



Preparing for Local League Resumption

To enable competitive league table tennis to resume safely at indoor venues, we have produced a set of recommendations that can support local league play to start again safely. It is important to note that these will be a set of recommendations for clubs and leagues to implement and will need to be adapted taking into account the varying situations in local areas; including venue availability, sizes of venues, player feedback and local lockdowns. It will not always be possible or the right decision for local leagues to commence from September. We have been offering one to one sessions for clubs or leagues with a Table Tennis England member of staff to discuss the implementation of these guidelines in your facility/facilities and this offer remains in place, please click on the following link to book a session.

[Ready to Return - Book a 1-2-1 session](#)

When considering the guidance below, please refer back to at all times the main Hygiene and Facility Guidance document for more detailed guidance in relation to hygiene, social distancing and facility requirements, which can be found [here](#). You can also find facility templates [here](#).

Following the implementation of the Governments tiered system, included below are the **official** implications of these for league table tennis.

Area of consideration	Tier 1 - Medium	Tier 2 - High	Tier 3 – Very high
Clubs	Clubs can continue to operate under for U18's or individuals' with a disability in bubbles of up to 15 players and over 18's or mixed groups in bubbles of up to 6 players	Clubs can continue to operate for U18's or individuals' with a disability in bubbles of up to 15 players and for adults when playing with someone from their own household or support bubble	Clubs can continue to operate for U18's or individuals' with a disability in bubbles of up to 15 players and for adults when playing with someone from their own household or support bubble
Leagues	Local leagues can continue to operate, as long as clubs abide by the rule of 6 and follow all guidelines set out by Table Tennis England and the Government Players from tier 2 or 3 areas should not take part in league matches in a tier 1 area	Local leagues should not take place in tier 2 areas at this time	Local leagues should not take place in tier 3 areas at this time
10pm closure time	Bars and restaurants, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse/leisure facility, can open in accordance with the latest government guidance. The hospitality areas selling	Bars and restaurants, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse/leisure facility, can open in accordance with the latest government guidance. The	Bars and restaurants, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse/leisure facility, can open in accordance with the latest government guidance. The hospitality

	<p>food and drink (such as cafes and bars) must close between 10pm and 5am.</p> <p>The wider sports facility is not subject to the 10pm-5am closure restrictions.</p>	<p>hospitality areas selling food and drink (such as cafes and bars) must close between 10pm and 5am.</p> <p>The wider sports facility is not subject to the 10pm-5am closure restrictions.</p>	<p>areas selling food and drink (such as cafes and bars) must close between 10pm and 5am.</p> <p>The wider sports facility is not subject to the 10pm-5am closure restrictions.</p>
<p>Local competitions and 1*s</p>	<p>Local competitions and 1*s can continue in tier 1 areas.</p> <p>Local competitions and 1*s should not accept entries from players in tier 2 or 3 areas</p>	<p>No local competitions or 1*s should take place in a tier 2 area.</p> <p>Players from tier 2 areas should not enter a competition in a tier 1 area</p>	<p>No local competitions or 1*s should take place in a tier 3 area.</p> <p>Players from tier 3 areas should not enter a competition in a tier 1 area</p>

Prior to league commencing

- Speak/survey your clubs about whether they are able to return to playing at their venue
- Speak to your members and/or conduct a survey to determine how your players feel about returning to league play
- Put in place a Covid-19 reporting mechanism to allow for players or clubs to report breaches of Government, Table Tennis England or league guidelines. We have made a template available to support clubs, which can be found towards the bottom of this document.
- Decide on the approach leagues will take for clubs to agree to operate within the Ready to Return guidelines.
- Taking into account the areas mentioned above, decide on the safest approach to returning to competitive local league play, including the format that will best suit your players and facilities.
- Leagues should appoint a ‘hygiene/covid-19’ officer to help monitor the playing environments to ensure guidelines clubs/leagues have set out are being adhered to. You can find a template role description [here](#).
- Consider how the guidance that **no** doubles play is recommended affects your league matches, our insurers have indicated that breach of this particular guidance would leave a club potentially exposed to an uninsured claim being made against them
- Individuals must avoid attending amateur and semi-professional sporting events as spectators.
- Bars and restaurants, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse/leisure facility, can open in accordance with the latest government guidance. The hospitality areas selling food and drink (such as cafes and bars) must close between 10pm and 5am. The wider sports facility is not subject to the 10pm-5am closure restrictions.

Space and playing space minimum levels



- To accommodate up to four players (2v2 format), you must have a space that is a minimum of 40.5 sqm. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be 9m X 4.5m, for one table rooms the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 40.5sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.
- To accommodate up to six players, you must have a space that is a minimum of 55 sqm (this 'space' includes the playing area and any surrounding areas around the playing area where people may sit), for example 10m X 5.5m or 9m X 6.5m. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be at least 9m X 4.5m, as long as the whole space for the match meets the 55 sqm guidance. For one table venues the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 55 sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.

League format considerations

The plan to move forward into Stage 4 of the ready to return road map from the 1st September continues, however leagues will need to strongly consider how they will do this and whether venues can safely socially distance all participants. In the table below we have laid out the advantages and disadvantages of 2v2 and 3v3 play and as you can see from below, we strongly recommend any leagues returning, that a 2v2 team format is the easiest and safest format to manage at this current time.

Adopting a 2v2 format allows for greater flexibility for venues, clubs and players to return confidently and safely, whereas a 3v3 format creates additional challenges in finding ways in which players can safely socially distance but could be facilitated with the appropriate venues and planning in place.

Regardless of the format a league decides to adopt, all players must maintain a 2m distance apart, including when not playing and this should be taking into account when mapping out where players will sit when not playing. If courts are less than 10m x 5.5m, non-playing team members should sit outside the playing area to maintain social distancing

A 3v3 format can take place on 1 table, as long as 2m social distancing is maintained by those who are not playing, and that they stay in their bubble of 6.

It will also be important for leagues to maintain a positive experience for all participants, avoiding placing players sitting in small corridors or in unsafe areas to try and maintain social distancing. As mentioned at the beginning of the document, Table Tennis England staff are available to speak to clubs and leagues to help navigate through the ready to return guidance and give you advice on any current plans.

<p>Easily manageable and strongly recommended:</p> <p>2 v 2 format, with no doubles</p>	<p>Possible but with additional challenges and restrictions in place:</p> <p>3 v 3 format, with no doubles</p>
<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of space required • Reduce the number of people that are required to fit into your space 	<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier transition using a similar format (for majority of leagues) as usual • Players get one more match per evening

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of venues will be able to facilitate four people, whilst meeting social distancing guidelines • Limiting the length of time players are in the hall and mixing with other players for – reducing risk <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players get one match less than in a 3v3 format • Potential reduction in income/costs more per person, might be counteracted by requiring less time in the hall 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some venues/clubs may not be able to safely socially distance participants and may need to pull out or find a new venue • Players are mixing for a long period of time (2.5-4 hours) • Increasing the number of players in a hall, making social distancing more challenging • Increase the amount of space required for matches
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Getting your league started

- Ensure players and clubs have agreed to operate within the Government, Table Tennis England and league Covid-19 guidance and the disciplinary procedures in place if breaches are made.
- Ensure all clubs have completed the necessary Covid-19 facility risk assessment, a template of which can be found [here](#)
- Umpires - We have conducted viewing of the length of time players come into close proximity of an umpire and this has proven to be an insignificant length of time and therefore umpires are able to operate within the below guidelines:
 - Umpires must be positioned 1.5m away from the table
 - Umpire to be one of the players to maintain a bubble of six
 - To remove the use of any scoreboards, the cleaning down of which would become extremely challenging
 - Ant-bacterial wipes and gel to be available on the umpires table
 - Pen used for scoring to be wiped down after use
- No spectators should be permitted to reduce number of people present and to maintain bubbles of six
- Face masks to be worn when not playing and by anyone else that enters the facility that is not playing, i.e. parent/carer. There is no guidance from Government about wearing face coverings in between exercise but Government guidance states that face masks do not have to be worn when to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others - including if it would negatively impact on your ability to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity. Players would be expected to wear a face covering if they believe after exercising that wearing a face covering would not unduly affect their recovery and not put you at risk of harm or injury.
- Individuals' to bring their own refreshments (unless operating a café area, under the Government guidance for serving food and drink)
- Players/teams to refer to Government guidelines with regards to using public transport or car sharing, you can find more information [here](#).



- Clean/wipe down balls after each match, a two-ball rotation could be implemented to keep matches flowing to allow one ball to be cleaned, whilst a new ball is used to start the next match.
- Have a designated player that is responsible for any adjustments to the table/net playing space, avoid the number of people touching items such as the net.
- Any areas that a player may come into contact with during a match should be wiped down before the next players enter the court, such as barriers, sides/ends of the tables
- No handshaking/slapping hands between players or players and umpire. The league may want to consider an alternative protocol to avoid confusion between players.

League templates:

Club confirmation of adherence to COVID Guidelines template:

Leagues are encouraged to seek confirmation of adherence to COVID guidelines from Clubs and Teams entering their competition.

The example statement below could be used to ensure that Clubs and Teams take responsibility for their venues, and operate in line with Government and Table Tennis England guidelines.

This could be added to entry forms or sent as a stand-alone message to Team Captains.

Leagues may also wish to request Risk Assessments from Clubs entering the League. A template risk assessment can be found here;

[Templates for clubs & coaches](#)

Example statement

Example Table Tennis League are looking forward to a return to League play for the 2020-21 season. It is important that we all take responsibility for ensuring that League play takes place in a way that is safe for organisers and players, and so ask Clubs and Teams to agree to the following statement relating to COVID-19;

(Enter Club Name) agree that matches played at our venue will be conducted in line with Table Tennis England and Government Guidelines relating to COVID-19. This includes, but may not be limited to;

- *Ensuring adequate court sizes for matches to take place*
- *Ensuring sufficient social distancing and hygiene measures are in place*
- *Ensuring a registration process at the venue for NHS Track and Trace*
- *Allocating an individual or COVID-19 Officer to ensure that COVID-19 guidelines are adhered to*
- *Completing a COVID-19 risk assessment*
- *Ensuring that players representing the Club/Team agree to and adhere to the League's Code of Conduct*

Information and guidance on all of the above can be found in the Ready to Return section of the Table Tennis England website; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/our-sport/major-events/ready-to-return/>



Club / Team Name:

Signed by:

Date:

Managing Breaches of COVID-19 Guidelines

Adhering to Table Tennis England and Government guidelines is essential for the safety of players and members. Due to the importance of the guidelines, Leagues are encouraged to think about how breaches of COVID-19 Guidelines will be managed.

Leagues could consider;

- Whether COVID-19 guidelines for players should be added to the codes of conduct for the season
- Whether existing disciplinary processes for breaches of codes of conduct are adequate for dealing with reports relating to COVID-19, or whether these need to be revised.

Codes of Conduct

A template Code of Conduct has been developed for Clubs specifically relating to COVID-19 in the Ready to Return section of the Table Tennis England website. This includes key responsibilities for members, and outlines the responsibilities of the committee regarding COVID-19. This template can also be used for Leagues.

[Templates for clubs & coaches](#)

Disciplinary Process

If a League does not have an existing Disciplinary process, please refer to the sample process provided by Table Tennis England. This can be adapted for the needs of your League.

[Guidelines for complaints procedure for clubs](#)