

FA update on The Return of Grassroots football – 29th March 2021

Step One of the Government's Roadmap out of lockdown

What you need to know about the return of outdoor grassroots football

As part of the next stage of the Government's roadmap out of national lockdown, outdoor sports facilities can open, and organised outdoor sport can take place. **This means that from Monday 29th March, organised outdoor football, following all FA and government protocols, can take place.** Organised outdoor disability football can currently take place, including under national lockdown.

The aim of this note is to share with you what we currently know about what the return to football at the end of March will look like to help your planning. This is based on our conversations with the Government to date and information published on Gov.uk. **Please note that our full guidance will be published as soon as we receive the DCMS guidance. We expect that this will be early in the week commencing Monday 22nd March. Please note that we will need to regularly update our FA guidance as we move through the different steps of the Government's roadmap.**

This note applies to all youth and adult grassroots football and futsal, including all formats of the game. Information for clubs with teams who compete in the men's National League System and the Women's Football Pyramid (Tiers 3 to 6) will be communicated separately. All government guidance on hygiene and social-distancing measures must be followed.

Tiers

The tiered system has now been removed and the Government's approach moving forward, will be a national approach.

Travel

The Government guidance on travel is that the 'stay at home' rule will end on Monday 29 March, but many restrictions will remain in place. As organised sport can resume, all participants may travel to games but should avoid travel at the busiest times and routes, as well as minimising any unnecessary journeys where possible. All participants must follow the Government's guidance on **safer travel**, which we expect will be updated shortly.

Changing rooms

Changing rooms cannot be used as part of step one in the roadmap out of lockdown and must remain shut. Changing facilities can only be used in emergency situations, or by disabled people who are taking part in organised sport and physical activity. We are working with the Government on what this will look like through each step of restrictions being lifted. We will update our guidance as soon as we have any further information. Toilets will be allowed to open, 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after training and/or matches.

Spectators

No spectators are allowed at grassroots football as part of step one of the Government's roadmap, unless for safeguarding purposes which should be limited to one parent or carer per child.

Indoor football

Indoor sport is not currently allowed. This is planned to return no earlier than Monday 17th May, as part of step three of the Government's roadmap. Currently, no indoor football or futsal can be played apart from disability football, which can take place indoors from the 29th March.

Safeguarding and First Aid

Before re-starting play, all clubs **must** carry out a risk assessment and record the procedures and checks put in place. It is essential that everyone is clear about the restrictions and works together to manage social distancing, strict hand hygiene and all other protocols in our detailed guidance. Clubs should also update their medical emergency action plan around player care and strictly follow the first-aid guidance document which will be updated and published on TheFA.com, alongside our guidance.