

Lancashire FA: COVID-19 Current Support Available and Guidance

Draft FAQ's

GENERIC QUESTIONS and CEO Updated Feedback

- **Q. What is furlough leave?**
- A. Furlough leave is a temporary leave of absence for economic reasons and is designed to save jobs in the long term. The Lancashire FA staff who are affected by this understand and are supportive of this decision. We all very much look forward to their return to work at the earliest possible opportunity.
- **Q. Who should I contact now?**
- A. During this time, please direct any enquiries to one of the six members of staff mentioned above, or to info@lancashirefa.com. Our office and facilities are closed, and staff are working remotely, so email is the preferred method of communication. We will respond as swiftly to your request as we can but do ask for your patience at this time, if there is a delay in our response due to the reduction in staff available.
- **Q. What is the current situation with grassroots football?**
- A. All grassroots football, including matches, training and friendlies is currently suspended, and this will continue until further notice in accordance with advice from The FA. Further details can be found [here](#).
- **Q. How will you communicate with me and update me on this situation?**
- We will continue to keep you updated with developments at Lancashire FA through our social media channels, website and monthly newsletters.
We will also be continuing to run our League weekly WebEx meetings, where we are available for a Q&A session every Thursday night.
- **Q. What is the future for football in Lancashire?**
- A. We are doing everything we can to maintain the infrastructure of football during this time and will be exploring with our footballing partners and the football community a recovery plan that will enable us to get football back up and running as soon as it is safe to do so. We need your support, enthusiasm and passion for the game to do this, and will be seeking your opinions and ideas so that we can get this right and be ready for the return of our Players, Teams, Coaches, Referees, Volunteers, Parents, Clubs and Leagues.
- **Q. Will there be financial support from the FA/CFA's due to lost revenue**
- A. The FA & CFA are looking at a recovery package to support Leagues and clubs and you will be updated on what the recovery package looks like as soon as practicable, see our funding pages, guides and the Facilities and Investment Section for other tools, tips and thoughts.
- **Parting thoughts**

The challenging times, and the decisions that accompany them, continue and seem to get bigger and bigger. As a football community we are used to coming together as a team and this is certainly the time to be doing just that. Please stay safe, keep well and **follow all government advice** to protect those who are most vulnerable in our society

Football Services, including affiliation, discipline, cup competitions:

- **Q. What is the current situation with regards to County FA competitions?**
- A. We will do our utmost to ensure that the competitions can go ahead. When this will be exactly, we are unsure at this stage, but we will of course let everyone know as soon as we can.

- **Q. Will we be refunded for any discipline payments that have been made, or do any outstanding fines now become void due to the season ending?**
- A. Unfortunately this is will not be the case any fines paid or outstanding will retain this status, the issuing of fines is not dependent on a season being completed. Similar to a game that has been abandoned, the sanctions still remain. However, we appreciate that these are difficult times for clubs and if you would like to contact us to request a reasonable extension, we will be happy to assist.

- **Q. What is the situation with discipline suspensions?**
- A. Suspensions that are outstanding will be served at the start of the team's competitive season.

- **Q. How will meetings be carried out, if unable to have personal hearings.**
- A. Correspondence hearings will still be taking place via conference call. Those participants who wish to have a personal hearing, these will be arranged once we have been cleared to arrange these.

- **Q. When will the affiliation window open?**
- A. This at present is unclear It will not be open prior to 1st June dependent on the current situation. If Clubs wanted to start the process earlier and are happy to upload their information rather than downloading it, then please contact: info@lancashirefa.com

- **Q. How can we consider registrations for next season (Dates are fixed) if we don't know when this season may end or be cancelled, same issue re AGM's**
- A. The season is now concluded (please see attached Option 1 and 2 for further guidance)

- **Q. Can we register a tournament?**
- A. Again at present we do not know how and when the indefinite suspension of grassroots football will be lifted. It would be advisable if tournament organisers started to put together contingency plans in terms of options dependent on when things return to normal so you can update your entrants. In other words, let them know dependent on the month you are back when you would hope to play and what is the final deadline for cancelling the competition.

Coach Education and Training:

- **Q: Will you still be taking enquiries and bookings for courses in the future?**
- A: At present there will be no courses scheduled until at least the end of June and any changes will be reviewed in line with ongoing guidance

- **Q. I haven't heard about my UEFA B application for 2020?**
- A. The places for the 2020 UEFA B have now been filled. If you haven't been registered for it and contacted, then unfortunately you have not been successful on this occasion. We had over 300 applications, so we were unable to get back to each applicant. However, the window for 2021 will open later this year and you are more than welcome to apply.

- **Q. What happens with regards to a current course that I was booked on?**
- A. By now you should all have been informed via e-mail, on next steps. Again, if you have not managed to pick up the e-mail, there will be no course delivery until at least the end of June - please note this will be reviewed as per above.

Referees

- **Q. When does referee registration open?**
- A. Although we still have no clarity around when the 2020-21 season will commence, the referee registration window will open on June 1st 2020

- **Q. Do I still need to update my safeguarding accreditation prior to registration for 2020-21?**
- A. The mandatory requirements around referee safeguarding have been deferred by twelve months to allow workshops to be arranged upon resumption. Referees who are eligible to access the free Online Safeguarding Recertification should still do so.

- **Q. How do I apply for promotion from L7 or L6?**
- A. Please see all the relevant details here <http://www.lancashirefa.com/referees/refereeing-support/promotions>. Note the closing date is 31st May, 2020.

Safeguarding and Well Being

- **Q. Can we continue to process new DBS application and renewals?**
- A. No. The service is currently suspended to allow resources to concentrate on NHS volunteers who urgently need to have police checks done

- **Q. Can we verify applications via e-mailed document copies?**
- A. No. The service is suspended currently.

- **Q. We have lots of renewals due in the next six months. How will this affect the club?**

- A. Any DBS due for renewal between March 1st, 2020 and October 1st, 2020 will be extended by one year to reduce pressures on clubs and the system
- **Q. We have coaches who were due to renew before March 1st. What happens with them?**
- A. When football recommences you can process their renewal in the normal way. However, they can have **no involvement** until the DBS is returned "Accepted." Renewals should be started three months before the previous check expires to prevent the lapse of a legal requirement.
- **Q. How will the current situation affect affiliation?**
- A. You will be able to affiliate those teams with compliant coaches and managers. Teams led by new volunteers will need to be added to the club's affiliation retrospectively once that volunteer is compliant.
- **Q. How will referee registration be affected by the current shutdown of football and the requirement for safeguarding accreditation prior to next season?**
- A. The FA has postponed the mandatory safeguarding requirements for referees from June 2020 until the 2021-22 season. This will allow referees sufficient time to attend workshops and the county FA the time to arrange them and allocate tutors. Referees who can recertify online should continue to do so. Any questions on Safeguarding for Referees should be directed to neil.yates@lancashirefa.com.
- **Q. How can we get a new club welfare officer qualified in time for the new season with no workshops currently being held?**
- A. We will work with clubs to ensure new CWOs gain the necessary qualifications as soon as possible. We will ensure plans are in place to prevent any impact on the club in terms of affiliating. New recruits can access the online safeguarding course for committee members during shutdown to speed up this process.
(<http://www.lancashirefa.com/news/2019/jun/25/free-online-safeguarding-course-for-club-committee-members>)
- **Q. What will happen to our Charter Standard if we cannot get volunteers on safeguarding and first aid workshops in time?**
- A. Lancashire FA in conjunction with the FA will adopt a common sense approach and will not penalise any club where it is evident progress towards achieving or retaining Charter Standard was directly adversely impacted by the shutdown of football.

For further specific Safeguarding information please see the associated web link here :

<http://www.lancashirefa.com/news/2020/apr/03/dbs-checks-covid19>

Facilities Development and Investment Support (Inc grants and funding)

- **Q. Are there any grants schemes that can help our club to pay outstanding invoices and general running costs to support us?**
- A: Yes, in principle there are, however you need to assess the criteria and if you meet this as per the funder, please see the following key links, which may be of interest to you.
<https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>
<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund>
we would also suggest you take a look at our funding guide and specific webpages for info, ideas and top tips.
- **Q. What is the current advice on how to maintain our pitches, so that when football re starts they are in good order and shape as we are worried, they won't be ready?**
- A. Look at the dedicated pages, resources and articles from our colleagues at the newly branded Grounds Management Association, formally the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) who as you know carry out the Pitch Inspections as Part of the FA Pitch Improvement Programme. <https://www.thegma.org.uk/covid-19-0>. However, ensure you always follow the Government Guidance firstly, and refresh with the ever-changing situation daily.
- **Q. Are ongoing projects still being supported with their funding applications and pre application?**
- A. Where possible we are still supporting and communicating with projects that are at an advanced stage, as the Football Foundation are still also supporting. Again, from a remote working platform. The Football Foundation will no doubt be guiding applicants and communicating to ourselves as well. As the situation evolves, we will maintain communication where possible, always following government guidance. Potential future queries are also being dealt with, but this will be limited and specific based on what is possible considering the above. In addition see partner web links that have further FAQ sections.
- **Q. What about "Grow the Game" grants?**
- A. We have been informed as of the 8th April that this specific fund has been suspended in light of the present situation. Check the website here for update and further FAQ's <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/>. With regards to applications already received it is expected that the Foundation will make direct contact with those.
- **Q. Are you still able to do FA Pitch Improvement Inspections.**
- A. **NO** these and all other site contacts have till further notice been fully suspended with full agreement from the IOG/ GMA. We are still able to take enquiries and discuss with regards to grass pitch improvement. Our colleagues at the IOG/GMA are still available again on a remote home working basis to offer support and advice. However we are happy to discuss and plan for the future.
- **Q. What about projects that are identified in the LFFP, what is the plan there?**

- A. As you will appreciate, we will do what we can working remotely to support and put plans in place that are robust and maintain a healthy communication with local partners. However, at this present time many of our community partners are currently dealing with significant other challenges, so being mindful, we are dealing with this on a case by case basis and offering our fullest support. We are also as a county FA in weekly and regular dialogue with our colleagues and funding partners.
- **Q. Our club / organisation has recently been awarded funding from the Football Foundation for a project. What do we need to do?**
- We would strongly advise that you maintain a healthy dialogue with the Football Foundation and their central enquiries. If you do not have details of the grant officer, or they have not been in touch with you, e-mail enquiries@footballfoundation.org.uk . They will advise what is the best practice whilst we will also monitor and support clubs and organisations locally where possible, again whilst maintaining all government rules and guidance

League & Clubs Development

- Q. What will be the processes for Health checks?
- A. (All Annual Health checks are now completed and awarded, none outstanding)

Refunds

- **Q: Should League and County FA fees be refunded if season void**
- **A:** We respect the autonomy of County FAs, as the sanctioning bodies of grassroots Leagues, as well as the autonomy of the Leagues themselves to have local decision-making rights in this respect.
- **Q. Will there be a rebate on Club Aff/League sanction fees**
- A. (As above FA/ CFA recovery package first section and below)

We are aware that some County FAs and Leagues are considering how they will be trying to support teams by reducing fees for the 20/21 season.

Lancashire FA will in due course communicate a recovery package for all member Leagues/clubs and what that package looks like, in line with the current situation we all find ourselves?

Promotion and Relegation:

- **Q. Is there an option to decide on promotion/relegation on an “Average points per game basis”**
- A. (See attached option 1 & 2 on this specific area)

Bluefin Insured Leagues/Clubs

- **Q. P/Liability- P/Accident Ins, will it be a rebate or discount rolled onto next season?**

- A: There will be no rebate on P/Liability Ins however please see guidance on Bluefin Personal accident Insurance

All Personal Accident policies to remain in force until the expiry date, 30 June 2020;

At the next renewal, all premiums will be discounted to reflect the period of inactivity The Personal Accident insurance provided via the NGIS covers all organised footballing activities, so although all league and cup fixtures have been concluded for the 2019/20 season, the Personal Accident insurance will cover your affiliated Clubs/Teams in respect of :-

Friendlies

Training

Tournaments

Coaches, whilst attending County FA organised Educational courses

Club Social Events

Subject, of course, to adherence to the relevant advice / guidance issued by the Government and/or The Football Association.

The renewal invitation that will be issued in respect of the Personal Accident insurance for the 2020/21 season, will make specific reference to the premium adjustment made to reflect the period of inactivity due to the Government measures, thus ensuring full transparency, and avoid any misunderstandings, accordingly.

Independent Insurers

Clubs who have secured their Personal Accident Insurance from any other insurance provider, should check their policy and payments with your own Insurance provider?

AGM's SGM's

- **Q. Can Leagues re-schedule their:**
 - **New club application dates**
 - **Player Registration dates**
 - **Rule proposal dates**
 - **SGM Dates/AGM dates**
- A. Yes, the above dates can be re-scheduled in sequence to support the challenges in adhering to current agreed dates. (League committees can arrange an SGM/AGM with your member clubs via e-mail/ & E-mail voting / by WebEx or a Microsoft Teams meeting set up on your behalf by Lancashire FA.
- If the social distancing instructions are removed (**Govt & PHE guidance permitting**), the County FA will offer out the Lancashire FA meeting rooms for Leagues to hold their AGM's (Free of Charge) if they wish to hold a formal meeting for their AGM's
- **This will under no circumstances be allowed unless all restrictions are lifted**

- **Q. Can we hold meetings via remote system/e-mail, and can a vote be carried out remotely via e-mail**
- **A. Yes you can Please see attached guidance**

For further details information re Charter Standard League and Clubs Covid 19 FAQ from the FA, please see the attached link.

For further detail on how to run a virtual AGM, the FA grassroots tech team have produced a useful guide, that can be accessed here.

FA SCOR'S SCOR and SCORY changes for 2020/21

- **SCOR & SCORY Update for 2020/2021 Season - Please note these proposed changes are still be approved. If you have any questions or queries, please contact john.treacy@lancashirefa.com .**
- **SCOR & SCORY Preamble - At the end of the current preamble to add "Please note that from the 2021/22 season all players must be registered though WGS."**
- **SCORY Changes for 2020/2021 Season - We have one further change for SCORY only for 2020/2021 season - The ball size for Under 10s to change from size 4 to a size 3 ball**

As these are the only changes, it may be more beneficial for our member leagues to just make these two changes within their existing rules to save League officials time. All other parts of SCOR/Y remain the same.