



## **SPECTATORS (SECTION VI. OF THE NLS GUIDANCE)**

The Government's Covid-19 Winter Plan has seen the introduction of restrictions on spectators based on the regional Covid-19 alert level a club is in. Clubs within Tier 4 Alert Level areas will not be allowed spectators in accordance with the restriction of fixtures. Clubs in Tier 3 will be restricted to operating of **Stage 1** of this guidance document.

In Tier 1 and 2 Alert Level regions spectators are able to attend fixtures at **Stage 2**. At these fixtures, it is vital that the rule of six is adhered to and that groups are no larger than six people. There should be no mingling between groups. Once in a six-person group, spectators must remain within it.

Where guidance issued by DCMS on the return to recreational team sport has been amended to permit clubs to accommodate a limited number of spectators, clubs must follow current government guidance in relation to Covid-19 and The FA's National League System club guidance.

### **Risk assessments**

Clubs must update their risk assessments and action plans, which were required to be prepared under the previous version of the government guidance, to consider and mitigate the risk posed by permitting spectators to attend fixtures (in particular, how they intend to minimise transmission rates and ensure that spectators comply with social distancing).

**IN TIER 3 AREAS, CLUBS SHOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL AND SPECIFIC REFERENCE IN THEIR RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ADDITIONAL TIER 3 RESTRICTIONS;**

- A. HOW SPECTATORS WILL REMAIN 2M APART AND SPREAD EVENLY AROUND THE GROUND**
- B. ENSURING THAT IN PERIMETER AREAS SPECTATORS REMAIN ONE PERSONS DEEP**
- C. WHERE GROUNDS HAVE COVERED SEATED OR TERRACED AREAS, NO MORE THAN 15% OF ADMITTED SPECTATORS CONGREGATE IN THESE AREAS**
- D. HOW SPECTATORS WILL REMAIN IN SINGLE HOUSEHOLD GROUPS ONLY**

### **The risk assessment should focus on:**

- 1)** How the club intends to ensure that spectators maintain social distancing whilst at the ground (on arrival, during and after the match and on departure). Clubs may wish to consider:
  - a. marking queues with tape on the floor at 2m intervals wherever possible, but a minimum of 1m+ if not (i.e. at turnstiles and takeaway food areas);
  - a) Ensuring spectators are spread evenly around the pitch;
  - b) markings for spectator standing;
  - c) reducing the availability of seats within covered accommodation;
  - d) crowd management, i.e. barriers at pinch points and/or introducing a one way system; and
  - e) advance purchase ticket schemes, allowing clubs to manage walk ups.



- 2) How the club will ensure that any covered seating or terraced areas will not exceed the respective 15% or 30% of the capacity of these covered areas, to ensure congregation in these areas are comparable to capacity restrictions for the ground.
- 3) How the club intends to maintain appropriate hygiene in spectator areas, including toilets, entrances and exits.
- 4) How the club intends to inform clubs of any new policies or procedures which will be in place. Clubs may wish to consider signage and use their communication channels to encourage spectators to follow the guidance.
- 5) Whether the club wishes to implement any COVID-19 screening measures for spectators attending fixtures. If so, what are these measures and how will they be implemented.
- 6) How to remind spectators of the risks associated with shouting and/or singing in transmission of the virus and how the club intend to reasonably control this.
- 7) Whether the club intends to amend its usual refreshment facilities for spectators.
- 8) What medical provisions the club has in place if spectators fall ill and how this can be provided in accordance with current government guidance.
- 9) How the club intends to monitor compliance with its risk assessment and action plan and the steps it intends to take if spectators are found to be breaching social-distancing measures or increasing the risk of transmission. **Failure to do so will trigger intervention from the League or The FA.**

**Please note that each ground will be unique and will require its own individual risk assessment and action plan.**

Arrangements **must** also be put in place to support NHS Test and Trace efforts by collecting sufficient written information from spectators to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary.

Please ask spectators to download the NHS Covid-19 app, which has a feature that allows users to quickly and easily 'check in' to your venue by scanning the NHS QR code you should display (see information on page 3) in relevant places. The information stays on the user's phone, so that in England, you do not have to ask people who choose to 'check in' using the official NHS QR code to provide their contact details. If there is an outbreak associated with a venue, a message will be sent to the relevant app users with the necessary public health advice.



## **Spectator limits**

The FA has been working with the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) and DCMS to agree appropriate spectator levels for matches at Steps 3 – 6. Please note this guidance is only applicable for clubs in Tier 1 and 2 Covid-19 Alert Level regions.

Following those discussions, The FA can confirm the following:

### **Stage 1**

1. At stage 1 clubs can permit of the minimum ground grading capacity for the relevant Step (or the figures set out in **Appendix A**).

### **Stage 2**

At stage 2, spectators must not exceed 30% of the minimum ground grading capacity for the relevant Step (or the figures set out in **Appendix A**).

These limits shall apply unless and until The FA confirms otherwise. However, The FA will keep these limits under continuous review and reserves the right to amend these limits (upwards or downwards) or insist on returning to stage 1 or behind closed doors at any time, in particular in response to any change in government guidance. If The FA or the League in which a club is in membership becomes aware that any club has not complied with the guidance in relation to stage 1, it may direct that individual club to return to stage 1 or go behind closed doors.

Clubs should also be mindful of the impact of any local restriction via a local authority which may prevent them from permitting spectators to attend fixtures (or play fixtures at all) and must comply with any guidance given by the government, local authorities or local health services which will supersede The FA guidance.

## **APPENDIX A**

Although Ground Grades F, G and H do not specify a minimum ground capacity for Steps 5 and 6, The FA considers 1,000 to be an appropriate threshold to set (given the minimum ground capacity in the grades above), which will also promote a consistent approach across the Steps. The FA does not consider that this threshold will have a negative impact on clubs at Steps 5 and 6 given the number of spectators that ordinarily affect fixtures in Steps 3 - 6.

The FA has calculated 15% of the relevant figures and rounded up/down to reach an appropriate capacity limit. For the avoidance of doubt, clubs should comply with the numbers in the capacity column below.

### **Stage 1**

<b>STEP</b>	<b>GRADING CAPACITY</b>	<b>ALLOWANCE</b>	<b>STAGE 1 CAPACITY</b>
<b>Step 3</b>	Min 1950	15% capacity	300
<b>Step 4</b>	Min 1350	15% capacity	200
<b>Step 5</b>	Min 1000	15% capacity	150
<b>Step 6</b>	Min 1000	15% capacity	150

### **Stage 2**

<b>STEP</b>	<b>GRADING CAPACITY</b>	<b>ALLOWANCE</b>	<b>STAGE 1 CAPACITY</b>
<b>Step 3</b>	Min 1950	30% capacity	600
<b>Step 4</b>	Min 1350	30% capacity	400
<b>Step 5</b>	Min 1000	30% capacity	300
<b>Step 6</b>	Min 1000	30% capacity	300