



Coronavirus  
**COVID-19**  
Public Health  
Advice

# COVID-19 Protocols for **Badminton Players/Members** in Northern Ireland



**From 24<sup>th</sup> May**



## Framework for resumption of Sport

### Always follow the Government Guidelines of Good Hand Hygiene – Respiratory Etiquette – Social Distancing

The guidelines in this document relate to the resumption of Sport and physical recreation. The protocols have been designed in line with advice from Sport NI and the NI Executive.

This phase:

- Permits sporting activities dependent on the size of the hall, where physical distancing can be maintained.

### Safe every step of the way

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Badminton is a safe, life-long, and family-friendly sport that caters for players of all abilities. Badminton provides both great physical and mental health benefits for our players. However, we must ensure that all those participating in the sport can do so within a safe environment.

These Protocols outlines the robust measures Badminton Ireland would like clubs to implement and maintain to help safeguard volunteers and members during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow all of us to get back on court, safely, improving the wellbeing of members across the country.

The protocols cover each step of the journey from home to the club and back home again. These measures should be in place seven days a week and until further notice.

Our protocols and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the gradual lifting of social restrictions.





## 1. Before you Play

### **You must:**

- Check with your Doctor prior to playing if you are in a high-risk health category.
- Ensure your club has conducted a risk assessment and check what protocols they have in place.
- Ensure your club has up-to-date contact details for you.

### **You must stay at home if you:**

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have flu-like symptoms or are feeling unwell
- Are in a high-risk health category.

## 2. Attending Badminton Activities

- Pre-arrange your court time with your club so you know exactly what time you will be on-court.
- Clubs should provide members with a scheduled breakdown of play for the evening at least three hours before the start of club play that evening. This schedule should have members dedicated to time slots so that everyone is aware exactly what time to enter and vacate the facility.
- Arrive and leave as close as possible to when you are due on court.
- Players, coaches, spectators and appointed officers, may attend badminton activities in a venue provided physical distancing measures can be maintained.
- Face Masks/Coverings should be worn by everybody indoors bar those playing on court.
- Only one parent/guardian may accompany any player under 18 years old.
- Players should arrive ready to play as there may be no access to dressing rooms during this phase, depending

upon facility.

- Player's must adhere to the guidelines set out by their venues in terms of using facilities on-site such as changing rooms, toilets, and any other facilities which players may have used prior to Covid-19.
- Players should, ideally, bring a small bottle of hand sanitizer with them and keep it in the pocket of their bag for use.

## 3. Physical Distancing Behaviors and Playing Practices

- Players must refrain from handshakes and high fives.
- Always keep a physical distance from other people, where possible.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or hand-sanitiser when available, before and after eating, after going to the toilet, sneezing, and coughing.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes and dispose of any used tissue in your own bag and bring it home with you.
- Avoid touching your face and if coughing, do so into the crease of your elbow.
- Try not to touch any surfaces, but if you do, sanitise your hands as soon as possible
- Do not share food, water bottles, or any equipment.
- Excessive handling of shuttles should be avoided where possible.
- Use your racquet to pick up shuttles and hit them to your opponent. Avoid using your hands to pick up shuttles where possible.
- Remain apart from other players when taking a break, always maintaining social distancing parameters.
- If a shuttle from another court comes across, send it back with a hit from your racquet.
- Players should warm-up prior to entering the venue or in a designated warm up area so they are prepared to begin playing immediately.
- Players should keep any kit/equipment in a reserved area at the back of the court they are using. There should be no kit/equipment left at any point along the length of the court.



- Do not change ends of the court at any stage during sessions. Remain on the same side of the court for the entirety of each playing slot you have.
- Players should play in the same groups each time they use the facility where possible. Clubs should ensure minimal crossover of players in groups through appropriate scheduling.
- Arranging a court time in advance is mandatory for all players, preferably via a court booking system, website, app, or phone. This will assist in managing physical distancing and contact tracing should it be required.
- All players should ensure their club has their up-to-date contact details (phone and email).
- Normal play, including singles and doubles, may resume provided players adhere to the public health advice.
- In the case of doubles, pairs should limit close contact as much as possible during play. Maintain physical distancing during breaks.
- We recommend that clubs operate a 'pod of 8' players per court, and to keep these consistent throughout this period.
- All players participating on the night should be recorded in a log. If there is a change to who is playing, it is mandatory to update the log.
- Players should travel to the club alone, or only with a member of the same household.
- Ample car parking spaces should be available to ensure social distancing. If players must park next to another car, they should wait for the other person to exit or enter before doing so themselves.
- Players should arrive at the court entrance no more than 5 minutes prior to the reserved playing time. It is important that players maintain physical distancing and wait in a pre-designated waiting area that allows for physical distancing.
- Players should always observe physical distancing and resist the temptation to mingle.
- Locker rooms should remain closed during this phase.
- Players should sanitise their hands and practice caution with the handling of shuttles.
- If a player becomes unwell after playing, they should first contact their GP/NHS and then

inform their club. The club will then follow advice provided to them by the NHS on the next steps.

- Members should be encouraged to remind other members of the protocols, in a gentle way, when they witness poor practices. Poor practice should be reported to the club as soon as possible.
- Club scheduling should ensure there is a minimum 10-minute layover between one group of players leaving the facility, and the next group of players entering the facility.
- With the exception of playing on court, players should wear a mask when in the facility.

#### **When Play Finishes**

- Once play has finished players should leave the facility immediately.
- Hands should be washed and sanitised as soon as possible.
- Ensure equipment is cleaned thoroughly after use.

#### **Shuttlecock**

- Although there is no specific evidence that shuttlecocks can spread COVID-19, we know that contamination from respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive on hard surfaces for up to three days.
- Replace shuttles if someone suspected of having COVID 19 comes in contact with them.
- More regular rotation of shuttles is encouraged.

#### **Contact tracing/positive testing**

- Players should ensure they sign into each session and where possible maintain a list of players you train with.
- If a player tests positive, they should inform any clubs or individual players they have recently trained with.
- Players who test positive or have symptoms of COVID 19 should not return to play until they have passed the incubation period.



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