areas subject to them. Therefore COVID officers should regularly check Scottish Government advice and guidance relating to local outbreaks and measures at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local advice and measures](#).

Travel Restrictions in Level 4 areas

Those living in a Level 4 local authority area can travel within that area to undertake outdoor sport, exercise and recreation including walking, cycling, golf or running that starts and finishes at the same place (or up to 5 miles from the boundary of their local authority area for informal exercise), as long as they abide by the rules on meeting other households.

Exemptions are also applicable for essential animal welfare reasons, such as exercising or feeding a horse or going to a vet.

When taking part in sport, exercise or recreation participants should at all times follow [Scottish Government 'stay at home' guidance](#)

Outdoor Sport & Leisure Activity

Operators in Level 4 areas may continue to open outdoor sports areas, courts, pitches and facilities (with the exception of ski centres/resorts) if documented risk assessments are undertaken and all appropriate mitigating actions including the guidance herein is put in place to ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers. Please also refer to additional guidance produced by **sportscotland** at: [Getting Your Facilities Fit for Sport](#).

Restrictions on the number of people who can take part in sport, exercise and recreation has been updated and is as follows;

“Only a single household group, or a group containing no more than 2 people from 2 different households can meet outdoors for sport, exercise or recreation purposes. Children under the age of 12 from these households do not count towards this number but where separate households are participating 2m physical distancing should be maintained at all times.”

Group sport, exercise or training activity should not be undertaken by young people or adults over 12 years of age in a Level 4 area. Household rules apply.

Children under the age of 12 years can meet outdoors for sport, exercise or recreational and do not count towards the total number of people permitted to gather outdoors. Children under 12 years can therefore take part in non-contact group activity. In such circumstances the number of coaches involved must not exceed household limits i.e. maximum of two for any given session.

Coaches should not deliver a session to more than one other person if aged 12 years or older at any given time.

Indoor Sport & Leisure Facilities

Indoor sport and leisure facilities including club houses, changing rooms and activity areas should remain closed at Level 4. Exemptions are available as noted below.

Public Toilets

Operators may open indoor toilets for public use if they follow Scottish Government [Opening Public Toilets Guidelines](#).

Public toilets are defined as any toilets accessible to the public. The opening of toilets should be accompanied by local risk assessment, and control measures should be proactively monitored by operators.

All appropriate cleaning procedures and equipment/disinfectant should be provided as per Health Protection Scotland guidance.

Storage Areas & Lockers

One off access to storage areas and locker rooms is permitted to retrieve personal equipment which is essential for an activity to be undertaken. Personal equipment should not be returned to these areas.

Where equipment cannot reasonably be taken home and is stored on site, such as kayaks, boats etc, access to retrieve and return such equipment to storage areas is allowed if appropriate risk assessments are undertaken.

Risk assessments should include mitigating actions to reduce the risk of virus transmission such as individual access, booking slots and cleaning/hygiene protocols.

Access to outdoor facilities

Where external access to outdoor sports facilities is not possible, access through an indoor area can be provided if suitable risk assessments and safety measures are put in place. These should include restricting access to one person at a time, ideally with a one-way system in operation, and no contact with hard surfaces such as door handles. Persons moving through the area should not stop or congregate at any time.

Hospitality

Additional restrictions are in place for hospitality businesses with Level 4 areas subject to bar and café closures. Sports facility operators providing catering or bar services should refer to Scottish Government guidance for applicable guidance including takeaway services. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance.](#)

Retail

Retail units operated by sports facility operators in Level 4 areas should follow Scottish Government [Retail Sector Guidance.](#)

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