



## COVID-19 Return to Cricket Guidelines

### CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

#### **Background**

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported on 12 January 2020 a cluster of severe acute respiratory syndrome in Wuhan, China, following a novel coronavirus outbreak in December 2019. From January to early February 2020, the majority of the cases were isolated in China, but the subsequent global spread led to the WHO declaring a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

According to John Hopkins University & Medicine, as of mid-June 2020, there have been more than 9M cases and 495,000 deaths. Within the USA there have now been close to 2,452,000 cases and over 124,800 deaths.

The novel coronavirus is formally named SARS-CoV-2, once an individual is clinically diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 this is referred to as COVID-19. COVID-19 is an infectious disease that mainly affects the upper respiratory tract.

#### **Symptoms**

Reported COVID-19 cases present with a range of symptoms from mild to severe and in extreme cases leading to death. On average, it takes 5–6 days from when someone is infected with the virus for symptoms to show, however it can take up to 14 days.

The latest list of COVID-19 symptoms as advised by WHO are:

#### **Most Common Symptoms**

- fever.
- dry cough.
- tiredness.

#### **Less Common Symptoms**

- aches and pains.
- sore throat.
- diarrhea.
- conjunctivitis.
- headache.
- loss of taste or smell.
- a rash on skin, or,
- discoloration of fingers or toes.

#### **Serious Symptoms**

- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- chest pain or pressure.
- loss of speech or movement.

Note: Children have similar symptoms to adults and typically have milder illness and symptoms. Sourced: World Health Organization.

#### **Prevention: General Guidelines**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization offers recommendations on best practices for the general public and how to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Among other things, these recommendations currently include:

- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water thoroughly for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol sanitizer with 60% plus alcohol content as advised by the CDC.
- Carry hand sanitizer with you when leaving the house.
- Avoid touching or making contact with others when out in public. No handshaking, fist pumps, hugs etc.



- Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth when in public settings.
- Avoid putting hands in your mouth, eyes or nose.
- Cover your sneezes (sneeze into crease of elbow) and coughs or use a tissue.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and exercise equipment, light switches, doorknobs, water fountains, door handles, mobile phone, car keys, computer keyboards, etc.
- Stay home if you are sick or have any symptoms.

Note: The full set of general CDC guidelines can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html> and the full set of WHO guidelines can be found at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

### **Cricket Specific Risks**

Cricket is a non-contact team sport and so the risks and exposure to COVID-19 are different from full contact team sports. However, there are several risks specific to the sport of cricket which must be considered alongside general physical exercise guidance issued by national governments and sporting bodies. In particular:

1. Cricket requires players to be in close proximity at times during a match and involves the use of shared facilities. At a domestic or social level, players might also share certain items of kit and equipment, such as bats, helmets and pads.
2. Although cricket is not a contact sport, the cricket ball is passed around the players throughout the course of a game and is therefore a potential medium for the transmission of COVID-19.
3. On-field behavior in the form of team huddles and celebrations often bring players together or result in bodily contact between them, and certain fielding positions (e.g. in the slips) require individuals to be in close proximity.
4. Cricket has traditionally permitted the use of saliva to be used to help preserve and enhance the condition of the ball.
5. Depending upon the format being played, the duration of a cricket match can be longer than many other sports and therefore increases the risk of communication of COVID-19. In addition, because of the construct of a cricket match, it can be an extremely social pursuit where players engage socially with each other for large parts of the game (e.g. particularly members of the batting team waiting for their innings).
6. Some participants, in particular umpires, match referees and support staff, may, as a result of their age, be considered vulnerable individuals that are at higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19.
7. Because of the role of bowlers (particularly fast bowlers) within a game of cricket and the impact on their body in fulfilling that role, certain players will be at higher risk upon return where insufficient strength and conditioning preparatory work has been carried out.
8. Based on international evidence, transmission of COVID-19 is assumed to be greater for indoor sporting activity than for outdoor activity, even with taking similar mitigation steps. Extra caution should therefore be taken for any indoor cricket activity.



## **Managing the Practice / Match Day**

Stringent guidelines to all the organizers, participating teams, parents and individual players for the cricketing activity.

### **Communication of Plan for Mitigating Risk**

Communication should be sent to all the participants (including parents, where necessary) what mitigating steps will be taking to protect against the risk of catching Covid-19 through such competitive matches.

### **Transportation**

Players should make every effort to arrive at the ground/facility using their own method of transport. However, where they share a car with individuals outside of their own family or use public transport, then they should wear a cloth mask at all times.

### **Temperature Testing**

There will be a mandatory temperature check of all players, team and match officials prior to game commencement; where any player or team or match official has a temperature of **100.4F (or 38c)** or higher, then participation in that match should be denied.

### **Sanitization**

Players are strongly encouraged to bring own sanitizing products to ensure that they have easy access to such materials.

All players should take steps to clean their hands immediately prior to their participation in the match, immediately after the match and at the innings break.

Umpires should carry small sanitizing products for use by players from time to time.

### **Equipment**

All sharing of personal cricket equipment or “team kit” should be strongly discouraged. Where (particularly for cost reasons) this option cannot be complied with, cricket equipment may be shared provided that a thorough sanitization process for the equipment after each use is completed. Particular care should be taken in respect of the shared use and sanitization of helmets.

Umpires should not hold kit or equipment for bowlers or any member of the fielding side during the match. Where necessary, such kit should be placed on the ground either immediately behind the wicketkeeper or behind the umpire and appropriate amendments to the playing regulations should be made to address the issue of if/when the cricket ball hits such kit or equipment during a match.

### **Social Distancing and Facial Covers**

There should be no deliberate physical contact at any time or for any reason. Where any participant (player, coach or otherwise) is unable to maintain 6ft of social distance from another at any point during a training session then cloth masks should be worn during that part of the relevant training session.



Where any participant wishes to wear a face-mask even when more than 6ft away from another, they shall be free to do so.

### **Team Meetings**

Follow social distancing guidelines, all players should be 6ft apart in a circle.

### **Ball Maintenance**

No saliva should be applied directly or indirectly on the ball.

Players should refrain from licking hands/fingers at all times.

Where the League and the participating teams so agree, teams may use two new balls (one from each end) and appropriate rule changes may need to be made to incorporate this practice.

### **Batting Partners**

Both members of the batting pair should remain 6 ft away from each other at all times, with particular care to be taken when communicating orally throughout the match.

### **Wicket Celebrations and Handshakes**

There should be no team huddles, hugs, 'high-fives', handshakes or anything that requires physical contact of any type.

To uphold the spirit of cricket, teams should show their respect and acknowledgement for members of the opposition at the end of a match in an alternative fashion to the traditional handshake, e.g. verbally or through a wave or other suitable gesture.

### **Batting Team on Sideline**

Members of the team should remain separated by 6ft at all times.

### **Umpire Standing Position**

The umpire at the bowler's end should stand 3 ft behind stumps to ensure safe distance from the non-striking batter.

### **Scorers**

Scorers should be 6ft apart from one another and bring their own pens, pencils and devices to score; there should be no shared scoring equipment or devices.

### **Food & Drinks**

All players, parents and spectators should bring their own food to the ground. There should be no sharing of drinks, drinks bottles/containers or food prior to, during, or after the match.

Communal water fountains should not be used.

### **Parents / Spectators / Volunteers**



Individuals should bring their own chairs to the ground if they wish to sit and spectate and remain 6ft apart.

### **Managing symptoms and incidents of Covid-19**

Where any individual has played, officiated or been involved in a competitive match and then subsequently fallen ill or developed symptoms, then that player or official should: (1) report the same to the organizer of the match; (2) seek healthcare support immediately; and (3) follow all local and authority regulatory requirements.

Where any individual has played, officiated or been involved in a competitive match and then subsequently contracts COVID-19, then that player or official should: (1) report the same to the organizer of the match; (2) follow all local and authority regulatory requirements; (3) self-quarantine for a minimum period of 14 days (or such period as they may be advised by any medical practitioner – whichever is longer) before returning to training and/or participating; and (4) provide a copy of a doctor's note confirming that they are clear to participate in such activity.

Where any report of an individual contracted COVID-19 is made, the organizer of the match should: (1) notify all individuals who may have come into contact with the reporting individual; and (2) immediately cease all related activities and carry out a new risk assessment exercise before any further activities are resumed.

### **Transition of field and facility**

There should be no possibility of interaction permitted between groups who have finished a match and those who have arrived for a subsequent match.

Players should arrive at sessions ready to commence activity immediately and should disperse promptly once any such session has concluded.

### **Ensuring compliance**

One official from each team should be appointed prior to each match to be responsible for ensuring the compliance of these guidelines (and/or any other relevant guidelines) by his/her team throughout the match.

For the purposes of supporting potential contact tracing, the individual assigned responsibility for ensuring compliance should keep a record of all persons in attendance at each match.

### **Player Waiver**

All players should be required to sign an assumption of risk, release and waiver of liability and indemnity agreement relating to Covid-19 exposure, Covid-19 liability and Covid-19 risks.