

COVID-19 What it means to Groups in Northern Ireland



Advice to all parts of UK

The guidance from different governments is getting increasingly complex with local lockdowns and restrictions coming into force as well as changes to the numbers of people who can gather. It is every group's responsibility to keep up with changes to any restrictions that affect their group and ensure they are adhering to them. This may mean a change to your protocols and risk assessment at short notice. Please consider this when developing your plans and inviting participants and volunteers to sessions.

Social distancing (2M/6FT) remains a key message for everyone not from the same household and is the most effective way to protect everyone. Hand hygiene also remains a critical defence from contamination.

Trustee checklists and Covid-19 Risk Assessment should be completed and emailed to RDA National Office Groupsupport@rda.org.uk before the group can be signed off as ready and any RDA activity can begin.

Northern Ireland – Stay safe, save lives

RDA Sessions

From 12 April up to 15 people (including coaches) can take part in structured outdoor sports training, through clubs affiliated to recognised sports governing bodies. This means RDA group sessions, up to a maximum of 15 people, (including all coaches, volunteers and participants) can commence. Indoor facilities (including covered arenas) should remain closed currently **unless used for equine assisted learning or therapy (see below), which includes RDA sessions.**

From 23 April:

- **Outdoor sport organised by a club, individual or individuals affiliated will be extended to include squad training;**
- **The Executive agreed that from 23rd April equine assisted therapy and learning can resume both outdoors and indoors in gatherings of up to 30 people. This includes RDA sessions.**
- **Competitive outdoor sport organised by a club, individual or individuals affiliated, with participant numbers not exceeding 100 and no spectators will be permitted;**

Following the protocols submitted to the Executive Office individuals are now permitted to come into closer proximity than social distancing would normally allow (2m) with a disabled person from outside their household to support them to access sport and physical activity in Northern Ireland. **This is to support individuals for short periods e.g. helping them to mount and dismount.**

If this dispensation is **used**, this should be subject to a risk assessment and therefore should be included on your group's COVID-19 risk assessment. There are further restrictions if you choose to do this and so please ensure you read our guidance on [Supporting Disabled People during COVID-19](#) and [face coverings](#).

If you hire out your outdoor facilities for organised activities (e.g. Pony Club or with a coach) this can be for up to 15 people (including coaches). This can only be for up to 10 people (including children) from a maximum of two households if it is informal hire.

Carriage Driving

We have also had confirmation from the Executive that carriage driving can resume, following [RDA carriage driving protocols](#).

Travel

As of 12 April the 'stay at home' message has been lifted. Travel is permitted for work and volunteering purposes. Participants should aim to travel locally for exercise.

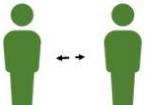
From 30 April

Individual activities in gyms, swimming pools and other large venues will be allowed to resume – including with a carer and to allow 1-2-1 training/coaching with social distancing.

From 24 May

The Executive hopes to resume indoor group exercise and training in numbers limited to suit the venue. This date is subject to review.

What can we do in Northern Ireland? (23 April 2021 onwards)

Category	Regulations and guidance
 <p>National guidance– SOCIAL</p>	<p>As of 12 April, the ‘stay at home’ message has been lifted. Up to 10 people (including children) can meet outdoors. Up to six people from two households can meet indoors in a non-domestic setting. Households can form a bubble with another household of any size but no more than 10 people (inc. children) can meet indoors.</p>
 <p>RDA meetings</p>	<p>Must do so from home if reasonably practicable.</p> <p>RDA recommendation: Strongly discourage face to face meetings especially if can be undertaken by other means (e.g. Zoom)</p>
 <p>RDA sessions</p>	<p>RDA sessions can commence outdoors with a maximum of 15 people, (including all coaches, volunteers and participants). From 23 April, RDA sessions may resume up to 30 people indoors and outdoors as our activities are considered equine facilitated learning/ therapy</p>
 <p>Social Distance (SD)</p>	<p>2m unless in extended household</p> <p>A dispensation for disability allows a short term breach of social distancing to allow disabled participants to access sport. This includes supporting a rider to mount or dismount. A very specific risk assessment must be undertaken for this. Individuals would be classed as ‘close contact’ for Test Trace Protect and would need to self isolate if they had come into contact with a positive case</p>
 <p>Data Collection</p>	<p>Legal requirement to collect and keep details of attendees for 21 days (not required for outdoor leisure)</p>
 <p>Face coverings</p> <p>Outdoors</p>	<p>Face coverings must be worn if breaching social distancing for a specific purpose (see social distancing)</p> <p>RDA rule:</p> <p>Face coverings can be worn—not a substitute for social distancing</p>
	<p>Travel should be kept to your local area.</p>