



GUIDANCE FOR ATHLETICS VENUES

Step 3: updated 27th November 2020

This guidance might be updated in due course

Introduction

This guidance document has been developed in adherence to government guidelines as outlined by the government on 22nd September 2020 and can be put in place immediately unless otherwise stated. All England Athletics guidance will be updated as per government guidelines when they are made available or as soon as possible thereafter.

These guidelines apply to **England only**. [More details are available here](#). **We recommend that you stay up-to-date with government guidance at all times. Government guidance supersedes all advice given by the governing body and must be followed at all times.**

Please stay aware of any local lockdown measures and restrictions enforced in your local area. These may be put in place by government at short notice and restrictions may vary across different areas. [Click here to view a list of local lockdown areas and the restrictions applicable to those areas](#). If local lockdown measures come into force that impact your venue, or planned activity at your venue, then please contact your local authority for local-specific advice.

The safety and wellbeing of all athletes, runners, coaches, and the wider community is at the heart of any guidance that England Athletics is distributing. We know that athletes, runners, coaches, and athletics venues will be keen to resume athletics activity as soon as it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. England Athletics recognises that wish BUT at the same time wants to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the athletics community, facility providers and the wider community is considered as the first priority.

The guidance that follows provides sport specific advice to help athletics venues. **It is important to say that any return to activity must take account of local conditions and any risk assessment for normal activities should be undertaken as well as ensuring that all government guidance around maximum adult group sizes indoors and COVID-19 is taken into account.** It is the responsibility of each athlete, runner, coach, and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment.

This guidance has been published on the understanding that it is an interpretation of government guidance relevant to the sport of athletics and running. It is likely to change at short notice, in which case we will publish updates through the [England Athletics website](#) and social media channels.

Any measures that venues put in place to enable athletics activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter movement/social distancing is reintroduced in the future or when the restrictions are further relaxed.

All parties should note the [disclaimer](#) at the end of this piece. Please also read our other guidance documents:

1. [Guidance for Athletes and Runners – return to activity](#)
2. [Guidance for Coaches – return to activity](#)
3. [Guidance for affiliated clubs – return to activity](#)

Before opening

- Opening facilities is at the discretion and consent of the facility owner, provider, or contractor.
- The track operator group (Committee, Facilities Owner, Manager) has completed all relevant plans, procedures, and risk assessment – updated for COVID-19.
- All risk assessments are up-to-date and have COVID-19 restriction added.
- You have clarified with your insurance around re-opening.
- Deep Cleans have taken place of all 'open' areas of the facility and equipment.
- All staff and volunteers have been fully briefed.

Facilities

- Clubhouses can be opened in a limited way for operational reasons (e.g. to switch on floodlights, thoroughfare to access the track) or for toilet access.
- All social spaces should remain closed.
- Toilet facilities can be opened if the venue wishes, but particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, ensure soap and hot water is provided.
- At this point all fixed and movable equipment should have a clear ongoing hygiene plan in place, that outlines if the equipment is to be used and pre and post cleaning of equipment. There should be clear signage in place around all equipment.
- Remove any other unnecessary equipment and items from tracks.
- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained (in some cases this may require limited access to the clubhouse being possible) and a clear plan for dealing with an incident is available to all users. [Guidelines for dealing with CPR can be found here.](#)
- Make sure hand sanitisers or wipes are available for use at entrance/exit to venue/tracks area and equipment if in use.
- Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) regularly, wearing disposable gloves.
- Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between people, including in car parks and at entrances (clear signage in place).
- Consider marking social distancing at appropriate points, such as the entry gates.
- Athletes should ideally bring their own equipment. Where shared equipment is used, this must be cleaned before and after use with a clear protocol, appropriate cleaning wipes and sprays in place.
- Operate online booking for the track where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings. Take online or card payments.
- It might be possible on the track to have more than one unit training at any one point, this would need to be carried out in line with government guidelines and social distancing at all points within the facility, including the track.
- Communicate with your members/customers clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.

- Ensure signage on guidelines for taking part safely and promoting hygiene measures is clearly displayed (and ensure these remain up-to-date as restrictions change).
- [Government advice on cleaning is here.](#)

Spectating

- Spectating to adhere to government guidance on large events and be within the capacity of the venue. No Spectating in Tier 3.
- Parent/guardian supervision permitted (one per athlete).
- Clubs may have welfare policies that stipulate parents / carers of young athletes being in attendance. In this case athletes are permitted to have a parent / carer in attendance at each session.
- The venue should have a clear protocol in place to ensure parents / carers attending are fully aware of their responsibilities in order to comply with all measures put in place to ensure the venue is COVID secure. These include adhering to social distancing and hygiene requirements.
- The venue / club should ensure details of parents / carers who are in attendance at a session are recorded in the same way as participants and that they abide by the club's procedures in relation to when not to attend and when to inform the club of any symptoms.

Track and Field guidance

- In all cases normal coaching practice with risk assessment and high-quality practice should be adhered to as well as implementing any requirements around social distancing and hygiene.
- All coaches, leaders, athletes, and runners should ensure they have followed government hygiene rules including washing hands and cleaning any equipment prior to use.
- All coaches, leaders, athletes, and runners must follow any hygiene guidance put in place by a facility.

Track

- Coaches, leaders, athletes, and runners should ensure they maintain social distancing appropriate for the activity.
- Steeplechase barriers and the water jump can be used by a coach and athlete provided the equipment is thoroughly cleaned according to guidance before and after each session.
- Hurdles can be used by a coach and athlete provided the equipment is thoroughly cleaned according to guidance before and after each session.
- Starting blocks should be used just by one athlete and thoroughly cleaned according to guidance before and after each session.

Jumps

- Coaches should ensure they maintain social distancing at all times as well as maintain social distancing from any other coaches and athletes using adjacent space.

Vertical Jumps, High Jump and Pole Vault

- Athletes and runners follow hygiene guidelines for cleaning hands prior to any training starting.
- The mat is cleaned in line with manufacturers and government guidance, before and after each group of up to 12 athletes.
- Operators must contact the manufacturer of the jump's mats in use at their facility to confirm whether the proposed cleaning products can be used safely on their equipment. Disinfecting landing beds effectively against Coronavirus is the responsibility of the facility operator. The disinfectant used for this purpose must not damage or compromise the safety properties of the landing bed, or cause harm to staff, volunteers, or athletes.
- If sharing, poles should be re-gripped before use and any part of the pole outside of the grip should be cleaned before use by another athlete.
- Bars should be cleaned using an anti-viral spray or wipe before use and managed by dedicated individuals for a particular session – i.e. one athlete and the coach and cleaned between sessions.

Horizontal Jumps, Sand Pits

- Athletes follow hygiene guidelines for cleaning hands prior to any training starting.
- The landing pit is fully cleaned by turning and raking of the sand before and after each group, and rake between individual athlete/user. A venue operator may choose to use a high mist spray of sterilising fluid of a suitable concentration to neutralise the virus, this can be sprayed over the sand after use, as well as a turn and rake. [Public Health England cleaning guidance is here.](#)
- Equipment such as rakes and measuring tapes should be managed by dedicated individuals for a particular session – i.e. one athlete or the coach and cleaned between one athlete's series of jumps or between sessions.

Throws

- Athletes follow hygiene guidelines for cleaning hands prior to any training starting.
- Coaches and athletes should ensure all equipment is used by one athlete and then thoroughly cleaned according to guidance before and after each session.
- Coaches should ensure they maintain social distancing at all times with any athlete they are coaching, as well as maintain social distancing from any other coaches and athletes using adjacent space.

Section 3: Disclaimer

Please note that the subject matter covered in this guidance is in no way exhaustive and the material does not stand on its own nor is intended to be relied upon as a substitute for obtaining specific legal advice. Individual circumstances will differ. The information contained in this guidance is given in good faith but any liability of England Athletics Limited or its professional advisors (including their respective members or employees) to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party of the contents of this guidance is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law. England Athletics Limited and its professional advisors accept no duty of care or liability for any loss occasioned, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of any material in this guidance. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

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