SCOTTISH CURLING

Return to Curling

Guidelines to ensure members are ready to curl within current COVID-19 guidance.

Guidance for Level 0 and Beyond Level 0
Published 12 August 2021

The most up to date copy of this guidance can always be found here.

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Foreword

Season 2020-21 was one of the most challenging seasons our sport has faced. COVID-19 put a stop to almost all curling activity for the season, with many rinks unable to open due to Scottish Government restrictions.

The health and wellbeing of our members and the wider community continues to be at the forefront of our planning and decision making. This guidance has been developed with the support of **sport**scotland as we strive for a more successful Season 2021-22, recognising that our sport can play a role in the physical and mental health of people of all ages and abilities.

Input to this document has been received from many of our stakeholders and we are grateful for their support. Scottish Curling is committed to working in partnership with the Scottish Government, **sport**scotland, Scottish Ice Rink Association (SIRA), Ice Rink Managers Association (IRMA), all ice rink operators, other partners and our clubs and members. This guidance document has been approved by **sport**scotland.

The operators of each facility will be conducting detailed operational plans including risk assessments to ensure they continue operate safely.

Each curler should refer to this document along with Scottish Government and local rink guidance to inform their own return to curling. Individuals, clubs and facilities will be supported should they wish to put in place any additional measures beyond those detailed in this document.

Information on the Scottish Government's approach to managing COVID-19 is available here. Other sources of relevant information are in the table below.

Title	Published By	Access
Coronavirus (COVID-19): staying safe and protecting others	Scottish Government	Link
Latest coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government	NHS Scotland	Link
Coronavirus in Scotland	Scottish Government	Link
Coronavirus (COVID-19) information and resources	**sport**scotland	Link
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information	Scottish Ice Rinks Association (SIRA)	Link
COVID-19 Information and Updates	Scottish Curling	Link
Test and Protect	Scottish Government	Link
Return to Sport and Physical Activity Guidance	**sport**scotland	Link
Operational Guidance: Indoor Ice Rinks	**sport**scotland	Link
COVID Officer Information	**sport**scotland	Link

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Introduction

This document is intended to be clear, unambiguous and easy to follow guidance for Scottish Curling members and stakeholders. The Scottish Government is using a Strategic Framework to apply restrictions across local authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This document will be updated if and when new Scottish Government advice is issued, including for Level 1 and above. The latest revision can be found on our website here.

1. Summary of Guidance

This guidance is for all non-professional curling activity in Scotland, and should be applied depending on the current status of the local authority each ice rink is located in. Travel to or from some local authority areas may be limited, and Scottish Government guidance should be consulted prior to travel. The application of this guidance at each stage of the Strategic Framework is summarised in the table below.

Indoor Curling		
	Adult	**U18**
Beyond Level 0	No restrictions on number of sweepers. No physical distancing required. No maximum number of participants per sheet.	
Level 0	No restrictions on number of sweepers. No physical distancing required on field of play. Maximum of 20 participants per sheet.	

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2. Curler Responsibilities

We urge our members to follow the most up to date advice provided by the NHS and Scottish Government, including self-isolating and immediately booking a COVID-19 PCR test if showing any symptoms of the virus. Curlers are also encouraged to regularly take lateral flow device (LFD) tests even if they aren't showing any symptoms. The latest NHS Guidance can be found here. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

Scottish Government advice currently includes:

- regular hand washing
- appropriate cough and sneeze etiquette
- being acutely aware of the symptoms of the virus
- engaging with the Test and Protect system
- isolating if you have the virus, or have been told to by Test and Protect

Curlers from local authority areas in Levels 0 or above are encouraged to walk, cycle, wheel or use private cars limiting car sharing where possible to get to the ice rink. Curlers should follow appropriate Scottish Government guidance if using public transport to travel to the rink.

Curlers should arrive ready to play as changing facilities may be restricted, but space for changing of footwear and outerwear will be available.

As per the Scottish Government's Test and Protect system, curlers may be required to log their contact details with their club and/or the ice rink when attending a session to facilitate the tracing of individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19. Please refer to your local rink's guidance on how to log your details. This information will be used for this purpose only.

Players should remove all personal equipment, including brushes and delivery aids, from the building after each session and clean with disinfectant. If wearing gloves for warmth, these should only be worn for curling activity, not used before the start of each session and should be disinfected/washed after each session.

All curlers should refer to guidance which is specific to their local rink as this may vary due to individual facility provision and local authority restrictions.

All players, coaches, spectators and staff should follow the current Scottish Government guidance on the use of face coverings. This means that, when required, individuals must wear a face covering when circulating in the ice rink building. This is a mandatory requirement, unless an individual is exempt from wearing a face covering. Players may remove their face covering when on the ice, but coaches and non-participants should continue to wear theirs. Face coverings may also be removed when eating and drinking in café/bar areas.

When attending the curling facility, individuals should adhere to any physical distancing requirements or gathering limits set out by the Scottish Government, or by the facility they are attending.

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3. Ice Rink Responsibilities

Facilities will adopt measures to assist in following the Return to Curling Guidelines. Specific guidance for each facility will be available from the rink's COVID Officer, and curlers should consult this prior to attending the rink. Additional ice rink guidance from **sport**scotland can be seen here. The list below is not exhaustive but contains suggested measures that ice rinks should follow.

- Carry out risk assessments for all areas of the facility and implement control measures as required. The ice rink should share these with Club COVID Officers on request.
- Adopt measures that assist with following any Scottish Government guidelines on physical distancing which may include restricting the number of people able to access the facility, floor markings and planning the flow of people entering and leaving the building.
- Liaise with their local authority for any specific conditions that may apply, or for advice/support they may offer.
- Have a dedicated Rink COVID Officer for all enquiries from Club COVID Officers and to ensure that any curlers participating in non-club activity have a point of contact.
- Follow any procedures related to the Scottish Government's Test and Protect system such as the recording of individual's attendance. The latest guidance can be found here.
- Ensure policies, procedures and training material are updated for staff and volunteers, including first aid provision.
- Provide suitable equipment for their workforce (including appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as necessary) and conduct formal training for all workforce members on any new procedures and protocols.
- Review and update operating procedures to allow touch-free access where possible and ensure busy areas of the building are cleaned more regularly.
- Operate an online payment system or use contactless where possible.
- Provide hand sanitisers at key points and ensure hand-wash sinks have disposable hand towels.
- Disinfect any provided curling equipment, including brushes and stone handles, between each session.
- Publicly display information on cleaning and disinfecting procedures and remind customers of their responsibilities.
- Communicate with members regularly, with key updates such as opening dates and times, and any new procedures that players/visitors will be required to follow.

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4. Club Responsibilities

As sports return to activity it is a requirement from **sport**scotland that all sports have key contact people, called COVID Officers. All sports organisations and clubs are required to have a COVID Officer.

The purpose of the COVID Officer role is –

- To be the main point of contact for your organisation on all things related to Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Oversee public health and safety measures across the organisation
- Ensure documented risk assessments and all appropriate mitigations are put in place before any activity is undertaken.
- Ensure an accurate record of all attendees in line with Scottish Government Test & Protect

In Curling, participants require access to a shared rink, but rest assured the risk assessment and operational planning elements of this role are the **responsibility of the facility**. The role of the Club COVID Officer is **not to create these** but simply to ensure that their club members have the relevant information from their local rink. For example, in liaison with the rink, this could simply be reminding participants not to stand too close to one another, or to adhere to any directional signage. Each facility will be different, but broadly speaking, in partnership with the rink, this is what we envisage.

The split of responsibilities within a curling context is detailed below:

- **Scottish Curling COVID Officer** – Central point of contact at governing body for non-facility specific guidance on the sport. Our appointed COVID Officer is Maggie Wilson, but all members of the team have been working closely on the return to curling guidance and will be able to offer advice on their area (e.g. competitions, workforce, etc.)
- **Rink COVID Officer** - Key contact for club COVID Officers on COVID matters associated with local rink e.g. specific operational plans and risk assessments for that facility. They will also be the key point of contact for curlers who are not participating as part of a club. Any facility specific queries should be directed to the Rink COVID Officer.
- **Club COVID Officer** – to circulate key information and be the central point of contact for their club members. The COVID Officer should liaise with local rinks to ensure records are kept of all club members playing for Test & Protect. This really important role could be a new volunteer role or added to a current role within the club such as the club secretary. For clubs curling outdoors, the Club COVID officer should assume the additional role and responsibilities of Rink COVID Officer.
- **Individuals** – All curlers have a responsibility to act safely to avoid spreading the virus and should contact a COVID Officer if they have any queries or concerns.

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These roles have been put in place, to help everyone understand the adaptations made to make the return to curling as safe as possible. They are important roles, which have already been working successfully across a number of sports. A useful and straightforward eLearning module, has been created by **sport**scotland and can be found here.

Due to the nature of curling with many clubs curling out of one facility the Club COVID Officer would liaise closely with the facility to ensure the club is aware of and satisfied with risk assessments and mitigations the facility has in place.

COVID Officer Resources:

- **sport**scotland's summary of the COVID Officer Role
- Online COVID Officer Training

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3. Returning to Curling

3.1 Overview

This guidance is for all non-professional curling activity in Scotland, and should be applied depending on the current status of the local authority your ice rink is located in. Travel to or from local authority areas in Protection Levels may be limited, and Scottish Government guidance should be consulted prior to travel. The guidance for returning to curling is summarised in the table below.

Indoor Curling		
	Adult	**U18**
Beyond Level 0	No restrictions on number of sweepers. No physical distancing required. No maximum number of participants per sheet.	
Level 0	No restrictions on number of sweepers. No physical distancing required on field of play Maximum of 20 participants per sheet..	

Clubs and participants should be aware that facilities may require time to adjust to changes in restrictions and implement any required changes to operations. Facilities will continue to prioritise the safety of participants, staff and volunteers, and we ask curlers to be patient during these times.

3.2 General Guidance

This guidance should be applied to curling activity in all levels of the Scottish Government Strategic Framework and beyond Level 0.

- All players, coaches, spectators and staff should follow the Scottish Government guidance on the use of face coverings when in an ice rink. Individuals must wear a face covering when in the ice rink. This is a mandatory requirement, unless an individual is exempt from wearing a face covering. Players may remove their face covering when on the ice, but coaches and non-participants should continue to wear theirs.

- The customer flow or journey should be managed by rinks from entry to exit to avoid pinch points and aid physical distancing where required.

- Each rink should consider introducing staggered start times if appropriate to assist with customer flow.

- Scottish Government restrictions for the relevant stage in the Strategic Plan apply in all ice rink hospitality facilities, including any on household gatherings and restricted opening hours.

- Changing rooms and social areas may have altered usage – members are encouraged to arrive changed and ready to curl, as much as possible. Rinks to provide clear guidance on where curlers can change their footwear and leave any clothing.

- If curlers do not own their own brush, cue or delivery aid, one will need to be allocated to each curler per session and sanitised between uses.

- Beyond Level 0, Scottish Government guidance permits the shaking of hands. Curlers are encouraged to continue acknowledging good sportsmanship verbally and should be careful to consider the wishes of their teammates and opposition on this matter. In Level 0 and above, there should be no shaking of hands at beginning or end of games, with good sportsmanship acknowledged verbally.

The following guidelines for maximum number of participants per sheet should be followed. These numbers include any coaches or on ice assistants.

Maximum Sheet Capacity	
Beyond Level 0	No maximum.
Level 0	20

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3.3 Coaching

This guidance should be applied to coaching activity in all levels of the Scottish Government Strategic Framework and beyond Level 0.

- Coaching and junior club sessions may take place following the appropriate guidance, and within the relevant sheet capacity limits.
- Guidance and a useful checklist for coaches is available here in **sport**scotland's Getting Your Coaches Ready for Sport document.
- Coaches working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by Children 1st: Delivering Sport at a Distance.
- Coaches can contact the Scottish Curling Workforce Manager for support if required.
- Face coverings should be worn by coaches at all times.
- Coaches should perform the usual risk assessment prior to a coaching session including considering the needs of curlers with a disability or additional support needs.
- Coaches should use other curlers for demonstrations where possible and ensure participants use the same stones throughout the session or handles are cleaned between users.
- Coaches should use their own equipment during the session, for example, brush, video equipment and laptops when filming.
- Coaches should familiarise themselves with any changes to first aid procedures at the rink.
- Coaches should consider any impact that COVID may have on their coaching session.
- Coaches should complete an attendance register.

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3.4 Umpiring and Timing

These are general guidelines for competitions. If there are any specific instructions relating to competitions these will be communicated accordingly.

Umpires can perform their duties while being mindful of hygiene and any physical distancing that is required, and following these guidelines:

- Face coverings should be worn by umpires at all times.
- Clean measuring equipment and radios before and after use.
- LSD measures to be used by one umpire with the other recording results. (When players are observing a measure, face coverings must be worn).
- Teams to sign scoring sheets with their own pens.
- Sanitize hands before and after updating the score board.
- Umpires to supervise while curlers tape their own brushes for championship play.
- Alternative arrangements for change of line-up process to remove touch points e.g. electronic or drop off point.

Umpires will be given guidance on the enforcement of COVID related restrictions that are in place for the competition they are involved with.

Timers can perform their duties while being mindful of physical distancing and hygiene, and following these guidelines:

- Face coverings should be worn at all times.
- Clean all timing equipment before and after use, e.g. keyboard, mouse, laptop.
- Access to timing area by Chief Timer (CT)/Deputy Chief Timer (DCT) and timers for that session only.
- Use of timers' own notebook/pad and pen to make notes.
- Timing area to be sanitized before and after use.
- Where there is a need for a time correction, the timer must allow physical distancing space for CT/DCT to access the laptop - hands must be sanitised before and after performing the task.

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3.5 On Ice (Outdoors)

This guidance should be applied to curling activity in all levels of the Scottish Government Strategic Framework and beyond Level 0.

- Organisers should consider suitable arrangements to ensure any required physical distancing can take place off the ice including one-way systems and additional barriers.

- Scottish Government guidance indicates that face coverings do not require to be worn while outdoors. However, clubs may opt to adopt stricter guidance. Individuals are welcome to wear a face covering while curling should they choose to do so and should wear a face covering if required to do so when in any indoor areas including the club house.

- Any physical distancing guidance from the Scottish Government must be followed at all times.

- Participants in organised sport will form 'Field of Play Bubbles', meaning that they are exempt from the restrictions on the number of households allowed to gather. For outdoor sport, the maximum field of play bubble as defined by **sport**scotland is summarised below.

Maximum Field of Play Bubble Size	
Beyond Level 0	No limit
Level 0	500

- Beyond Level 0, Scottish Government guidance permits the shaking of hands. Curlers are encouraged to continue acknowledging good sportsmanship verbally and should be careful to consider the wishes of their teammates and opposition on this matter. In Level 0 and above, there should be no shaking of hands at beginning or end of games, with. good sportsmanship acknowledged verbally.

- If curlers do not own their own brush, broom, cue or delivery aid, one will need to be allocated to each curler per session and sanitised between uses.

- Local competitions can take place but organisers may require variations to the rules so as to remain within Return to Curling guidelines.

- Any outdoor curling equipment including measures and crampits should be sanitised before and after use.

- Each curler should only touch their own stones and these should be sanitised before and after each game.

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4. Resumption of Performance Sport

sportscotland issued guidance that allowed performance athletes to return to training prior to full return to sport for members of the public. Performance athletes are exempt from some local restrictions and may be exempt from some aspects of Scottish Curling guidance, with additional medical checks and restricted access to training facilities making this possible. The full **sport**scotland guidance on the return to performance sport can be found here.

5. Summary

All players, coaches, parents/guardians/carers, volunteers, staff and other facility users are responsible for following this guidance. By so doing we will collectively help to reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect health workers and save lives.

The ice rink staff are responsible for the operations of their facilities and facility users must follow the local instructions.

We will continue to review this guidance, as Scotland continues to move through the COVID-19 pandemic.

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6. Version Control

Status	Date	Author	Approved	Action
Draft for stakeholder review	28/05/2020	Scottish Curling Staff	CEO	Draft Guidelines prepared with input from ice rinks and Scottish Curling staff. Circulated for feedback and comment from Scottish ice rinks, IRMA (UK).
Internal review after rink feedback	2/06/2020	SC Staff	CEO	Amends made and agreed following feedback from ice rinks.
Version 1	11/06/2020	SC Staff	CEO	Includes feedback from **sport**scotland
Version 2	18/06/2020	SC Staff	CEO	Follows Scottish Government announcement on start of Phase 2. No change to detail for curling.
Version 3	14/07/2020	SC Staff	HoD	Changes to staggering of Phase 3, No date yet given for indoor sports facilities opening.
Version 4	31/07/2020	SC Staff	CEO	Changes to wording of face covering advice. Additional information given regarding return to performance training. Changes in potential opening and other dates.
Version 5	21/08/2020	SC Staff	CEO	Addition of COVID Officer and changes to face coverings and opening dates
Public version 5.1	31/08/2020	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Information on Field of Play Bubbles, and updates following feedback from **sport**scotland.
Version 6	10/09/2020	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Additional detail on "Field of Play Bubbles" Clarity regarding COVID Officer roles Added use of Buddy Poles for wheelchair curlers Additional guidance for Coaching Added guidance for Timers
Version 7	02/10/2020	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Clarifying rules on field of play bubbles
Version 8	30/10/20	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Updating guidance to reflect Scottish Government's Strategic Framework Protection Levels
Version 9	22/12/20	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Addition of guidance for outdoor curling
Version 10	07/01/2021	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Addition of enhanced protection level 4
Version10.1	06/05/2021	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Removal of enhanced level 4. Update to travel guidance.
Version 11	10/08/2021	SC Staff	CEO and **sport**scotland	Full review of guidance Limited guidance to only Beyond L0 and L0

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