



British Weight Lifting COVID-19 Guide for Clubs: considerations to make before returning to training (V3)

Updated 13 April 2021

This document includes:

- 1) **Priority Actions**
- 2) **Facility Guidance**
- 3) **Health, Safety and Hygiene**
- 4) **Training Guidance**

Introduction

Following the full closure of the sector due to COVID-19, the role of this document is to provide guidance and best practice for British Weight Lifting Clubs to allow them to get back to training, while ensuring the safety and well-being of anyone that enters your facility is considered. This document sets out the framework for opening clubs during an ongoing period of "social distancing". It also provides the basis for clubs to develop their own required risk mitigation guidance for members, staff and visitors now the Government has advised that facilities, or parts of facilities, can open.

The framework has been developed by British Weight Lifting by gaining advice and best practice from the Government, UK Sport, Sport England, UK Active and the wider sport and fitness sector, who are at different stages of managing COVID-19. The gym and fitness industry play a vital role in ensuring the ongoing health and wellbeing of the nation following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. We believe this role has never been more important than at this current time in helping society regain its health. However, we must ensure that minimum standards are set to prevent the spread of COVID-19 any further. A club can make their own decisions and can go above the standards set within this document, **but not lower**. This guidance is to assist a club with the various considerations and put in place appropriate risk mitigation strategies before opening your club.

It is of paramount importance that individuals including coaches and athletes monitor themselves for any signs of the virus, as well as their general health.

This guidance has been published on the understanding that it is an interpretation of Government guidance relevant to the sport of weightlifting. Guidance is changing very quickly with regard to returning to elite training, recreational training and the sport and fitness sector. We will continue to publish regular updates through the British Weight Lifting website and social media channels, to keep you up to date.

All parties should note the disclaimer at the end of this document.

1. Priority actions

When your venue is permitted to open, you should follow all the steps set out in this document in order for your workplace to be COVID-secure. The following key steps are a summary of the priority actions you need to take to protect yourself, your staff and your customers.

- Complete a COVID-19 risk assessment, including consideration of the reasonable adjustments needed for staff and customers with disabilities. Share it with all your staff.
- Clean more often. Increase how often you clean surfaces, especially those that are being touched a lot. Ask your staff and your customers to use hand sanitiser and wash their hands frequently.
- Make sure everyone is social distancing. Make it easy for everyone to do so by putting up signs or introducing a one-way system that your customers can follow.
- Provide adequate ventilation where people are in enclosed spaces. This can be natural ventilation (opening windows, doors and vents), mechanical ventilation (fans and ducts), or a combination of both.
- The maximum occupancy of each indoor facility should be limited by providing a minimum of 100 square foot per person which is equivalent to one person per 9.3 square metres or approx. one person per 3.05m².
- You must take part in NHS Test and Trace by keeping a record of all your customers, visitors and staff for 21 days. This is a legal requirement. Some exemptions apply.
- Turn people with coronavirus symptoms away. If a staff member (or someone in their household) or a customer has a persistent cough, a high temperature or has lost their sense of taste or smell, they should self-isolate and get a test.
- Engage with returning visiting instructors and volunteers. Ensure they are aware of the rules on sport and physical activity, and any specific safety measures you have put in place in your facility. Work with instructors to understand the number of facilities they visit and minimise contacts. Consult volunteers to understand their responsibilities and provide relevant training material to help them return to a facility or sport.
- ******Minimise risk in changing rooms and showers. Ensure they are cleaned frequently, and that social distancing can be maintained. Discourage the use of changing rooms wherever possible, including by informing customers that these are areas of increased risk, they should arrive ready to participate and shower at home, and they should minimise time spent inside.
- Ensure customers can use your facility safely. Inform them of the rules on group sizes (during, as well as before and after, the activity) and how they can take part in sport. Minimise sharing of equipment. If equipment is shared, ensure it is cleaned between users.

2. Facility Guidance

From 12 April, indoor sport facilities can open to the public. This applies to most indoor sport and physical activity facilities, including gyms and leisure centres, sport courts and pitches, dance studios and fitness studios.

Before opening:

- Opening your club is at the discretion and consent of the facility owner, provider or contractor.
- The Club Committee (Head Coach, Welfare Officer and Secretary) has completed all relevant plans, procedures and risk assessment – updated for Covid-19, in line with Government advice. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

- All risk assessments are up-to-date and have Covid-19 considerations added and mitigated.
 - Not performing an RA or putting the said strategies into action is a breach of health and safety law and can result in serious fines or even imprisonment.
- You have clarified with your insurance company around the re-opening of your club.
- Deep cleans have taken place throughout the facility and of all its equipment.
- All coaches, volunteers and members have been fully briefed
- Appropriate Public Health England (PHE) or equivalent posters should be on display, throughout the facility, informing customers and staff of social distancing, hand-washing and any other cleanliness/hygiene protocols.
- Sanitiser stations and hand wipes should be in place around the facility, especially in high contact areas for staff and members to access easily.
- The maximum occupancy of each indoor facility should be limited by providing a minimum of 100sqft per person which is equivalent to one person per 9.3 square metres or approx. one person per 3.05m².
- Consider implementing additional capacity limits for smaller enclosed spaces. Within the maximum capacity for your venue, some areas such as studios and weights rooms may need additional limits to ensure that there is adequate ventilation and space for social distancing.
- Gym equipment and machinery should be appropriately spaced so that people can comply with social distancing guidelines, and with a suitable margin for adequate circulation or one-way routes.
- Consider moving equipment, using screens to separate equipment, or taking equipment out of use if it cannot be used safely. It may be helpful to use tape around pieces of gym equipment to demonstrate appropriate social distance.
- Designated socially distanced areas should be marked out throughout the premises using floor markings ensuring at **least 2m can always be maintained** between individuals. Where feasible it is recommended to introduce a one-way system for entry and exit to facilities and movement around equipment and platforms.
- An appropriate booking system should be implemented to reserve time slots in advance, in order to ensure no more than the maximum number of individuals are in the facility during any time period.
- Consider taking online or card payments only to minimise cash handling.
- A time buffer should be built in between sessions to enable social distancing and adequate cleaning, aligned with Government guidelines.
- If possible, separate entrance/exit systems should be implemented in order to maintain 2m social distancing. An external queuing system should also be implemented in order to control numbers into the facility at any one time.
- Communicate with your members clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.
- Consider additional steps to be implemented for any clientele aged over 70 or with underlying health conditions or if individuals have recovered from the virus.
- All individuals on each occasion when they visit the club should sign a self-declaration form, stating they are healthy and fit and declare any underlying/previous illnesses.
- Spectating should be actively discouraged and is not permitted. Where attendance of a parent/guardian (non-participant) or a carer for a disabled athlete is required, it should be limited to one per athlete where possible, with social distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions (consider marking out specific boxes/areas for this purpose).

3. Health, Safety and Hygiene

- It is important to state from the outset that social distancing and thorough, frequent hand washing remains the best health protection and defence against cross contamination.
- Rigorous cleaning procedures should be designed and implemented upon opening.
- Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) regularly, wearing disposable gloves and face coverings.
- Cleaning of all contact gym equipment after each session should be implemented including high risk contamination equipment such as Barbell, Weight Discs and Collars. Gloves should be worn whilst disinfecting equipment in order to minimise contact between skin and cleaning chemicals.
- The use of chalk bins is not advised due to the risk of contamination.
- Gloves are not mandatory but the requirement to regularly wash your hands should be encouraged.
- Extra care/signposting will be provided to maintain social distancing when in changing rooms or toilets. Appropriate cleaning materials should be available for customers to use for touch points after each use.
- Clubs should commit to the wellbeing of their staff and customers, and if they show/have any signs of COVID-19 (temperature, new persistent cough, loss of smell and difficulty breathing), they will be sent home to follow Government regulations.
- If there is a COVID-19 case in the facility, the operator should follow the PHE Guidance: COVID-19: Cleaning in non-healthcare settings while cleaning all areas of the facility. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- If anyone is sent home if they are unwell and showing any symptoms, the individual should follow Government advice. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>
- Although there may be heightened concerns around first aid, this should continue in line with the facility's risk assessment, with the below aspects to be used when needed:
 - Gloves
 - Resus masks for emergency first aid to be provided to all first aiders
 - Face masks for general first aid.
- The Resuscitation Council UK has provided specific guidance on CPR delivery. <https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>
- You should follow the government guidance on appropriate PPE usage. The following documents should be consulted:
-Recommended PPE usage: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Face coverings for sport facilities

People are not required to wear face coverings while taking part in sport and physical activity. All forms of face coverings may restrict breathing efficiency and should not be used during exercise except on specific advice from a physician.

Visitors are not required to wear face coverings in sport facilities, however they should be encouraged to wear face coverings in enclosed public areas when not engaging in sport or physical activity.

Staff are not required to wear face coverings in sport facilities, however you should encourage them to be worn to protect staff and customers. You should support your workers if they choose to wear face coverings.

However, face coverings may be required in specific areas. If your facility contains

retail or hospitality areas (such as a shop, cafe or bar), face coverings must be worn by staff and visitors in public-facing roles. If this applies to your facility, you are required to remind customers to wear face coverings where they are required (for example, displaying notices outside and inside a cafe area).

Changing rooms and showers

- Changing rooms are an area of increased transmission risk, so you should take steps to ensure they can be used safely. 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 changing rooms and showers can be used, you should take all necessary precautions to ensure appropriate social distancing can be maintained. This includes assessing the maximum number of people that can be permitted, making any necessary operational changes (see below for steps you can take), and communicating this clearly to customers.
- Changing rooms and shower facilities should not be closed unnecessarily, but you should encourage participants to avoid or minimise use where possible (for example, by arriving in kit and showering at home) and to minimise the time they spend in the changing area.
- If you are considering closing changing rooms or shower facilities where they are not necessary, remember that access must be maintained for some safety and safeguarding reasons (for example, supporting customers with disabilities or allowing children to change clothes).

What you should do:

- If you are reopening after a facility shutdown, check changing rooms and showers are safe to use. You should ensure that all water systems, including showers and sinks, are safe after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimise the risk of legionella and other diseases associated with water. You can find more information in HSE's guidance on the risk of legionella.
- Review cleaning schedules and ensure changing rooms and showers are cleaned frequently, throughout during the day and at the end of the day.
- Encourage people to avoid or minimise time spent in changing facilities, for example by asking customers and staff to change and shower at home rather than in changing rooms where possible. However, changing rooms should not be closed unnecessarily as access will be needed, particularly after swimming or outdoor sport in wet weather.
- Communicate clearly to customers how they can use the facilities safely. Ensure that customers are aware of the additional risks in these areas, and the need to maintain social distancing at all times. Make clear to customers that they must not mix with people outside their household or support/childcare bubble when using showers and changing rooms.

4. Training Guidance

Adults & Children

- **Adults:** Indoor sport and physical activity can only take place for individuals or single households. This means that group sessions and exercise classes, and indoor sports/activities that require more than one person, cannot take place unless with

someone from within your household/support bubble. However, classes are permitted outdoors as part of organised sport and are exempt from gathering limits. These activities must be organised by a qualified instructor / coach, club, charity or national governing body.

- **Children:** Children will be able to attend organised indoor children's activity. Organised indoor children's sport and physical activity must be formally organised by a qualified instructor / coach, club, national governing body, company or charity and follow sport-specific guidance where appropriate. Children's indoor sport and physical activity sessions must be done in groups of 15, in line with guidance from the Department for Education and out of school setting guidance. Organised classes are permitted outdoors as part of organised sport and are exempt from gathering limits. These activities must be organised by a qualified instructor, club, charity, or national governing body.

Training Area

- Activities in the training environment which require close personal contact must be avoided.
- As stated above designated socially distance training areas should be marked out ensuring at **least 2m can always be maintained** between individuals.
- Consider implementing coaching areas which allows coaches to instruct while maintaining social distancing rules.
- Lifters should avoid sharing a bar or weights and this equipment should be thoroughly cleaned after each use or between different users working with them.
- Prior to a session starting, all equipment should be thoroughly cleaned before use using appropriate cleaning materials.
- At the completion of each session all used equipment will be thoroughly cleaned using appropriate cleaning materials. Having a gap between sessions will allow this cleaning to take place.
- All platforms should be disinfected and allowed time to dry between sessions.

Coaching Guidance

- Personal training sessions can take place indoors on a one-to-one basis or for one household only. Coaches can have multiple sessions throughout the day but these should be spaced out.
- Clubs should encourage coaches to check all guidance that has been published, especially concerning social distancing and hygiene and any athlete specific guidance.
- Be aware guidance can change quickly and more restrictive rules may be applied in the future, so please refer to Government guidance documents and the British Weight Lifting website regularly.
- A return to training screening questionnaire should be completed by all coaches in order for them to be cleared as suitable to return. At every visit to the facility, coaches should sign a self-declaration stating they are fit and healthy with no symptoms of the virus.
- The approach to coaching should be socially distanced communication, delivering cues, verbal corrections, and encouragement. There should be no physical contact and breaking of the 2m social distancing perimeter unless it is an emergency.
- Face coverings and gloves are not mandatory for coaches to wear during a session. However, any shouting from coaches will generate droplet spread over a much larger area than normal interaction so the wearing of face coverings should be encouraged in these circumstances in order to minimise this spread.
- Communicate with your athletes clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow.

- Spotting is to be discouraged, due to its violation of the 2m social distancing rules.
- Loading the bar for athletes should be carried out carefully controlled with 2m social distancing observed and appropriate cleaning protocols implemented.

Athlete Guidance

- A pre-screening questionnaire should be completed by all athletes in order to be cleared as suitable to return. At every visit to the facility, athletes should sign a self-declaration stating they are fit and healthy with no symptoms of the virus.
- Aligned with the English Institute of Sport the attitude of all involved in return to training should be, '**Get in, train and get out**' – athletes should be prepared for training prior to arrival at venue (minimise use and avoid gathering in changing rooms/bathrooms etc).
- It is down to the individual to take reasonable personal responsibility when taking part in physical activity.
- Towels/'sweat towels' should not be taken into the training area.
- Athletes should minimise and use only their own equipment including shoes, belt, wrist straps etc.
- Athletes should bring their own chalk to the gym in a clear plastic bag with their name on it and this must not be shared with anyone else.
- If using public transport, athletes should bring clean training clothing to get changed into before beginning their session and then change into clean travel clothing afterwards as this will help minimise the risk of contamination from their journey to the club and from the club back to their home environment. This is assuming that appropriate changing room facilities are available.
- If travelling by car, walking or cycling athletes should arrive ready to train and change into fresh clothes before leaving.

NHS Track and Trace QR Code

- It is a legal requirement in England to show the QR code at the entrance to a facility, from Thursday 24th September, and encouraged in Wales (in England linked to Test and Trace, in Wales to Test, Trace and Protect)
- The QR code is available to create and download here and needs to be shown at the front/reception of your facilities. Please follow this link: <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>
- If there are any cases in your facility, you will still be contacted by the authorities in the same way you are currently.
- If you/a user has been in close contact with someone who has been confirmed as having COVID-19 – you/they will receive an alert saying 'You have been to a venue where you might have been in contact with someone who has been confirmed positive of COVID-19', the alert will also link to potential next steps.

For anymore information please check out this UK Active document:
<https://www.ukactive.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/QR-Code.pdf>

Funding streams

In 2020 Sport England launched a new £16.5 million fund to give additional help to the sport and physical activity sector during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Return to Play Fund will support groups, clubs and organisations who've been impacted by restrictions brought in to tackle the disease, and is part of their overall response to the crisis that now includes more than £220m of government and National Lottery funding.

The deadline for the smaller Return to Play community sport fund has recently been extended until June 2021

For more information please follow this link:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/return-play-small-grants>

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 Government or legal advice. Individual circumstances will differ. The information contained in this guidance is given in good faith but any liability of British Weight Lifting 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 Weight Lifting 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. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

APPENDIX

BWL has put together the following information to support your club

Appendix 1 – Useful links

- [Guidance for people who work in grassroots sport and sport facilities.](#)
- [Guidance on the Phased return of Elite Sport](#)
- [Guidance for providers of grass roots sport and leisure facilities](#)
- [Guidance on CPR delivery.](#)
- [Guidance for appropriate PPE](#)
- [Guidance for Coaches by CIMSPA](#)
- [Sport England FAQ](#)

Appendix 2 – Advice if you think you have symptoms of COVID-19

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) **do not attend training.** You should contact your Club's COVID-19 officer, stay at home (self-isolate) and get a test.

If you develop symptoms whilst you are training you must go home immediately and contact your Club's COVID-19 officer

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

- *a high temperature* – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature) or your temperature 37.8°C or greater.
- *a new, continuous cough* – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- *a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste* – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

When you attend training, you will be asked if you have any symptoms of COVID-19 and may have your temperature taken.

What should I do if have symptoms?

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

- a. **Stay at home (self-isolate)** – do not leave your home or have visitors. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also self-isolate. See link [here](#) for more information. If you are training or away from home, you must return home immediately.
- b. **Get a test** – get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, should also get a test if they have symptoms.

How do I get a test?

Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can ask for a free test to check if they have the virus. This is called an antigen test. You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms.

You can ask for a test:

- for yourself, if you have coronavirus symptoms now (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- for someone you live with, if they have coronavirus symptoms

This service is for people in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Further details on COVID-19 testing and how to book a test can be found [here](#)

Where can I get further information?

If you have any worries about your symptoms or are not sure what to do then you can dial 111 or use the online COVID-19 advice service [here](#)

Appendix 3 - Return to Training Pre-Screening questionnaire

Member Name

Date

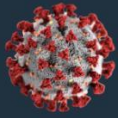
<p>Have you had confirmed COVID-19 infection or any symptoms (listed below) in keeping with COVID-19 since January 2020?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fever - New, persistent, dry cough - Shortness of breath - Loss of taste or smell - Diarrhoea or vomiting - Muscle aches not related to sport/training 	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p><i>If 'Yes', please provide details:</i></p>
<p>Have you had a known exposure to anyone with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 since January 2020? (e.g. close contact, household member)</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p><i>If 'Yes', please provide details:</i></p>
<p>Do you live with or will you knowingly come into close contact someone who is currently 'shielding' or otherwise medically vulnerable if you return to the training environment?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p><i>If 'Yes', please provide details:</i></p>
<p>Do you have any health related concerns (physical or mental) with regards to returning to the training environment?</p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p><i>If 'Yes', please provide details:</i></p>
<p>Do you currently have any of the main symptoms of Covid-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a high temperature</i> – this means your temperature 37.8°C or greater. • <i>a new, continuous cough</i> – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual) • <i>a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste</i> – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal 	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p><i>If 'Yes', please provide details:</i></p>

Additional comments:

Signed:

Date

Appendix 4 – BWL ‘Lift Safe’ Covid-19 Infographic



LIFT SAFE COVID-19



BRITISH WEIGHT LIFTING

GET IN



Before arrival
You must complete a pre-screening questionnaire

Symptoms of Covid-19
If you have a high temperature, a new continuous cough or a change or loss of smell / taste you must stay at home, call 111 and follow NHS / PHE advice



Travel
Please travel to training by foot or your own vehicle

Stay in your bubble
Avoid Public transport and maintain 2m social distancing any time you are outside your home environment



On arrival
You will be asked to take your own temperature

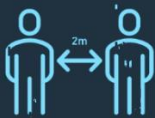
High Temperature
If your temperature is 37.8°C or above you must go home immediately, call 111 and follow NHS / PHE advice

TRAIN



Wash Your Hands
regularly with soap or using an alcohol gel

Clean & Disinfect
Wipe down bars, plates and equipment thoroughly before and after training using disposable wipes



Practice Social Distancing
and minimise the need to share equipment

Train Smart
Face away from others where possible and train at an intensity which reduces the need for others to intervene for your safety (e.g. spotting)

GET OUT



Go Straight Home
Wash your hands and go home exactly as you arrived

Protect your bubble
Once you are home keep your bubble small, you have a responsibility to practice effective social distancing to protect your family and team mates