

RETURN TO FENCING - DRAFT INDOOR FENCING COMPETITIVE EVENT PROTOCOLS 17TH MAY TO 21ST JUNE

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document lays out the additional measures that should be taken by fencers, clubs, officials, volunteers, coaches, and spectators before, during and after all fencing competition activity in Step 3 of the Roadmap in England from 17th May. A further version will be published for competitive events running in Step 4 (no earlier than 21st June).

This document is ***in addition to the BF guidelines on indoor fencing and equipment cleaning protocols*** which sets out general measures to be followed by anyone participating in fencing (whether in competition or club).

In light of the increased risk of changes, cancellations and postponements (due a number of factors) competition organisers should ensure that they have a communication channel in place with all participants to notify them of any last-minute changes. We recommend that organisers (in the event they choose to take out specific event insurance) check their insurance policy – many policies will not cover costs arising from COVID-19.

For the purposes of this document the term '***participants***' refer to all individuals participating in the event – competitors, referees, event officials, coaches, spectators and so on.

For the purposes of this document the term '***event***' refers to the whole fencing event. There may be one or more '***competitions***' taking place in the venue at the same time on the same day.

2. EXCLUSIONS

This document is not intended for use by organisers of 'have a go' events. This is guidance for our member and affiliated clubs when holding BF licensed competitive events for members.

This document does not include all the requirements of an event organiser. This document sits in addition to the standard requirements and expectations on event organisers, as covered by BF's published policies and procedures.

3. GOVERNANCE

Any resumption of and ongoing participation in fencing activity in England is at all times governed by

1. Government Guidelines (this includes Public Health England)
2. Venue Specific Rules (includes use of changing rooms, movement/volume of people, hygiene protocols, availability and provision of water/refreshments)
3. BF Guidelines including Fencing Specific Adaptations to meet measures such as social distancing. Including but not limited to policies and guidelines on Welfare and Safety.
4. Any additional guidelines put in place by any other event sanctioning body – eg FIE or EFC

This document is based on the Government Roadmap guidance for England, more information [here](#).

It is subject to change in response to the current COVID-19 Alert Level, community prevalence of COVID-19 and/or to reflect additional or updated UK Government guidance.

4. SIZE & FORMAT OF COMPETITION

Licensed BF competitions are considered 'organised sport events'.

Informal or self-organised sport is not covered by any exemptions and can only take place within the legal gathering limits which otherwise apply to social contact: in groups of up to 6 people, or 2 households including bubbles.

For indoor organised sport events the total number of participants (competitors, referees, spectators etc) in a space is limited by

- Capacity (based on size of the competition/hall area – see below)
- Ability to keep household groups separated, abiding by social distancing measures

In Step 3 of the Roadmap, the numbers of people that can get together to fence in a licensed fencing event will no longer be determined by a 'bubble' size. Instead a particular indoor space will be subject to a capacity cap.

You can calculate the capacity cap if you know the area (sq. ft or sq. m) of the competition hall. If you are using more than one hall, each hall will have its own capacity cap and care must be taken not to exceed that if people can move from one hall to another.

Every person in a space counts – spectators, coaches, fencers, referees, welfare and covid officers. Every person must have at a minimum of 100 sq. ft (9.29 sq. m) within the area they are occupying.

So if your competition hall is 3,000 sq ft you can have 30 people in the space. If the changing rooms are 300 sq ft you can have 3 people in the changing room at any one time.

Other than when actually fencing every person must remain socially distanced (unless they are in household groups). This may mean that some venues due to their layouts will not be able to support the maximum capacity cap number.

Organisers should get in touch with venue operators to determine capacity caps for the spaces they are using and update their risk assessments accordingly. Risk assessments should include capacity

cap calculations and descriptions of measures to ensure that (other than when actually fencing) all participants remain socially distanced.

In relation to formats it is recommended that individual competitive bout limits of '40 hits' are not exceeded. This means that two fencers cannot each other for a total number of bouts where the cumulative maximum score exceeds 40. So two individuals can fence 8 bouts to 5, 2 bouts to 5 and 2 to 15, or 5 bouts of 5 and one to 15.

This allows, for example any two individuals to meet in 2 rounds of 5 hit poules and then in a 15 hit DE match and once more in repechage.

Any decision to increase the potential competitive interaction between two individuals (eg 3 rounds of 5 hit poules plus DE & repechage) should be documented in the risk assessment and additional mitigations noted.

This allows the standard competitive formats to restart – multiple rounds of poules, or poules plus DE.

Safeguarding & Spectators

When holding an event, the event organising committee is responsible for the safety of **everyone** attending an event – this includes officials, fencers, parents, coaches and spectators.

This means that organisers must include everyone in the capacity cap calculations.

We recognise that it is unlikely that all organisers will be able to allow spectators/supporters (parents, coaches) to attend due to restrictions in capacity. Where supporters are present procedures must be in place to ensure that social distancing is maintained between individuals/household groups.

For younger competitors, if it is not possible for parents/guardians to stay, competition organisers **must** have the appropriate welfare procedures in place for the period of time that they are in the care of the organisers, with defined arrival and departure procedures. We recommend consideration of competition formats that allow for specific pick-up windows, rather than knock-out formats in these cases.

Care must be taken to provide a supportive and equitable competitive environment, particularly for young fencers. Creating a situation where a young fencer, whose parents/guardians are unable to attend due to capacity restrictions is competing against another fencer whose coach is able to attend and is providing support is not the preferred experience. BF would encourage competition organisers to ensure there is a consistent, supportive atmosphere in place for all U18 competitors. This may mean organisers decide that no coaches or parents are permitted to stay and watch or that they are restricted to remaining in waiting areas which will not allow piste-side viewing/access.

Summary Table

	Step 3 – 17 th May
Spectators (at all times subject to legal gathering limits, venue restrictions and capacity)	Yes
Covid Officers	Yes (min 1 per competition hall, max 1:64 ratio for any one hall)
Welfare Officers	Yes (min 1 per event, max 1:32 ratio for unaccompanied U18 competitors).
Piste-Side Coaching (2m+ away at all times)	Yes. Minute break/in-between bouts only. Subject to space.
Warm-up Lessons/Sparring	Yes. Subject to space and social distancing between pairs. (Individual warm-ups subject to social distancing)
Maximum No of Competitors	Limited by capacity cap (every participant counts)
Permitted Formats	All standard formats (if two individuals are likely to meet repeatedly and exceed the 40-hit competitive limit, this must be noted in the risk assessment and mitigating actions considered)

Remember – all event officials should, for the safety and respect to all participants:

- Avoid shouting
- Respect 2m social distancing at all times where possible
- Sanitise hand before and after touching any objects or surfaces
- Wear face coverings (and visors for certain roles)

5. SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

This section is subject to change as more information released in advance of 17th May, not yet available at the time of writing.

All events are subject to the following conditions

- Event organisers follow all relevant COVID-secure guidance depending on the type of event and complete a related risk assessment. (sports events guidance [here](#)).
- Organisers and attendees adhere to all legal requirements, including maintaining group sizes permitted by social contact restrictions at the relevant step in the Roadmap and preventing mixing between groups, enforcing social distancing guidelines and mandating face coverings in indoor areas where required.
- All reasonable action has been taken by the event organiser to mitigate risk to public health.

5.1 PLANNING A FENCING COMPETITION

When planning a sporting activity, you should ensure that:

- Participants do not attend if they have any health conditions which would put them at increased risk.
- All participants and attendees (including players, officials, organisers, volunteers and spectators) are aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the need to self-assess before attending every sporting activity.
- Any participant or other attendee reporting symptoms does not attend and is directed to follow NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation.
- Participants are aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in sporting activity, based on the national governing body's guidance and risk assessment.
- Participants are strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high-risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.
- Participants continue to adhere to legal gathering limits before and after sporting activities, act responsibly and limit transmission risk wherever possible.
- Participants are aware that they are choosing to take part in the modified version of the game, including any relevant COVID-19 measures, and should comply with these measures as a condition of participation.

You should also ensure you are adhering to important safety measures:

- Ensure that spectators are following legal gathering limits and do not put the safety of participants at risk. Where it is anticipated that an activity will attract spectators, there should be a named person or persons with responsibility for ensuring adherence with these guidelines and ensuring the facility is COVID-secure. They should carry out and publish a risk assessment for the activity which limits the number of spectators and focuses on the need to maintain social distancing on arrival, for the duration of the activity, and on departure.
- Ensure you are collecting information from participants, spectators and other attendees, which is detailed enough to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary. You should check your NGB's guidance or see the maintaining records guidance for further information.
- Ensure that all sessions comply with your NGB's safeguarding policies and procedures, with particular consideration to children and young people, and vulnerable adults who may be less able to understand or maintain social distancing discipline.

5.2 MATCH OFFICIALS, MEDICS AND COACHES

Match officials, medics and coaches should observe the relevant guidance in the same way as participants. Where capacity caps apply, people participating in a work or volunteering capacity (such as match officials, medics and coaches) are not exempt and are included in the number of participants. They must remain socially distanced from players where possible during play. Should match officials not be able to remain socially distanced due to their role in the sport, the sport's national governing body or local provider should conduct a risk assessment to see if other mitigations may be necessary.

Match officials will be empowered to ensure that COVID-secure measures are adhered to, and to enforce this through appropriate sanctions set out by the sport's national governing body.

5.3 SPORT PROVIDERS (INCLUDING EVENT ORGANISERS)

Organised sport providers that deliver NGB activities must ensure they follow the NGB's sport-specific guidance and have the appropriate measures in place to offer their sport or activity safely. Each individual provider should undertake their own risk assessment, including ensuring that operators, organisers and volunteers are aware of modifications to game-play or activity structure. They should also write their own action plan to be distributed to all relevant personnel, including coaches and welfare officers.

5.4 OFF-FIELD ACTIVITY

Sport providers should put in place measures to limit transmission risk from off-field activity, including:

- Limiting the time spent congregating at a venue before and after sporting activity. This could involve having strict meeting times or staggering start times and advising participants to arrive in kit and ready to warm-up.
- Minimising use of changing rooms and shower facilities. Changing rooms can open but their use should be discouraged. You should inform customers that these are areas of increased risk, that they should shower and change at home where possible, and, if they do need to use changing rooms, they should minimise time spent inside. When using indoor facilities such as toilets, people should not mix with others they do not live with (or share a relevant bubble with) unless an exemption applies.
- Ensuring that participants maintain social distancing throughout warm-ups and when not on the field of play (e.g. awaiting substitutions), and limit higher-risk activities like spitting or shouting (particularly when facing each other).
- Ensuring that participants adhere to legal gathering limits. Social interaction before and after playing any sport should only take place outdoors, in a group of up to 6 people, or as a group of two households including bubbles. Exceptions may be made where safety and safeguarding measures require this, such as supporting participants with disabilities (though minimal time should be spent waiting or in changing rooms).
- Avoiding equipment-sharing where possible.
- Advising participants to bring their own water bottles and ensure they are labelled or highly distinguishable. Water bottles or other refreshment containers should not be shared under any circumstances.
- Advising participants to take their kit home to wash it themselves, rather than have one person handling a large quantity of soiled materials. Where kit absolutely has to be shared or kept together (for example last minute stand-in players, shortage of kit, or an essential club function), each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately after.

6. EVENT STAFF - BF GUIDANCE

This advice is in addition to the government guidance for events (see Section 5) and in addition to the standard BF Return to Fencing guidance which can be found [here](#).

All events must have a COVID-19 Officer and a Welfare Officer. These cannot be the same person unless the event is taking place in one hall with the total number of all participants less than 40.

6.1 COVID-19 OFFICER

Every organising committee must have at least one trained Event Covid-19 Officer who is familiar with the BF protocols including those on Equipment Cleaning Protocols, BF Indoor Fencing Guidelines & BF Competition Guidelines which can all be found [here](#).

On the day there must be one Covid-19 Officer allocated to each competition area. E.g. Where competitions are being held in separate halls there must be one Covid Officer for each hall and a maximum ratio of 1 Officer per 64 participants within each hall.

The Covid-19 Officer is responsible for ensuring that all participants (spectators, coaches, competitors, referees) follow BF protocols.

COVID Officers should be independent at all times – e.g. they should not be attending as individual coaches for competitors.

6.2 WELFARE OFFICER

Every event must have at least one fully trained Lead Welfare Officer who has completed the Time to Listen (or BF equivalent) training (now delivered virtually) in the last 3 years.

Additional assistant Event Welfare Helpers must have attended a Safeguarding & Protecting Children training in the last 3 years (or the Scottish Equivalent – Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport training) and a current Criminal Record Check.

For U18 events ***where parents/guardians are not present:***

There should be a minimum ratio of one Welfare official per 32 U18s competing. One Welfare official can cover more than one competition for example if you are running 2 separate age group competitions at the same time in the same hall, you can have one welfare official (the Lead Welfare Officer)

The Welfare Officer must review the competition risk assessment and any detailed welfare protocols (eg drop-off and pick-up) to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are met. The Welfare Officer is responsible for ensuring that this information is shared to any Event Welfare Helpers.

Welfare Officers and Helpers should be independent at all times – they should not act as individual coaches for the competitions.

6.3 REFEREES

Any person undertaking refereeing (even if poules are 'self refereeing') must follow the additional guidelines below. The Event Lead Welfare Officer and the event COVID-19 Officer cannot also be an acting referee.

6.4 ARMOURERS

At this time events should not offer an armoury service to fencers/their equipment. Fencers should be turning up with sufficient levels of fully working equipment.

Clubs are encouraged continue putting in place hire schemes (with all the required sanitisation/quarantine procedures in place) so that competitors can enter competitions with sufficient equipment.

Event organisers should put in place protocols to minimise additional armoury personnel requirements whilst the competition is in progress. Covid protocols must be in place for any set-up and take-down activity, and this must be included in the risk assessment.

7. SUMMARY MEASURES FOR COMPETITION ORGANISERS

7.1 PRE-COMPETITION

- Appoint Event COVID-19 Officer and Event Organising Committee including lead Welfare Officer
- Check updated local and national restrictions and guidance
- Read the relevant BF Guidance (including specific COVID Indoor Fencing Guidelines, Equipment Cleaning Protocols and Competition Guidance)
- Liaise with Facility provider over requirements
- Complete first draft risk assessment, which will include mitigation plans to reduce risks in relation to
 - Capacity cap limits
 - Use of Sport facilities, including toilets, changing areas etc
 - Competitors – local, national or international
 - Event Officials – COVID-19 Officer, Welfare Officer(s), referees, armourers, DT, other event volunteers
 - Spectators – processes and procedures to ensure all social distancing restrictions are met
- Apply for a BF event license (risk assessment must be included).
- Publish details to ensure all participants are informed in advance the additional requirements are
- Appoint and train dedicated event staff to oversee COVID-19 specific measures
- Ensure that sufficient PPE is available
- Prepare a Crisis Management Plan for

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- potential positive tests in the event team (organisers, referees) in the run up to the event
- changes in restrictions that mean the event will need to be altered or cancelled
- Prepare and display clear information (posters, flyers, videos etc.) in the competition venue, with regards to hygiene and reminders of any procedures in place to reduce risk of COVID-19.
- Organise the electronic collection of the Covid-19 Statement to be signed by each participant (or their parent/guardian)
- Prepare detailed hygiene procedures
- Make sure that general and fencing specific rules will be communicated and applied
- Entry Process should be online and in advance and entries should be available to current members ideally through the BF Platform <https://bf.sport80.com/> (see section below). All participants should confirm that they have read the relevant BF documents and any event specific terms and conditions. Cancellation policy should be published.
- Put in place Event Screening Questionnaire.
- Perform an Event staff briefing – suggest this is done online at the latest the evening before the event.

7.2 ON ARRIVAL AT COMPETITION

- The event organisers should publish the arrival procedures in advance
- Mandatory temperature checks for all participants will be performed before entering the venue and prior to any warm-up. Participants testing with temperature $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ and/or displaying any Covid-19 Symptoms will not be permitted access to the venue.
- Participants that have not completed their Screening Questionnaire will not be permitted access.
- Sanitiser Station should be made available near entry and exits
- One-way entry and exit system should be in place where possible.
- Competitors must be allocated a bag/rest space which ensures that the competitor is at least 2m away from any other participant whilst accessing their bag or resting between rounds. Competitors should be reminded of warm-up options and restrictions.
- Any spectators/carers/coaches/referees/event officials will also be allocated a space at least 2m away (from any person not within their household). They should as much as possible stay in their allocated space when not working and avoid unnecessary interactions.

7.3 DURING COMPETITION

- Piste areas, including areas for fencers, referees, coaches and spectators must be clearly marked.
- If a tannoy system is in place reminders of COVID-19 mitigation actions should be regularly communicated.
- Medal Ceremonies must be socially distanced with all participants wearing face coverings. Medal winners must sanitise hands before picking up any medal or trophies which should be made available on tables. No handshaking or physical interaction between the medal winners, or any other medal ceremony participants.

- **Referees**
 - Poule sheet, Direct Elimination slips, and Incident reports should be processed electronically, whenever possible. BF recommend that organisers look into using packages like Engarde Smart.
 - Referees should be allocated equipment for the duration event (weights/gauges/clip charts/pens/tablets). These items should not be shared. If this is unavoidable, each person handling it must wash or sanitise their hands immediately before and after handling the equipment.
 - Referees must remind fencers about relevant COVID protocols.
- Procedures should be in place to communicate results of poules, DE tableau in such a way to avoid breaching social distancing (where people crowd around notice boards or TV screens). Event organisers should consider publishing results/tableaus electronically so that fencers can access results using mobile devices.

7.4 POST COMPETITION

- Retain a record of the competition – fencers, bouts and referees.
- Should anyone attending the event test positive then you must inform BF and everyone at the event. Whilst our expectation is that the QR/Test and Trace system would inform participants **you should not rely on this**. You do not need to ask participants to isolate, unless there was any specific incident (eg medical, welfare) which meant that a participant spent 15mins or more less than 2m away from another participant.
- Ensure hygiene and social distancing procedures are followed to protect those responsible for event equipment ‘take-down’.

7.5 TEST & TRACE - USING THE BF PLATFORM

- All competitions must be licensed through the BF Events Platform (Sport:80)
- **All entries must be registered on the platform** – this can be done either through direct entry on the BF Membership Platform <https://bf.sport80.com/> or uploaded separately by the competition organiser as soon as practically possible. For direct entry there is no requirement to take payment through the platform. As a reminder, organisers should check that entrants have a valid BF membership at point of entry.

This is to ensure that:

1. BF can keep all competition participants up to date with the latest regulations in a consistent way. (Important where participants may be travelling to different areas/Home Nations to compete, and the competition organisers may not have the resources to keep participants up to date with changes in guidance).
2. Competition organisers can be confident all participants will have the required memberships in place for insurance purposes - the system will automatically alert organisers if memberships expire.

3. BF can support test and trace – we will hold a central record of who has participated in each event on which date. An individual competition organiser does not have access to information about other competitions that a someone may have participated in. BF will be able to contact individual fencers directly in the event of positive tests, and support competition organisers to navigate the requirements (particularly where participants have travelled from different Home Nations).

Note on additional functionality

- The BF Platform supports QR code check-in - participants and volunteers can scan the event code on arrival and they will automatically be 'checked in' to the event on the platform. (Wi-Fi/mobile data connectivity required)

7.6 WELFARE

- It is the expectation of BF that fencers attending competitions that they are capable of performing the basics of competing without requiring assistance from parents and coaches. This will also help to minimise transmission of viruses. This includes being able to sanitise hands regularly, take fencing kit on and off safely, plugging themselves into spools and plugging weapons into body wires. If there is a risk that competitors are unable to perform these basics, competition organisers should consider including training/education as part of their pre-competition briefing information and on the day assigning Welfare Helpers to support fencers in these tasks.
- Competitors with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their carers and the Lead Welfare Officer must work with the participant/carer to ensure that the needs of the participant are met.
- For the duration of the event, the Event Welfare Officer will be responsible for their welfare – from the moment that the child arrives until they leave.
- There must be procedures for signing children in and out appropriate to the age of the child. These should be communicated in advance to all U18s and their parents and guardians.
- We recommend that unless specific permission is given in writing to the event organiser, children under the age of 14 should not be permitted to leave the venue.
- Where competitions include athletes under the age of 14, we recommend that formats are used which allow organisers to pre-publish a pick-up time/window.
- Fencers with disabilities/additional needs who require a carer presents during the competition should contact the Event Welfare Officer in advance of the event.

7.7 MEDICAL

- Injuries should still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance.

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- At the minimum there must be a qualified first aider at the competition at all times who will have access to PPE and first aid kit.
- All medical personnel should take care to protect themselves and others through rigorous cleaning and personal hygiene, including increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting equipment and surfaces.
- Fencers should bring a small first aid kit and be encouraged to self-treat minor injuries where possible.
- Only **the assigned first aider** can approach the injured fencer and they **must wear face-coverings, gloves and a visor**.
- It is recommended that the patient wears a face covering where this is possible and practical.
- PPE should be included in the first aid kit located in the DT office and is to be used by the trained first aider.
- There must be a defined process (agreed with the venue operator) for dealing with major injuries/emergency situations which should be communicated in advance to all staff. Parents/guardians of U16s are requested to remain within 15 minutes of venue to collect in case the fencer requires non urgent treatment.
- After contact with an injured participant, medical personnel should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or the minimum social distancing was maintained. They should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Medical personnel should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, for test and trace purposes. Records should be kept for 21 days and then destroyed.

7.8 DT

- Each official and member of the DT must have an allocated chair 2m distanced.
- Social distancing must be respected at all times in the DT area.
- If possible, consider installing a light plexiglass shield on the front side of the DT desk. Alternatively, a barrier (eg table) and markings must be in place to ensure that 2m social distancing is respected wherever someone needs to interact with the DT.

8. SUMMARY MEASURES FOR PARTICIPANTS

8.1 ALL PARTICIPANTS

Every person present at a BF licensed competition is considered a participant and must comply to these guidelines. This includes spectators, event officials, coaches, referees and fencers.

Prior to the Event:

- Read and follow the published BF guidelines specifically including the Guidelines for Return to Indoor Fencing, paying particular attention to the hygiene requirements

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- Read and follow the event organiser guidelines.
- Temperature test before leaving to travel to the event.
- Do not travel to event if displaying any of the NHS listed covid symptoms and follow NHS guidance
- Do not participate in the event if you have been told to isolate or are isolating
- Complete and sign the Event Screening Questionnaire on the day of the event, prior to arriving at the venue.

On Arrival

- Scan the available QR Code
- Follow temperature checking and sign-in procedures (note that additional welfare procedures will be in place for U16s)
- Even if you are familiar with the venue do not assume that the procedures will be the same when a competition is held.

During the Event:

- Maintain Social Distancing of at least 2 meters at all times except whilst fencing.
- Face coverings should be worn at all times indoors, except when participating in fencing.
- All participants with mobile phones must use the NHS track and trace app and scan the QR code available at the venue.
- Bring your own:
 - bottle(s) of water. These must not be shared. Refill stations may not be available.
 - pen to fill in and sign any documents
 - small first aid kit
 - hand sanitiser and anti-viral hand wipes
- Participants must adhere to any additional measures/protocols (eg one-way systems, use of toilets/changing rooms) put in place by the competition organiser, venue operator.
- Shouting/screaming should be avoided where possible at all times.
- Routinely clean and disinfect hands before and after touching any objects/surfaces. For example, should you sit down at a chair, you must sanitise your hands before and after
- Any participant (fencer, coach, parent, spectator etc) that repeatedly breaches the COVID rules and guidelines will, at the discretion of the organisers in consultation with the Welfare Officer and the Covid Officer, be asked to leave the venue and reported to BF for possible disciplinary action.

After the Event

- Leave the venue as soon as is practically possible
- Social interaction before and after competing should be limited and only take place in line with informal/social legal gathering limits and other relevant restrictions.
- Inform the competition organisers if in the following 2 weeks you subsequently display any symptoms.

8.2 COMPETITORS

In addition to the advice for all participants, competitors should

Before the Event

- Check you have a valid British Fencing membership.
- Read and follow the guidance on clothing and equipment hygiene.
- Ensure that you have sufficient clean, working equipment for the event (no sharing permitted) - Fencing masks, gloves and weapons must be disinfected/sanitised.
- Prepare a small tool kit – you may not share allen keys, screwdrivers, weights, gauges etc,
- Check you are fit to fence – if you are not back to competitive sparring in club, we do not recommend that you attend a competition. Should you have any underlying health concerns you should consult a doctor before resuming any activity.
- Where possible arrive ready to compete. Changing rooms may not be available.
- Unless fencers have a related disability (which should be communicated in advance to the competition Welfare Officer) fencers must be independently able to participate in a fencing competition without requiring personal assistance. This includes putting on and taking off clothing and equipment, plugging and unplugging from spools, using hand sanitiser.
- Bring enough clean face towels to wipe off sweat from your face. Do not use your hands or wipe the sweat with the sleeve of your fencing jacket. Do not put your face towels on chairs, it should be placed in a bag or on your water bottle on the floor whilst you are fencing.
- It is the expectation of BF that fencers attending competitions are capable of performing the basics of competing without requiring assistance from parents and coaches. This will also help to minimise transmission of viruses. Fencers with disabilities/additional needs who require a carer presents during the competition should contact the Event welfare officer in advance of the event.

During the Event

- The customary handshake at the end of bouts is replaced with a salute.
- Sharing equipment with another participant is not allowed. Fencers are expected to bring their own spare equipment in the event of a failure.
- Screaming after the hit is scored is not permitted. Competitors that persist in screaming will be asked to leave the competition.
- Congratulatory hugging, kissing or handshakes are not permitted.
- Between matches and during rest periods, fencers must not breach social distancing and remain 2m+ from each other, referees, coaches etc.
- Personal kit must stay in fencing bags when not in use – do not hang items of clothing (towels, t-shirts, fencing equipment) on any benches or chairs.

After the Event

- All personal clothes and equipment must be removed from the venue and cleaned/sanitised on returning home (in accordance with published BF guidelines) and in particular before attending any other fencing session.
- Any participant testing positive within 2 weeks must inform the event organiser.
- Once eliminated competitors should leave the venue as soon as is practically possible in accordance with the departure procedures.

8.3 COACHES

In addition to the advice for all participants,

- Coaching is permitted at the discretion of the organisers, where space permits.
- There is to be no coaching during fencing and between hits. Coaching can be done during minute breaks and between bouts subject at all times to 2m distancing being observed.
- Organisers must ensure that the environment is inclusive – it may be more appropriate to decide that no fencers can receive piste side coaching to avoid a situation where a young fencer is on their own, unsupported, against another fencer who is receiving significant support.
- Coaches must wear a visor in addition to a face covering whilst providing piste-side coaching.
- Organisers must provide an allocated space by the piste for piste-side coaches, 2m away from all participants (referees, all fencers, spectators).
- Organisers must provide an allocated space for coaches to remain when not acting as piste-side coaches, 2m away from all participants (referees, all fencers, spectators). Coaches should remain in this space until fencer is called to the piste.
- Coaches must be on the BF Coaches Register
- Shouting is not permitted – support can be shown in other ways eg clapping.

8.4 SPECTATORS/PARENTS/GUARDIANS

In addition to the advice for all participants:

- Depending on restrictions and venue space it may not be possible to accommodate spectators (including parents and guardians).
- Where spectators are accommodated, they will be allocated an area 2m away from any other individual. It may not always be possible to have unrestricted viewing of all pistes.
- Spectators should remain at least 2m away from piste boundaries at all times.
- Shouting should be avoided – support can be shown in other ways eg clapping.

8.5 EVENT OFFICIALS

In addition to the advice for all participants, event officials:

- Must be members of BF and on any appropriate register for the role performed (eg welfare officer, referee)
- Are recommended to wear visors in addition to face coverings

Referees

- Must use hand-disinfectant before and after each bout.
- Should maximise use of FIE hand signals to reduce verbal signals
- Must wear a visor in addition to face coverings whilst refereeing including when performing a weapon test.
- Referees should be allocated equipment for the event (weights/gauges/clip charts/pens/tablets). This should not be swapped.

Doctor and medical staff

Must wear a visor and gloves in addition to face coverings during treatment of injuries (see specific section on Medical below).

9. FURTHER SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

These guidelines are accurate at the date of publication but are subject to change in line with government guidance. Keep checking www.britishfencing.com for the latest version and supporting tools and information.

10. 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 British Fencing 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. British Fencing 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.

11. APPENDIX A - PISTE LAYOUTS

- Distance between pistes and their position, as well as the position of the scoring tables and apparatus must always allow for social distancing of 2 metres between all participants.
- The Referee must be positioned so that they can maintain 2m social distancing at all times (other than when testing weapons).
- Participants in pool fencing should remain in socially distanced pre-allocated seating/standing areas, unless fencing or warming up. The distance between the seats must be a min of 2m. If seats are used these must be wiped down following the end of the pool.
- During the bouts, coaches must remain 2m away at all times and wear visors.
- In team competitions, the team area must be big enough to maintain a 2m distance between all participants unless fencing.
- In team competitions competitors must keep recommended 2m distance at all stages of the competition (presentation, support, celebration etc.) unless fencing.

During bouts:

- There must be a clear space of 2m (not including the run-off) around the full useable boundary. There must be a minimum of 2m between the edge of the piste and the next piste.
- Fencers must stay within the piste boundaries where at all possible.
- Event officials may temporarily enter the clear space during the activity provided there is no risk of breaching the 2m social distancing guidelines.
- Any piste-side coaching or refereeing must take place outside the clear area. This will require additional areas to be defined. Referees must observe 2m social distancing from other referees/coaches as well. Two possible set-ups are shown below – blue dots indicate positions that can be occupied by individual fencers when they are not fencing/coaches/supporters. These are not the only options, organisers will be expected to adapt the layouts depending on the venue.

