



# COVID-19 Guidance for **Athletics Coaches**

during Phase I of the Roadmap for Reopening Society





# Phase I

## Return to Restricted Training Always follow the Government Guidelines of Good Hand Hygiene – Respiratory Etiquette – Social Distancing

The guidelines in this document relate to Phase 1 of the Irish Government's Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business.

### This phase:

1. Permits sporting activity in open outdoor public sports amenities where social distancing can be maintained.
2. Permits people to engage in outdoor sporting and fitness activities, either individually or in very small groups (maximum 4 people), where social distancing can be maintained and where there is no contact.
3. Permits those individuals living within a 5 km radius of their club to attend.

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with international norms and medical experts, outlines the robust measures Athletics Ireland would like clubs to implement with coaches and athletes to maintain to help safeguard club members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The measures, which relate to Phase 1 of the Roadmap for Reopening Irish Society and Business, cover each step of the journey from home to the club gate and back home again.

These measures should be in place seven days a week and until further notice.

Our measures and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the gradual lifting of social restrictions.

### Before you Coach

- Develop and prepare a risk assessment and consult with your club how lessons can be delivered safely.
- Ensure that you get permission from the club to carry out your session.

You or your athlete(s) must stay at home if you or they:

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Have flu-like symptoms.
- Are in a high-risk health category. Such athletes should consult with their GP prior to training.
- Must travel a distance greater than 5km.
- Are over 70 years of age.

### Preparing for a Coaching Session

- Sessions should only take place outdoors during this phase of the reopening.
- Coaching should take place only where full physical distancing is possible.
- Pre book your session at the club online or via phone and advise who will be in attendance.
- Let your athlete know, preferably in writing, before the session how you expect them to act to help ensure a safe environment for themselves and others, and what precautions you have put in place. Advise parents in the case of younger athletes. Parents should be asked to reiterate the advice to their children pre-training.



### Prior to the session inform your athlete that:

- Only people core to your session can be in attendance.
- Athletes should arrive and leave as close as possible to when you need to be there.
- Only one parent/guardian should accompany younger athletes where possible.
- Athletes should arrive ready to train as changing room access will not be possible.
- Athletes and coaches should wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer when available, before and as soon as possible after the training session.
- Athletes should carry a bottle of hand sanitizer and antiseptic wipes at all times.

### During the Training Session

- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as cones.
- Don't let the athletes handle any coaching equipment if possible. The coach should pick up any equipment used eg cones.
- Be aware of what surfaces you or your athlete(s) touch and if you touch the equipment such as hurdles, cones, rakes etc. you must clean these before you leave. Coaches should have access to disposable disinfectant wipes at all times.
- Maintain physical distancing at all times including when giving feedback and while athletes are resting.
- When training finishes athletes must leave the club promptly.
- If coaches witness poor practice it should be addressed immediately in a polite fashion and ongoing disregard for protocols should be reported to the club as soon as possible.
- For endurance sessions:
  - Athletes running single file unless there is an empty space where they can leave 2m between them.
  - Athletes running with 2m between them and the next runner, including when overtaking. This might, for example, mean overtaking in lane 3 to pass an athlete running in lane one on a track.
- Athletes starting intervals in approximate order of ability with the fastest athlete starting first to minimise overtaking.



## Equipment

- Practice caution with all equipment and avoid letting the athletes touch unnecessarily.
- Clean all equipment with a disinfectant spray prior to and after use.
- Although there is no specific evidence that equipment can spread COVID-19, we know that contamination by respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive on hard surfaces for up to three days.
- Try to restrict equipment to a particular group.
- Clean all equipment with a disinfectant spray at the conclusion of your session.



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