



**COVID-19  
Return to Cheerleading  
Guidance**

**Combined Outdoor,  
Indoor and Protection  
Level Guidance**

**Updated 7<sup>th</sup> August  
2021**



## INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure the safest possible return to cheerleading activity SportCheer Scotland, in consultation with **sportscotland** and in line with Scottish Government regulations, has provided the following guidance for indoor and outdoor Cheerleading training.

SportCheer Scotland is recognised by the world governing body for cheerleading; the International Cheer Union (ICU) as the National Governing Body for the sport of cheerleading in Scotland. Cheerleading is a SportAccord recognised sport, and an International Olympic Committee provisional member sport.

The following guidance intends to outline the next steps towards the return to cheerleading in Scotland and the necessary controls, checks and balances required to ensure that this is achieved with the health and safety of all athletes, coaches and staff at the centre of any decision-making.

Programme owners are advised to consider the safety of athletes as the primary factor when deciding whether to proceed with indoor and outdoor sessions.

The close contact nature of cheerleading presents a unique challenge limiting the potential risk of transmission of COVID-19. We must progress with caution as we return to cheerleading and we urge programme owners and coaches to have patience throughout this process. We appreciate that the restrictions placed on indoor cheerleading and performance cheerleading classes may cause difficulty for your team or programme, however they are essential to limit further spread of the virus to athletes' households and communities.

Full guidance on preparing your facility can be found in the **sportscotland** document [Getting Your Facilities Fit For Sport](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic and the responses of the Scottish Government, **sportscotland** and Public Health Scotland remain fluid; data and recommendations will change. SportCheer Scotland will continue to update this document as new guidance becomes available: please check the date on the front cover to ensure you are viewing the most current version.

**This document is intended to be used in its entirety. Individual sections should not be used alone without consideration of the document as a whole. This guidance does not constitute legal advice or replace any government or Public Health Scotland advice; nor does it provide any commentary or advice on health-related issues.**

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### 1: GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS AND COACHES

1.1. Cheerleading clubs across the country operate differently according to their individual and local needs. Assessing whether indoor cheerleading sessions can be run safely will depend on a combination of these factors, which will differ between clubs and at each venue/location. It is the responsibility of each programme owner to put together a detailed risk assessment based on these individual factors to ensure a safe environment for all coaches and athletes.

1.2. For the purposes of this guidance 'organised cheerleading activity' refers to activities which are undertaken in a structured and managed way following specific rules and guidance of SportCheer Scotland, local authorities or businesses who in turn have fully applied related Scottish Government and **sportscotland** guidance. All organised activity should be overseen by a COVID-19 Officer with documented risk assessments undertaken and mitigating actions put in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants, coaches and officials.

1.3 When restrictions permit the reopening of indoor sport and leisure facilities, facility managers should ensure that the Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance for the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#) is fully implemented.

1.4. Programme owners and coaches should consult with their insurance provider that correct and full cover is in place for all planned activities prior to your scheduled return to classes. It is imperative that you stay in regular contact with your insurance provider at this time to ensure you are adequately covered for any activities you are undertaking. With guidance continually changing it is important to confirm your policy is up to date.

1.5. Cheerleading Clubs must nominate a COVID-19 Officer who will be responsible for completing documented risk assessments and ensuring all appropriate mitigations are put in place. The COVID-19 Officer should ensure all appropriate management processes are in place so that they can effectively oversee and maintain the implementation of measures outlined herein. The COVID-19 Officer will be contacted by NHS Scotland Test and Protect should an athlete test positive for COVID-19 and should only provide contact tracing details directly to the National Contact Tracing Service. They are not responsible for contacting athletes, spectators, staff or volunteers that may have come in contact with a positive case. An e-learning module for COVID-19 Officers is available [here](#). Please note this module has updates issued periodically. As such, the COVID-19 Officer should ensure they have completed the most up to date module.

1.6. Athletes, coaches and staff should adhere to Scottish Government guidelines on physical distancing at all times. This is set at a minimum of 2m with the exception listed in section 6.1. for athletes aged 11 years and under. Any parents and carers supervising their child should adhere to 2m physical distancing and not congregate during the session.

1.7. In planning your return to indoor and outdoor cheerleading sessions coaches should be mindful that many athletes may have been participating in lower levels of physical activity for an extended period of time. The emphasis should be on a gradual return to training fitness, conditioning, jumps and rebuilding current skill level rather than progression to new skills.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

1.8. Program owners are responsible for informing athletes, coaches and staff on all protocols prior to the athletes' return to your training hall or facility.

1.9. Program owners should be aware that not all facilities have reopened and may close on short notice. They should therefore remain in regular contact their venue directly for further information. Owners and operators will require time to consider all the implications of opening facilities/ venues and put plans in place to re-engage staff and to set up operations that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers. This is a difficult time for everyone so please be patient.

1.10. Shielding was paused from August 1<sup>st</sup>. Further information can be found in the Scottish Government resource [COVID-19: Shielding Support and Contacts](#).

1.11. People who are symptomatic, including close contacts, should self-isolate for 10 days as per [NHS Scotland Guidance](#). From the 9th August 2021 close contacts 18 years of age or over who have been double vaccinated for more than 14 days or 5 to 17- year-olds, with no symptoms, will be able to take a PCR test and end self-isolation if the result is negative. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.

1.12. To manage a safe return to cheerleading and performance cheerleading activities it is a mandatory requirement that all clubs, facility operators, coaches and participants follow the latest Test & Protect guidance to help break chains of transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Further information is available within this guidance and at [Scottish Government: Test & Protect](#) and in section 17.

1.13. No spectating should take place other than where a parent is supervising a child or vulnerable adult or when following specific [Scottish Government: sector guidance for sporting events](#). Please note that the Scottish Government is currently reviewing spectator guidance and updates will be provided when they become available.

1.14. Where a locality or region is subject to localised restrictions, not all of the changes above will apply. Details of local restrictions are available on the Scottish government [website](#). Details on the impact this has on cheerleading activity can be found [here](#).

1.15. Programme owners and coaches must remember that there can never be risk free cheerleading and any cheerleading activity will come with inherent COVID-19 risks until there is a significant reduction of the disease in the population and the vaccine rollout is complete. All decisions should be made with the health and safety of all athletes, staff and coaches as the highest priority.

1.16. Guidelines will be updated as we progress through phases of the Scottish Government COVID-19 routemap. Current updates from the Scottish Government can be viewed at [Scottish Government: Covid-19 Framework for decision making](#).

1.17. Facility operators, organisers and coaches should note that the situation around COVID-19 is fluid and activities may need to be cancelled at short notice should there be a change in local or national restrictions. In such circumstances plans should be in place to notify participants of event cancellation and to ensure they do not attend the venue.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

1.18. For guidance on holiday camps or extended sports activity should refer to their local authority or other Scottish Government guidance such as [school age childcare services](#) for those that provide regulated childcare (registered and regulated by the Care Inspectorate Scotland or [organised children's activity guidance](#) for those not registered.

1.19. Where programmes/clubs wish to offer a parent and child class (under 5 years), they should follow the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): organised activities for children](#) guidance for this age group.

### 2: SUMMARY OF RECENT UPDATES

All changes made to this document are highlighted in **yellow**.

The following changes come into effect on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021:

- 2.1. Update on isolation guidance (page 4)
- 2.2. Introduction of 'Beyond Level 0' (page 7)
- 2.3. Permitted activities 'Beyond Level 0' (page 12)
- 2.4. Update on spectators at organised events (page 13)
- 2.5. Physical distancing 'Beyond Level 0' (page 15)
- 2.6. Removal of requirement that athletes under 12 wear a face covering (page 30)
- 2.7. Health and Hygiene 'Beyond Level 0' (page 31)
- 2.8. Change to Test and Protect protocol from 9<sup>th</sup> August (page 39)

### 3: LOCAL RESTRICTIONS

3.1. On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 06:00, Scotland's Strategic Framework with various protection levels came into force across the country.

3.2. The levels range from **Beyond Level 0 (near normal)** to Level 4 (closing of indoor sports facilities).

3.3. These level will be allocated to each local authority and will be updated on a regular basis by the Scottish government.

3.4. Information on which level your club is operating under can be found using the postcode checker available here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels](#)

3.5. It is the responsibility of the relevant facility operator / COVID-19 officer to ensure that full risk assessments, processes and mitigating actions are in place before any sport or leisure activity takes place and to check if the activity is in an area which is subject to additional Scottish Government localised measures and restrictions.

3.6. Be aware that the Scottish Government may update or change measures and restrictions at any time, including the local areas subject to them. Therefore the programme's COVID-19 Officer should regularly check Scottish Government advice and guidance relating to local outbreaks and measures at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local advice and measures](#).

**3.7. Although Scotland is to move 'Beyond Level 0' on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 caution is still required, and the following guidance should be considered.**

## 4. TRAVEL RESTICTIONS

4.1. Travel guidance outlined by the Scottish Government should always be followed. Further information on what travel is permitted is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on travel and transport](#). No domestic travel restrictions apply to local areas 'Beyond Level 0'.

4.2. Information for each local government area, including their level is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): local protection levels including a postcode checker](#).

4.3. Specific information on car sharing is available from [Transport Scotland: advice on how to travel safely](#).

4.4. Athletes (17 years or under)

3.4.1. Participants aged 17 years or under can travel to and from Level 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 areas to take part in training if that is where their training normally takes place.

4.5. Athletes (18 years or over)

3.5.1. Participants aged 18 years or over can travel to and from Level 0, 1 and 2 areas (but not Level 3 or 4) to take part in training.

3.5.2. Adults living in a Level 4 area should only travel locally (within their own local government area) to take part in training.

3.5.3. From 26th April 2021 participants aged 18 or over may travel from one Level 3 area to another Level 3 area to take part in training

4.6. Coaches

3.6.1. Coaches are permitted to travel to all areas for work or voluntary purposes.

4.7 Travel Summary Table

Age Group	Level 0	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Under 18	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adults 18+	✓	✓	✓	L3 travel only	Local travel only

### 5: PERMITTED ACTIVITIES

#### 5.1 Definitions

5.1.1. **Contact activity**, sport or activity in which the participants necessarily come into bodily contact or as a matter of course encroach within 2m of one another” including stunting, dance lifts, rescue spotting, partner work, choreography formations and travelling is permitted at certain protection levels.

5.1.2. **Non-contact sport or activity**, a sport or activity in which the participants are physically separated by playing rules such as to make it difficult for them to make physical contact during an activity” including physically distanced choreography, drill based practice, standing and running tumbling which does not require spotting is permitted under most protection levels.

5.1.3. **Rescue spotting** by coaches, the act of providing assistance to athletes to prevent or “rescue” them from injury or an unplanned fall is permitted alongside contact activity. This is not continuous contact and guidance through movements, assistive spotting, shaping or full support of tumbles.

5.1.4. **Contact bubbles** should be formed for contact activity. This a group of up to 6 athletes that perform contact activities together such as stunting, dance lifts. Formations do not require contact bubbles.

5.1.5. **Field of play bubble** is the group/class participating in the activity, competition or events. Coaches, officials and any volunteers present are not included in these bubbles for Levels 0, 1 and 2 however are at Level 3.

5.1.6. **Sports competition** is defined as “any amateur participation sport, contest or race involving individual participants or teams who regularly compete against opponents as part of an organised SGB, league, local authority or club activity.”

5.1.7. **Sports event** is defined as “an organised gathering or activity of limited duration that brings people together for the primary purpose of participating in the one-off sporting activity such as a marathon or triathlon etc”. Within this document an event with spectators is referred to as a sports event not competition.

#### 5.2 Permissions by Protection Level

##### 5.2.1 Level 4

###### 5.2.1.1. Outdoor Activity

- Athletes aged under 18 years are permitted to take part in contact and non-contact activities in “field of play bubbles” of up to 30.
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.

- When taking part in tumble (or stunt for those under 18 years) activities, coaches must only provide rescue spotting.

### 5.2.1.2. Indoor Activity

- No indoor training is permitted.

### 5.2.2. Level 3

#### 5.2.2.1. Outdoor Activity

- Athletes aged under 18 years are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities in “field of play bubbles” of up to 30 people.
- Athletes aged 18 and over permitted to take part in **non-contact** activities in “field of play bubbles” of up to 30 people.
- Activities should include a maximum of 200 participants per day (this includes coaches, officials and volunteers).
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.
- When taking part in tumble (or stunt for those under 18 years) activities, coaches must only provide rescue spotting.

#### 5.2.2.2 Indoor Activity

- Athletes aged under 18 are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact activities**, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers](#).
- Athletes aged 18 and over are permitted to take part in one to one sessions.
- Coaches can take multiple indoor sessions (where protection levels allow) per day.
- When taking part in tumble (or stunt for those under 18 years) activities, coaches must only provide rescue spotting.

### 5.2.3. Level 2

#### 5.2.3.1. Outdoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities in “field of play bubbles” of up to 50 people.
- Activities should include a maximum of 500 participants per day (this includes coaches, officials and volunteers).
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.
- When taking part in tumble (or stunt for those under 18 years) activities, coaches must only provide rescue spotting.

#### 5.2.3.2. Indoor Activity

- Athletes aged under 18 are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers..](#)
- Athletes aged 18 and over are permitted to take part in non-contact activities, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers.](#)
- When taking part in tumble (or stunt for those under 18 years) activities, coaches must only provide rescue spotting.

### 5.2.4. Level 1

#### 5.2.4.1. Outdoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities in “field of play bubbles” of up to 100 people.
- Activities should include a maximum of 1000 participants per day (this includes coaches, officials and volunteers).
- Coach to athlete contact is permitted to support athletes for a maximum of 15 minutes per group per day. This includes continuous support through movements such as tumblers (or stunts for athletes under age 18 years).

### 5.2.4.2 Indoor Activity

- Athletes aged under 18 are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers.](#)
- Athletes aged 18 and over are permitted to take part in **non-contact activities**, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers.](#)
- Coach to athlete contact is permitted to support athletes for a maximum of 15 minutes per group per day. This includes continuous support through movements such as tumbles (or stunts for athletes under age 18 years). This must be included in any risk assessments and athletes/parents should be made aware of the increased risk of transmission on COVID-19.

### 5.2.5. Level 0

#### 5.2.5.1. Outdoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact activities** in “field of play bubbles” of up to 500 people.
- Where there are multiple bubbles operating at the same venue these must be risk assessed to ensure there can be no mixing of participants before, during or after the activity. Specific mitigations could include staggered start times, limiting car parking or controlling access / egress points.
- Coach to athlete contact for pre-planned activity (such as tumbles and stunts) is permitted. This must be included in any risk assessments and athletes/parents should be made aware of the increased risk of transmission on COVID-19.

#### 5.2.5.2. Indoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact** activities, group size should be determined following the guidance provided in the following section of this document: [Indoor Activity Guidance: Participant Numbers.](#)
- Coach to athlete contact for pre-planned activity (such as tumbles and stunts) is permitted. This must be included in any risk assessments and athletes/parents should be made aware of the increased risk of transmission on COVID-19.

### 5.2.6. Beyond Level 0

#### 5.2.6.1. Outdoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact activities**. No bubble requirements and up to 5000 participants per day.

### 5.2.6.2. Indoor Activity

- All athletes are permitted to take part in **contact and non-contact activities**. Return to normal facility occupancy levels but focus on good ventilation and 'Give People Space' messaging.
- Coach to athlete contact for pre-planned activity (such as tumblers and stunts) is permitted. This must be included in any risk assessments and athletes/parents should be made aware of the increased risk of transmission on COVID-19.

## 5.3 Sports Events and Competitions

### 5.3.1 Sports Competition (leagues, regular competition)

5.3.1.1. Where there is an supervision by a designated COVID-19 Officer, adequate risk assessments and all guidance within this document and relevant Scottish Government guidance is followed, sports competitions can take place.

5.3.1.2 Maximum participant numbers for sports competition should follow the relevant guidance for outdoor and indoor activity.

5.3.1.3. 42.4 Spectators are permitted under the following circumstances:

'Beyond Level 0' a maximum of 5000 people outdoors and 2000 people indoors can spectate subject to the organiser following Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID-19): events sector guidance and obtaining relevant permissions, where they normally would be required to do so. Any increase in these numbers must be agreed directly with the appropriate local authority prior to the competition going ahead.

5.3.1.4. Where agreement from other bodies is required to run a competition, operators must consult with and receive agreement those bodies as part of their risk assessment. Where licences are required there must also be agreement from local Environmental Health Officers.

### 5.3.2. Sports Events (one-off events)

5.3.2.1 Sports events are permitted where operators abide by Scottish Government guidance. Further information can be found on **sportscotland's** website: [Event Information](#)

### 6: PHYSICAL DISTANCING

6.1. Children aged 11 and under are not required to physically distance at any time, as set out by Scottish Government guidance. While athletes aged 11 years and under do not need to physically distance, any unnecessary contact or close proximity between athletes should be discouraged.

6.2. Depending on the applicable local protection level children aged 12 and over and adults may be required to remain 2m distant throughout the cheerleading session, including during any breaks. Risk assessments should, where possible, consider mitigating actions to reduce the likelihood of participants encroaching within 2m of each other.

6.3. Coaches and staff supporting cheerleading activity should attempt to keep physically distant where possible, but it is recognised that this will not always be possible. In such circumstances the responsible COVID-19 Officer should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment.

6.4. Specific consideration should be given to supervision of children under the age of 5 years as it is not appropriate for young children to maintain physical distancing, either practically or in terms of child development. You may, for instance, ask a parent or carer to be present.

6.5. In general, young people find it harder than adults to stick to physical distancing rules. Special attention should be given to how you communicate physical distancing rules to young people.

6.6. Where a participant with a disability requires functional support to enable their participation in physical activity and sport this can be provided without maintaining physical distancing. This support can be provided by a coach or other individual. In such circumstance the COVID-19 Officer should consider appropriate mitigating actions as part of the risk assessment. For instance, providing appropriate PPE, limiting the number of participants an individual provides functional support to, limiting the duration spent in close proximity, or a combination of actions.

6.7. Circulation routes around your gym or facility should be clearly marked to ensure a minimum of 2m physical distancing. In any areas – such as corridors and entranceways – where physical distancing cannot be facilitated you should consider risk mitigators including, but not limited to: a one-way system; traffic light system; the wearing of masks and/or face shields.

6.8. If possible, mark the floor to aid physical distancing both in the hall/studio space and for anyone queueing to enter. If using spot markers to show athletes where to stand then these should be placed 3m apart to allow movement during practice whilst maintaining a minimum of 2m distance.

6.9. Sufficient space should be allowed to ensure 2m distancing between coaches and participants when moving around the facility or during the cheerleading session.

6.10. All participants should have left the facility prior to any participants in the next session being allowed in. A one-way system, traffic-light system or controlled queueing system should be implemented to avoid the athletes of one session mixing with another. There should also be a 20- 30 minute gap between sessions to allow for the venue to be

sufficiently cleaned between sessions and to avoid contact between participants arriving and departing.

6.11. Car parking may also need to be managed to prevent mixing of participants or a build-up of traffic and people.

6.12. Parents and carers who are supervising their children should abide by Scottish Government physical distancing guidance and stay at least 2m away from those out with their own household. Groups of parents from different households should not congregate before, during or after the activity.

6.13. When a local area is operating 'Beyond Level 0' No physical distancing is required between participants however it is recommended that '**Give people space**' messaging should be promoted.

## 7: INDOOR SESSION GUIDANCE

**For sessions operating in an area 'Beyond Level 0' there are no restrictions on session duration or capacity. Coaches should focus on good ventilation (800-1000 pmm) and 'Give People Space' messaging.**

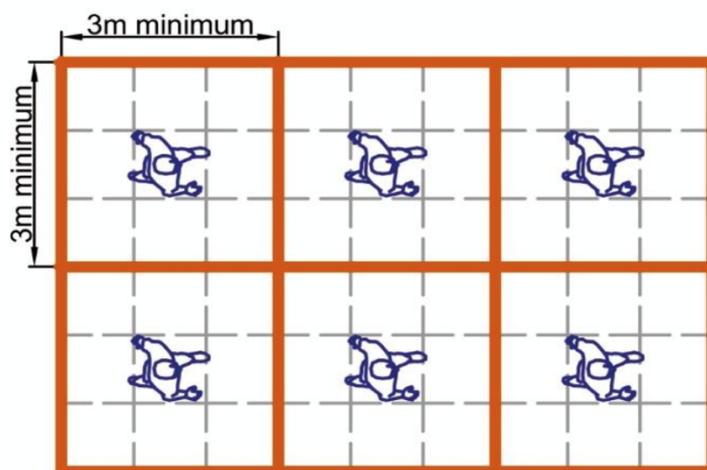
### 7.1 Participant Numbers

7.1.1. SportCheer Scotland recommends a focus on delivering cheerleading sessions with as few participants as is possible and for the minimum amount of time, while still allowing for the session to be run effectively.

7.1.2. Session participant numbers should be risk assessed to ensure physical distancing can be maintained and adhere to ratios agreed by your insurers.

7.1.3. The exact number of participants at an indoor cheerleading session should be based on the Scottish Government requirement for physical distancing, the ventilation and overall configuration of the training space, and with consideration given to the nature of the activities to be undertaken.

7.1.4. Each athlete should be allocated a 3m x 3m training box. Depending on the physical distancing requirements of the local protection level athletes may not be required to remain within the marked area throughout the session.

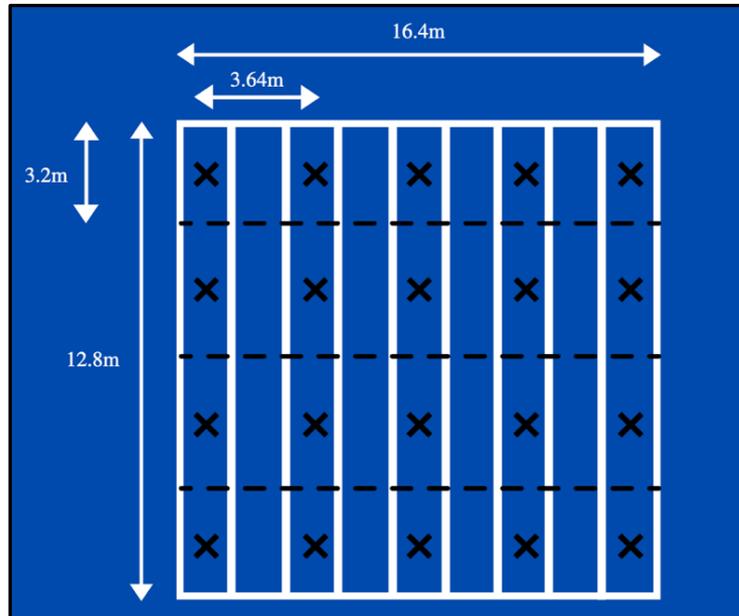


7.1.5. A cheerleading roll mat measures 1.82m x 12.8m and can be divided into four rows of 3m training boxes. Please note that sizes are indicative and that your mats' dimensions may differ.

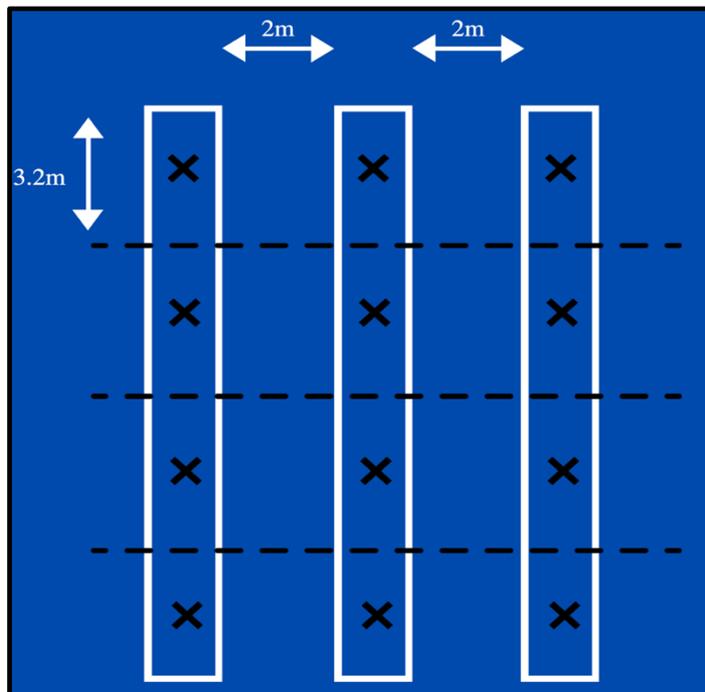
7.1.6. Training boxes should face in the same direction where possible and avoid athletes training face-to-face. Coaches may face the athletes when leading the session but should remain at least 2m away from all participants.

Example layouts for teams can be found on the next two pages.

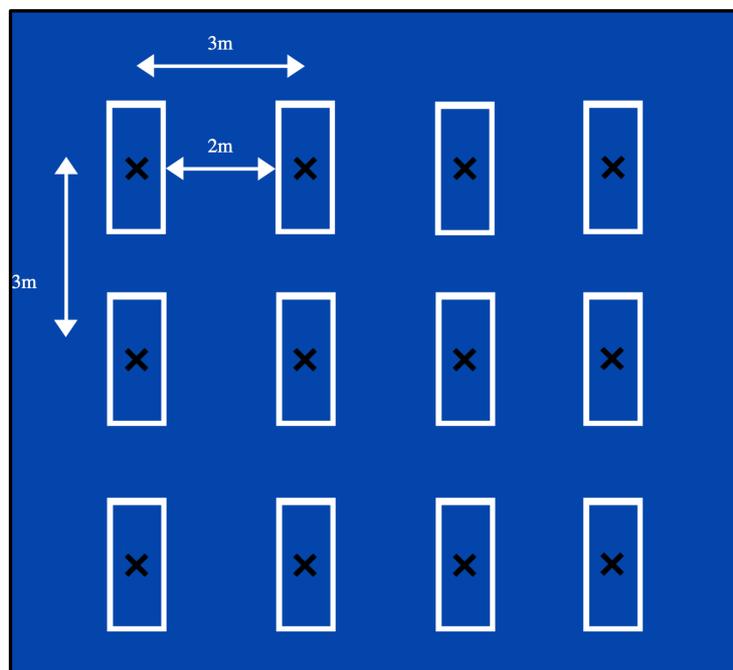
Example layout for a team with a full-sized cheer floor accommodating 20 athletes:



Example layout for a team with three roll mats in a larger hall space and accommodating 12 athletes:



Example layout for a team using panel mats and accounting for 12 athletes:



7.1.7. Athletes aged over the age of 18 years should remain within their designated training space for the duration of the session unless participating in contact activity.

7.1.8. For classes with athletes aged 18 years and over the maximum class participant number is set by how many 3x3m training spaces can be fit safely into your training hall or cheerleading floor and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.

7.1.9. For classes with athletes aged 17 and under the maximum participant number is calculated by dividing your total training area by 9, accounting for a minimum floor area of 9m<sup>2</sup> per person. The total training area may take into account changing rooms, toilet facilities and reception area provided that all areas are connected and well ventilated with fresh air circulating freely between these spaces. The maximum number should include any coaches and staff present and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.

7.1.10. For classes with participants under 5 years, it is recommended that parents are also in attendance to support and minimise physical contact. The maximum capacity for the session is set by how many 3x3m training spaces can be fit safely into your training hall or cheerleading floor and should reflect your ratio agreements with insurers.. The maximum number should include any parents/carers, coaches and staff present.

7.1.11. Participant numbers should adhere to any maximum athlete to coach ratio as required by your club's insurance policy.

7.1.12. If you hire a hall or facility you should contact your venue operator who will be able to provide details on your maximum training numbers. Coaches should be aware that this number may need to be lowered depending on the planned activity: the capacity of a hall may be higher than your cheer mats/floors permit.

7.1.13. If your risk assessment identifies that a facility or a specific space within a facility cannot be opened safely, or identifies activities that are not safe for staff, coaches or participants, then the facility or spaces must remain closed or activities suspended.

### 7.3 Crossover Athletes

7.3.1. The focus should be on restricting any possible risk of COVID-19 transmission between sessions, therefore it is recommended that crossover numbers are minimised as far as is possible for your club and that athletes only attend one session per day therefore only be in one contact bubble per day.

7.3.2. Programme owners should be aware that should a crossover athlete display symptoms of COVID-19 then all other athletes who have been in close contact with that individual may be required to self-isolate in line with Test and Protect procedures.

7.3.3. SportCheer Scotland recommends a return to training approach focussing on fitness, conditioning, jumps and rebuilding current skill level rather than progression to new skills. Grouping athletes by age or ability rather than teams would lower the need for athletes to attend multiple training sessions and in turn lower the risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19 within your programme.

### 7.4 Session Duration

7.4.1 SportCheer Scotland recommends a maximum session duration of 3 hours.

7.4.2. A recommended buffer period of 20-30 minutes should be scheduled between sessions to allow for adequate cleaning and for participants to leave before the next session's athletes arrive.

7.4.3. Immediately following the session all participants must leave and not congregate outside the venue.

### 7.5 Background and Routine Music

7.5.1. Music volume should be kept to a minimum to avoid coaches or participants raising their voice to communicate.

7.5.2. Athletes should be discouraged, where reasonable, from shouting their counts over the music.

7.5.3. Music should be turned off when a coach is providing any instruction to the athletes.

### 7.6 Guidance for Gym / Facility Operators

The following guidance has been provided for program owners and coaches operating indoor sessions at their own gym or facility.

7.6.1 Indoor sport and leisure facilities can reopen depending on the local Protection Level and subject to Scottish Government guidance being followed as outlined at Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on the opening of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities](#).

7.6.2. **sportscotland** has also produced the resource [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#) to help Cheerleading facility operators prepare for reopening. The resource supports Scottish Government guidance by providing further detailed checklists for the reopening of a range of sport specific facilities.

7.6.3. Changing rooms and shower facilities should remain closed where possible. These may be opened for athletes with disabilities or special needs.

7.6.4. Athletes should be instructed to arrive at the session in their training kit where possible.

7.6.5. Club toilets can be opened in line with the Scottish Government [Public Toilets Guidelines](#)

7.6.6. From the 31st August 2020 access to indoor locker rooms and storage areas is permitted for the dropping off and collection of sports equipment or clothing. The cheerleading facility operator should ensure mitigating actions are put in place to minimise the risk of virus transmission including physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning measures.

7.6.7 Facilities can open indoor bar/clubhouse facilities providing that they adhere to Scottish Government guidelines for hospitality, found [here](#).

7.6.8. For cheerleading programmes operating an in-house retail space, for example for the sale of food, drinks or team clothing: these spaces must adhere to the Scottish Government guidelines for retail, found [here](#).

For detailed facility guidance including a checklist that covers use of changing rooms, showers and toilets visit Scottish Government [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on the Opening of Indoor and Outdoor Sport and Leisure Facilities](#)

### 7.7 Maximum Venue Capacity

7.7.1 The maximum capacity of a cheerleading gym or facility should be limited to a minimum floor area of 9m<sup>2</sup> per person.

7.7.2. For this figure, the area is the net usable indoor facility space available to occupants to use, including all changing rooms, corridors, halls, reception areas and toilet facilities.

7.7.3. To calculate your maximum building capacity you should divide your total useable floor space by nine. The total number of athletes, coaches, staff and any supervising parents cannot exceed your maximum venue capacity.

### 7.8 Ventilation

Evidence continues to suggest that, in poorly ventilated indoor spaces, airborne aerosols are a possible transmission route. This is why ventilation is an important part of mitigating against the transmission of COVID-19. Ventilation throughout the venue and into the training space should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided and increased wherever possible. Particular attention should be given to spaces where high-intensity exercise activity takes place.

#### 7.8.1 Venues with natural ventilation

7.8.1.1. Doors and windows to the facility should be opened 15 minutes prior to any planned activity and remain open throughout the session.

7.8.1.2 It is an important risk mitigator to indoor cheerleading sessions that windows and doors are opened even if external temperatures are lower and cause discomfort. Athletes should be instructed to wear more layers or warmer training kit where practical.

7.8.1.3. During colder months the wind and indoor/outdoor temperature difference are greater, therefore any doors and windows do not need to be opened as wide to create the same airflow.

7.8.1.4. Where the training space only has windows on one side of the room consideration should be made to areas where air can become stagnant. Rooms can be well ventilated if the depth of the room is less than half its height. In deeper-plan rooms it is advisable to use a local recirculation unit or fan at the back of the room to enhance air disturbance and reduce the risk of stagnant air.

7.8.1.5. The guidance on physical distancing will inform how many people can safely be involved in activity in each space. Consideration should also be given to reducing the numbers or removing from use any activity spaces that do not have windows, doors or vents to allow natural ventilation.

For further details see section 4 in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation Guide](#).

#### 7.8.2 Venues with mechanical ventilation

7.8.2.1. A target ventilation rate of 20 litres per second per person is advised for indoor sports facilities. This may be achieved in one of three ways:

- Adjustments to ventilation systems to increase fresh air intake.
- Increase natural ventilation by opening doors and windows in line with the guidance above for natural ventilation.
- Controlling numbers by limiting the overall maximum capacity in your building to 9m<sup>2</sup> per person, irrespective of age.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

7.8.2.2. Reducing occupancy in this way whilst sustaining ventilation flows will increase the typical current 10 litres per second per person flow rate of ventilation to at least 20 litres per second per person as fewer people are being served by the ventilation system. To use this figure, first check that your system is operating at a minimum of 10 litres per second per person, then calculate the net useable indoor facility space available to participants to use – including changing rooms, toilet and wash facilities – before dividing by nine.

7.8.2.3 . Ventilation into the building should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided to all areas of the facility and increased wherever possible. Particular attention should be given to spaces where high-intensity exercise activity takes place.

7.8.2.4. Ventilation systems should provide 100% fresh air and not recirculate air from one space to another if possible.

7.8.2.5. All coaches, staff, athletes and any supervising parents must be accounted for in your maximum occupancy.

For further details see section 4 in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation Guide](#); you can also contact a specialist engineer.

### 8: OUTDOOR ACTIVITY GUIDANCE

8.1. Depending on local restriction levels additional cheerleading activities will be permitted if appropriate guidance and risk assessments are implemented. Clubs should ensure they have read the guidance below and have implemented the safety measures prior to starting training.

8.2. Coaches must plan appropriately for the session in advance, be aware of responsibilities, be clear on expectations with participants and build in a review period to reflect on effectiveness and safety of the session. A detailed document including checklists is available to support coaches at Getting Coaches Ready for Sport.

8.3. In planning your outdoor sessions, coaches should be mindful that many athletes have been participating in minimal levels of physical activity during lockdown. The emphasis should be on a gradual return to training, focussing on stretching, conditioning and basic choreography. To clarify, we do not recommend including stunting skills at this stage for athletes of any age group.

8.4. The ICU General Safety rules must always be adhered to, stating: "Athletes must always practice and perform on appropriate surface. Technical skills (stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling) may not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or surfaces with obstructions."

8.5. You should ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.

#### 8.6 Participant Numbers

8.6.1. SportCheer Scotland recommends a focus on delivering cheerleading sessions with as few participants as is possible and for the minimum amount of time, while still allowing for the session to be run effectively.

8.6.2. A 'cheerleading field of play bubble' can be created whilst an outdoor session is taking place, in effect suspending Scottish Government household number guidelines for the duration of the activity. Normal household guidelines will apply before and after the activity takes place for those aged 12 years and over.

8.6.3. Where there is likely to be close contact between participants in an organised cheerleading activity, mitigation should be put in place to minimise risk and keep participants safe. Clubs should therefore consider limiting the numbers taking part and the required duration of the activity.

8.6.4. Class sizes for an outdoor cheerleading session should not exceed the allowed limits defined in Permitted Activities.

8.6.5. There is no limit on total households.

8.6.6. Coaches can deliver multiple sessions in a day.

8.6.7. Where participants are not required to remain physically distant, however good hand hygiene is encouraged and unnecessary contact between athletes should be discouraged.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

8.6.8. The outdoor training space should be sufficiently large for the number of planned participants. SportCheer Scotland recommends a 1/2 football pitch for larger sized sessions (15- 30) and 1/4 football pitch for smaller sessions (1-15).

8.6.9. Where multiple sessions are scheduled coaches should consider staggering class start and finish times to avoid contact between athletes of different groups.

8.6.10. Athletes should not enter any adjacent group at any time.

### 8.7. Session Duration

8.7.1. SportCheer Scotland recommends a maximum session duration of 2 hours.

8.7.2. A recommended buffer period of 15 minutes should be scheduled between sessions to allow for adequate cleaning of equipment and for participants to leave before the next session's athletes arrive.

8.7.3. Immediately following the session all participants must leave and not congregate outside the venue.

### 9. STUNTING AND DANCE LIFTS

9.1. Cheerleading stunting, pyramid skills and dance lifts are activities that have a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission from athlete to athlete. This risk level has been determined by the prolonged level of close contact and in particular face to face proximity. COVID-19 is spread primarily through respiratory droplets in the saliva or nasal discharge when coughing or sneezing. During a training session there is a high moisture level where there is sweat, saliva and moisture rich breath. In activities such as stunting where physical distancing cannot be maintained the risk of transmission between athletes and/ or coaches is elevated.

9.2. For these reasons SportCheer Scotland permits the reintroduction of stunting and dance lifts but only for a set period of time depending upon the club's current protection level.

9.3. Due to prolonged break in stunting, coaches should therefore plan to rebuild athletes' strength and stamina in this area. They should also be considerate that a level of detraining will have taken place, particularly in stunting as these skills will not have been practiced via online classes. A plan for the incremental increase in training intensity with a focus on skill competency should therefore be considered in line with the sessions' risk assessment and SportCheer Scotland's guidance.

9.4. Due to the close proximity between athletes and the higher transmission risk that it presents the following risk mitigators will be required:

- Athletes may only stunt for the time determined by whether it is indoors or outdoors and the local protection level;
- Consistent athlete groups should be considered to minimise wider transmission within a session;
- Athletes should aim to regain strength and skill by practicing fundamental skills and those in which they are already competent and not look to develop new skills;
- Face coverings must be worn by all coaches whilst indoors, unless exempt under The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020;
- Coaches may only make contact with athletes in a "rescue" situation to prevent injury or an unplanned fall. "Rescue spotting" allows coaches to protect the safety of athletes without continuous contact and whilst maintaining the recommended 2m distance unless required in an emergency situation.
- The session must be thoroughly risk assessed for the inclusion of stunt training.
- Coaches should communicate clearly with participants and their parents/carers the intention to reintroduce stunt training. Communications should clearly set out what the club is doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after stunting activity.

9.5. It is recognised that cheerleading clubs across the country operate differently according to their individual and local needs. Each club should assess these local factors when determining the duration of their stunt sessions. It is the responsibility of each programme owner to put together a detailed risk assessment based on these individual factors to ensure a safe environment for all coaches and athletes. Indicators of elevated regional risk may include local population density, any local lockdowns, known R rate, whether the activity is indoors or outdoors, layout of cheerleading facility and the inclusion of any high-risk athletes in the activity.

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9.6. Programme owners and coaches should consult with their insurance provider that correct and full cover is in place for the planned level of stunt activity.

9.7. In planning a stunting training session coaches should be mindful that we have had many months without cheerleading activity, therefore a level of detraining has taken place. A graduated plan for training and session content needs to be considered in line with the session's risk assessment.

## 10: TUMBLE SKILLS

SportCheer Scotland recognises that spotting and manual support of athletes is a fundamental activity within cheerleading sessions, both for successful skill development and for ensuring athlete safety. When supporting an athlete, the coach will encroach within 2m of the athlete for longer than 3 seconds, therefore presenting a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission. In order to resume coach-athlete contact safely the following additional mitigations are required.

Programmes wishing to reintroduce the manual support of athletes must follow all measures included within the SCS Return to Cheerleading guidance including, but not limited to, venue capacity, risk assessments, physical distancing requirements and increased hygiene practices.

10.1. The following restrictions will apply at each Protection Level:

Level 3: No coach-athlete contact. Rescue spotting is permitted.

Level 2: No coach-athlete contact. Rescue spotting is permitted.

Level 1: Coach-athlete contact is permitted for a maximum of 15 minutes per group per day.

Level 0/ **Beyond Level 0**: Coach-athlete contact is permitted for all pre-planned activity, with consideration of risk levels and minimising unnecessary contact.

10.2. All coaches must wear a face covering for the duration of the session. Athletes are not required to wear a face covering but may choose to do so.

10.3. The reintroduction of manual support should be assessed by the coach as necessary to the skill development, and only once all non-contact preparatory drills and activities have been exhausted.

10.4. Coaches and athletes should consider their individual circumstances which include, but are not limited to, underlying health conditions and the increased risk of transmission during contact activity.

10.5. All athletes must be given notice of the intention to return to coach-athlete contact and be given the option to opt in or out. Coaches must consider arrangements for athletes that do not wish to participate in coach contact so that those athletes are not excluded from the session.

10.6. Coaches must consider the reintroduction of coach-athlete contact within their risk assessment.

10.7. Tumble sessions should initially focus on the rebuilding of strength and technique that may have been lost over the past year due to restrictions on training.

10.8. In the early stages of returning to cheerleading, athletes should only take part in skills they can competently complete independently without coach or other athlete intervention as spotting is not permitted in Protections Levels 3 and 4 for outdoor training and Level 2-4 for indoor training.

10.9. In an emergency situation, coaches are permitted to “rescue spot” an athlete to prevent athlete injury or an unplanned fall. This includes hands on spotting or support but not continuous support through an entire movement. This applies to all age groups.

10.10. As per equipment guidelines all tumbling equipment (crash mats, wedge mats, etc.) should be spaced a minimum of 2m apart and at a recommended distance of 3m. Equipment should be properly cleaned and sanitised between use. Physical distancing should be maintained when queuing for using a piece of equipment. This applies to all age groups.

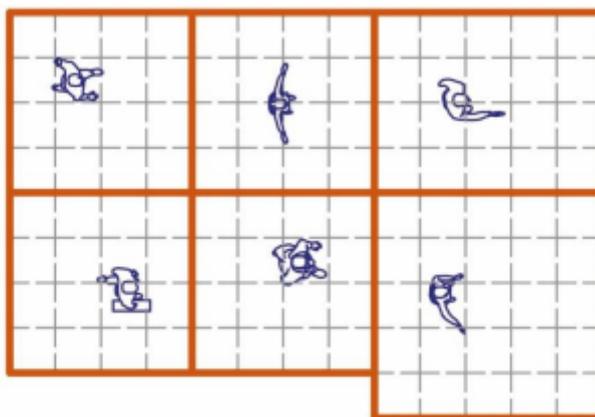
10.11. In planning a session with a reintroduction of tumbling skills training please be mindful that we have had many months without cheerleading activity, therefore a level of detraining has taken place. A graduated plan for training and session content needs to be considered in line with the session risk assessment.

### 10.12. Standing Tumbling

10.12.1. If possible, it is recommended that athletes stay within their 9m<sup>2</sup> area when performing standing tumbling drills or skills.

10.12.2. If necessary, it is recommended that an athlete's individual training area is extended to allow for performance of more dynamic skills (for example, standing back handspring), exceeding the 9m<sup>2</sup>.

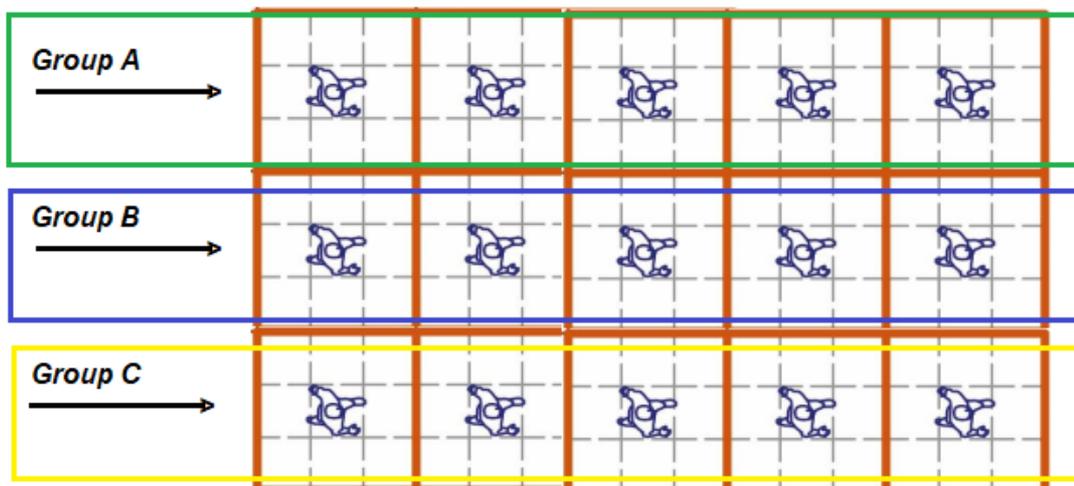
10.12.3 Coaches should take into account the need for expanded training areas when determining how many athletes their venue can safely hold during any given training session. A taller athlete would require an extended training area to complete a back handspring without encroaching within 2m of another athlete. See example of extended separate training areas:



### 10.13. Running Tumbling

10.13.1. As far as reasonably practicable, coaches should minimise the number of athletes sharing a running tumbling strip at any given time.

10.13.2. If venue space and equipment allows, consideration should be given towards the formation of 'tumbling bubbles.' Athletes whose individual areas fall within a tumbling strip should remain in that group for running tumbling to decrease the number of athletes having contact with that area of the floor. See example on the next page.



10.13.3. Athletes should maintain physical distancing when queuing for a running tumbling strip, and consideration should be given to the time between each individual athlete's tumbling pass.

### 10.14. Outdoor Session Considerations

10.14.1. Coaches must ensure that a suitable clean and dry surface area is provided i.e. cheerleading roll mats, tumble track or air floor whether tumbling indoors or outdoors.

10.14.2. It is essential that you check in advance that appropriate insurance policies are in place for all outdoor tumbling training and that insurance is valid for all planned activities.

10.14.3. Activity must be thoroughly risk assessed for the inclusion of outdoor tumbling training and hands-on spotting based on local circumstances.

10.14.4. Coaches should communicate clearly with participants and their parents/ carers the intention to reintroduce hands-on spotting of tumbling skills.

10.14.5. Communications should clearly set out what the club is doing to manage risk, and what advice they are giving to individuals before, during and after tumbling activity.

### 11: FACE COVERINGS

11.1. Athletes are not required to wear a face covering while participating in physical activity including contact activities such as stunting, however no athlete should be discouraged from wearing a face covering should they decide to do so. Individual clubs may wish to enforce their own policies surrounding face coverings.

11.2. When indoors, face coverings should be worn before and after the activity and when in “non-cheerleading” areas of the training venue e.g. reception, toilets etc. This is a mandatory requirement unless an individual has a ‘reasonable excuse’ not to wear a face covering. For example, if you have a health condition or you are disabled, including hidden disabilities such as autism, dementia or a learning disability. It is good practice for clubs to ensure all athlete medical records are up to date.

11.3. Face coverings must be worn by coaches and staff when indoors, except where an exemption applies, or if there is a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering such as:

11.3.1. Where there is difficulty in communicating with participants who may not be close by and safety is an issue. In such cases alternative measures should be considered such as the use of a face visor.

11.3.2. Being physically active or exercising as part of the coached session.

11.4. Coaches should remain 2m distant from athletes at all times when a face covering is not worn.

11.5. Babies, toddlers and children **under 12 years of age** are not required to wear a face covering.

11.6. Athletes aged 5 – 12 years must be supervised when wearing a face covering.

11.7. The Scottish Government has provided the following exemptions for those who are not required to wear a face covering [here](#). Those exempt under the guidance and regulations do not have to prove their exemption and should not be made to wear a face covering or denied access to your gym or facility.

11.8. Individual discretion should be applied in considering the use of face coverings for children including, for example, children with breathing difficulties and disabled children who would struggle to wear a face covering.

11.9. Programmes and coaches should be aware that face coverings discriminate against some deaf people who need to look at lips to help communicate. Staff in facilities should be made aware that it is okay to remove their face coverings to communicate with someone who relies on lip reading and facial expressions.

11.10. Face coverings guidance varies when using hospitality services such as cafés, bars and restaurants. For further information refer to [Scottish Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): tourism and hospitality sector guidance](#).

## 12: HEALTH AND HYGIENE

**As restrictions are eased, the emphasis will continue to be on personal responsibility, good practice and informed judgement. The latest information on Coronavirus in Scotland can be accessed on the Scottish Government website at [Coronavirus in Scotland](#). Operators and participants should however continue to:**

- maintain and promote good ventilation. Further information is available at [Scottish Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): ventilation guidance](#)
- wear face coverings in indoor sport and leisure facilities when not taking part in physical activity
- use good hand and respiratory hygiene and surface cleaning
- stay at home and book a test if you develop coronavirus symptoms
- work from home where possible and appropriate
- apply and adhere to 'give people space' messaging

12.1. Ensure access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained and has been updated appropriately for the COVID-19 pandemic and that first aiders have appropriate training. We recommend that you also contact your first aid qualification provider for advice regarding any change to first aid protocols.

12.2. In the event of first aid treatment being required it is recognised that a suitably qualified person, coach or supervising adult may be required to attend to the injured participant. The COVID-19 Officer should consider processes for managing this as part of their risk assessment. This could include but not be limited to;

- Provision of suitable PPE (A minimum of face mask and gloves should be considered)
- Training of coaches/supervising adults
- Presence of one parent/guardian being required at the activity for children/vulnerable adults.

12.3. Cleaning of equipment, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures to be implemented and provision should be made for these.

12.4. Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. For instance, common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) should where possible be left open but if not possible, regular cleaning with disposable gloves should be undertaken.

12.5. Make hand sanitisers or wipes available for use at the entrance/exit to the venue/facility where this is possible. Access throughout training venue will also encourage more regular sanitising. Hand sanitiser should be at least 60% alcohol based and detergent wipes appropriate for the surface they are being used on. Cleaning products should conform to EN14476 standards.

12.6. It is the responsibility of the club to provide appropriate hand and surface sanitisers.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

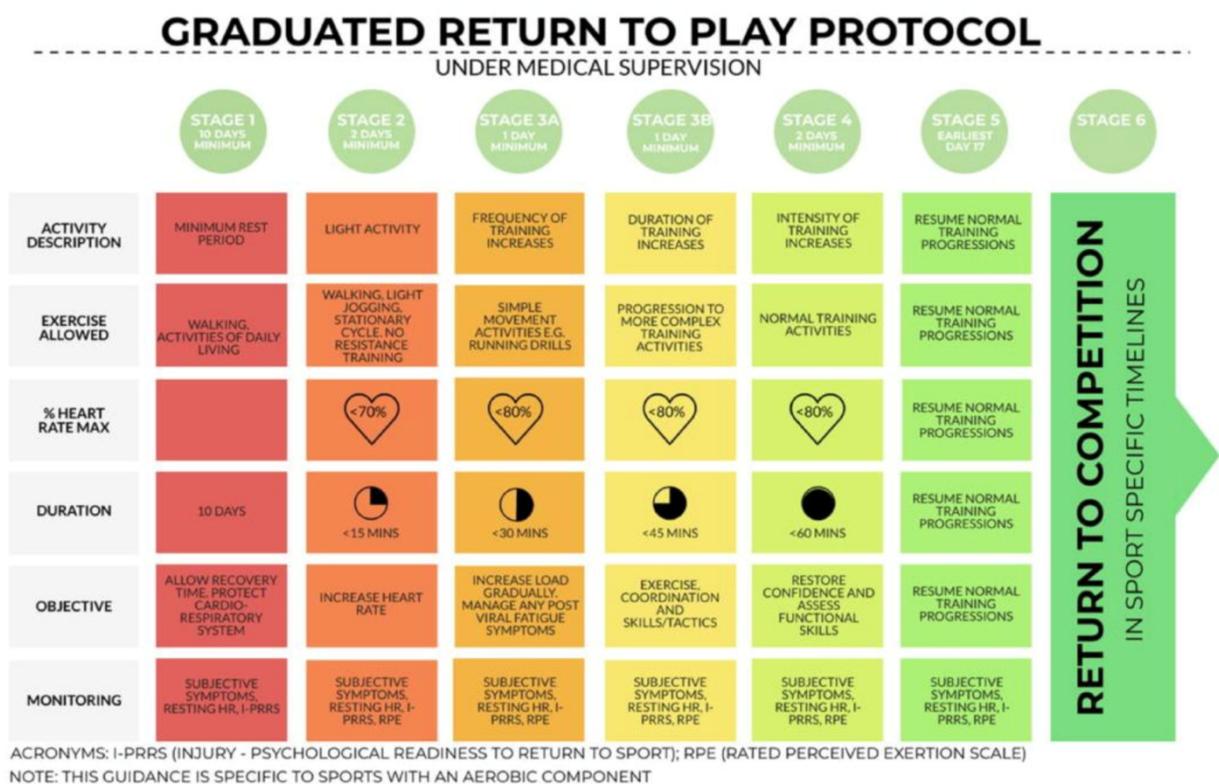
12.7. Athletes should be instructed to wash their hands for 20 seconds before leaving home to attend the session.

12.8. Be aware that disabled people may face greater challenges implementing regular handwashing because of additional support needs. Some disabled people may need to use touch to help them get information from their environment and physical support. It is important they are not prevented from doing this, but operators should be aware that this increases the likelihood of virus transmission.

12.9. All coaches and participants should be encouraged, where possible, to avoid touching equipment, surfaces, and their face and mouth.

12.10. Ensure signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are clearly displayed and up to date.

12.11. If an athlete has displayed COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19 they must follow the UK Home Counties Institute of Sport Return to Play Protocol:



INFOGRAPHIC CREATED BY UK HOME COUNTRIES INSTITUTES OF SPORT; ELLIOTT, N. ELLIOTT, J. BISWAS, A. MARTIN, R. HERON, N.

A checklist for health, hygiene and cleaning considerations and actions is available here: [Getting your Facilities Fit for Sport](#)

Additional resources on health and hygiene can be found on the following websites:

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

- Health Protection Scotland: [COVID-19: Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings](#)
- Health Protection Scotland: [Hand Hygiene](#)
- St. John's Ambulance [COVID-19 Advice for First Aiders](#)

### 13: EQUIPMENT

13.1. Non-essential sharing of equipment should be discouraged i.e. poms/ training mats. Where a tumbling aid is being used only one athlete should use it at a time, and it must be sufficiently cleaned between athletes. Shared equipment should be cleaned before, during and after each session. For further information on cleaning requirements the UK Government has provided the resource [COVID-19: Cleaning in Non-Healthcare Settings Outside the Home](#).

13.2. Coaches should remove any additional equipment including crash mats, poms and tumble aids that are not essential as part of the planned activity.

13.3. All training mats, markers and equipment should be put out prior to the start of a class by the session coach to avoid participants touching them unnecessarily.

13.4. Movement of equipment should be included in risk assessments including set up of sessions as well as transport of equipment e.g. to outdoor space.

### 14: CLEANING

14.1. A cleaning plan should be in place with provisions for facilities and equipment and with particular notice of any high frequency touch points i.e. door handles and gates.

14.2. A buffer time of 20-30 minutes should be included between sessions to allow for adequate cleaning and for participants to leave without classes overlapping, as appropriate to your venue and planned activity.

14.3. Clear guidance should be provided to staff and coaches on any cleaning responsibilities you expect of them.

14.4. Should an athlete develop symptoms while participating at a cheerleading session you should clean all public areas that the individual occupied with detergent and disinfectant. This should include any potentially contaminated high contact areas such as door handles or grab-rails. Once this process has been completed the area can be put back into use.

14.5. Any public area that a symptomatic individual passed through (spent minimal time in) e.g. corridors, and which are not visibly contaminated with any body fluids, do not need to be further decontaminated beyond your routine cleaning processes.

14.6. Environmental cleaning and disinfection should be undertaken using disposable cloths and mop heads using standard detergent and disinfectant that are active against bacteria and viruses. All cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags.

Additional resources on cleaning can be found on the following websites:

UK Government: [COVID-19: Cleaning in Non-Healthcare Setting Outside the Home](#)

Health Protection Scotland: [COVID-19: Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings](#)

### 15: SAFEGUARDING

15.1. All adults involved in coaching children or vulnerable adults in an organised cheerleading environment should have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

15.2. Cheerleading coaches and programmes should always ensure appropriate ratios of coach/adult to child/vulnerable adult.

15.3. Health, safety and welfare policies should always be risk assessed and implemented.

15.4. Coaches and instructors working with children should familiarise themselves with the additional considerations developed by Children 1st: [Child Wellbeing and Protection Considerations](#).

### 16: EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

COVID-19 is affecting everyone. But the impact of the pandemic is not being felt equally. Before the pandemic certain groups were less likely to participate in sport and physical activity. These groups are also the most at risk of worsening inequalities due to COVID-19:

- Older people
- Disabled people
- Ethnic minorities
- Women
- People from deprived communities

16.1. There is evidence that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups have a higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. COVID-19 patients who are admitted to critical care or who die in hospital have included a disproportionately large number of people from ethnic minorities. In the UK, one third of patients admitted to critical care with COVID-19 were from an ethnic minority group, despite constituting only one eighth of the UK population.

16.2. The elevated risk to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups has not yet been explained: further research will determine what combination of factors leads to higher coronavirus infection rates and/or more severe outcomes of COVID-19 among ethnic minorities. Programme owners and coaches must consider the higher risk level to athletes from these groups when completing the return to cheerleading risk assessment.

16.3. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need extra support to be active and cheerleading coaches should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

16.4. The evidence emerging has clear implications for how we design and deliver sport and physical activity. Some key areas for consideration include:

- Communication – Digital exclusion is a key issue. With so many services and so much information moving online it risks worsening the health impacts of the pandemic. Cheerleading programmes and coaches should think innovatively about the range of ways we can provide information to people in a manner that is mindful of digital exclusion.
- Accessibility – Accessibility of our environments is another key issue emerging from the pandemic. As clubs and facilities re-open it is important to build understanding of any athletes with disabilities and their specific accessibility needs. Consideration may include, but is not limited to, hygiene, physical distancing and face coverings.
- Anxiety, mental health and wellbeing – The COVID-19 pandemic is leading to an increased risk of anxiety and mental ill-health. Participation in sport and physical activity is known to have significant benefits for mental health, therefore it is vital that clubs continue to promote those benefits and encourage people to get involved.

## RETURN TO CHEERLEADING GUIDANCE

- Confidence – Confidence to return to sport is a big issue across all groups. We know that some groups are at higher risk from COVID-19 than others (including some ethnic minorities, disabled people and households experiencing poverty). These groups may be even more nervous about returning to cheerleading. Pressure must not be placed on athletes from any of these groups to return to cheerleading immediately: clubs should instead ensure there is still a place on the team for these athletes when they feel it is personally safe to return and/or they have an agreement from their doctor to do so.

Additional resources can be found on the following websites:

Scottish Disability Sport: [Principles for Participants with Disabilities Returning to Physical Activity and Sport in Scotland](#)

Scottish Government: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Evidence Gathered for Scotland's Route Map - Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact assessment](#)

Mental Health Collective: <https://mentalhealthcollective.org.uk/>

### 17: NHS SCOTLAND TEST AND PROTECT PROTOCOLS

17.1. [Test and Protect](#) is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.

17.2. Changes come into force in Scotland from 9 August 2021 for close contacts of those testing positive for Covid-19. Those with symptoms or testing positive will still be required to self-isolate. Close contacts aged 18 years or older who have been double vaccinated more than 14 days prior and with no symptoms will be able to get a PCR test and end self-isolation if the result is negative.

17.2.1. Those aged 5-17 years of age will also be able to take a PCR test and end self-isolation (without being double vaccinated) if the test result is negative.

17.2.2. This approach will be encouraged but not required for children under 5 years.

17.2. Containing outbreaks early is crucial to reduce the spread of COVID-19, protect the NHS and save lives and avoid the reintroduction of social and economic lockdown. This will support the country to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life.

17.3. It is a mandatory requirement that coaches and/or programme owners work with their nominated COVID-19 Officer to keep records of attendance at each session and ensure contact details for athletes are up to date. Should an athlete test positive for COVID-19 following one of your sessions you will be required to assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service to identify and contact individuals who may have been exposed to the virus. Those individuals may be required to self-isolate for 14 days.

17.4. A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#).

4 JUNE 2020

## TEST & PROTECT: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Following these steps is vital to tackle coronavirus in Scotland

<p><b>1</b></p>  <p><b>RECOGNISE SYMPTOMS</b></p> <p>A new persistent cough, fever, or loss or change in sense of taste or smell means you should immediately begin household isolation.</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>  <p><b>REQUEST A TEST RIGHT AWAY</b></p> <p>It is important to get a test as soon as possible. Visit <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/inform-scotland/test-and-protect">NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect</a> or call <b>0800 028 2816</b> if you cannot get online.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>  <p><b>ISOLATE</b></p> <p>Isolate for 7 days from symptom start date, longer if fever continues and 48 hours after fever ends. Others you live with should isolate for 14 days.</p>
<p><b>4</b></p>  <p><b>GET TESTED</b></p> <p>When isolating, you should only leave home to get tested. There are various ways of having this done.</p>	<p><b>5</b></p>  <p><b>GET RESULTS</b></p> <p>They should be with you within 48 hours.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>  <p><b>PROVIDE DETAILS</b></p> <p>If you have coronavirus, NHS contact tracers will contact you to confidentially ask who you have had contact with recently. If you don't have the virus, you and your household can stop isolating.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>  <p><b>NHS INFORMS CONTACTS</b></p> <p>If you have coronavirus, the NHS will contact the people you have had close contact with. Your name will not be shared unless you give permission. All data will be held safely and securely.</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>  <p><b>CLOSE CONTACTS ISOLATE</b></p> <p>They will be asked to isolate for 14 days from the last time they had contact with you.</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>  <p><b>HOUSEHOLD OF CLOSE CONTACT</b></p> <p>If the close contact has no symptoms, others in their household don't need to isolate. If the close contact develops symptoms, they should follow this guide starting from step 1.</p>

If you do not have community or family support and need essential help, call the National Assistance Helpline on **0800 111 4000** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or via textphone on **0800 111 4114**. The helpline is for those who cannot leave their home or get the help they need elsewhere.

For current health advice and more information about the Test & Protect service visit [NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect](https://www.nhs.uk/inform-scotland/test-and-protect)



17.5. If an athlete or coach contacts to say that they, or a member of their household, have displayed COVID-19 symptoms you should encourage the athlete or parent book a test. You should not contact anyone to inform them that they may have come into contact with a positive case: this is the sole responsibility of NHS Test and Protect. Full guidance on how to book a test is available at [NHS Inform](https://www.nhs.uk/inform) or by calling **0800 028 2816** if you cannot get online.

17.6. If an athlete or coach tests positive for COVID-19 the National Contact Tracing Service will help identify who they have been in close contact with and will contact your Club's COVID-19 Officer. At this point you will be required to provide the details outlined below. You should not contact anyone whom this individual came into contact with directly.

**If you are made aware of a potential positive case or contact within your sessions and are unsure of how to proceed you can contact NHS Test and Protect at 0800 030 8012.**

17.7. Information to collect:

17.7.1. Coaches and Staff

1. The names of all coaches and staff at the session

2. A contact number for each coach and staff member
3. The date and times that each coach and staff member were working

### 17.7.2. Athletes

1. The name of each athlete, or if multiple athletes attend from the same household then nominate a lead athlete, taking note of the size of the household group.
2. Contact details for each athlete or lead athlete of a household group.
3. Date and times of attendance. Where possible record the arrival and departure times.

17.8. If any athlete/parent does not have a contact number you are permitted to accept either a postal address or email address.

17.9. There is no legal requirement for individuals to provide their contact details for the purposes of NHS Test and Protect. In this instance clubs and coaches are entitled to refuse entry of any individual to a session or into their facility if they do not share their contact details for the benefit of Test and Protect.

### 17.10. Storing Data Securely

17.10.1. The COVID-19 Officer should keep class attendance records and contact details in a secure place and in line with your club's data protection policy. More information on data protection for the purpose of Test and Protect can be found in the Scottish Government resource [COVID-19 Test and Protect: Multi-Sector Guidance on Collection of Customer and Visitor Contact Details](#).

17.10.2. Data collected must not be shared with any individual or organisation that is not listed in your club's privacy policy.

17.10.3. Club management should not use the contact data to directly contact staff or athlete, even in the event that an athlete tests positive for COVID-19.

17.10.4. Data should be stored for 21 days to cover the full duration of the typical incubation period and some additional time in which a person may become infectious.

17.10.5. In order to gather and store customer information securely, sports facility operators may need to be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This will be the case if you are using an electronic system to gather and store data.

17.10.6. If you are unsure whether you need to register, please contact the ICO via their helpline on 0303 123 1113, or visit [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

### 17.11. How to Dispose of Data

17.11.1. After the 21 day period attendance records should be destroyed. If paper records have been kept then these pages can be destroyed through secure

shredding or other destructive process. Where records are stored online Clubs should ensure that data collected is not stored longer than the 21 day period and are not used for any marketing or external resource.

### 17.12 What should someone do if they have coronavirus symptoms?

17.12.1. If a person has a continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change in taste or smell, they should self-isolate and request a coronavirus test right away. Further information is available [NHS Inform](#) or by calling **0800 028 2816** if they cannot get online.

17.12.2. The Coronavirus (COVID-19): Test and Protect information leaflet provides information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland.

### 17.13 Protect Scotland App

17.13.1. NHS Scotland has launched a free mobile app designed to help with contact tracing efforts and slow the spread of COVID-19. The app will alert users if they have been in close contact with another app user who tests positive for coronavirus.

17.13.2. Supported by a dedicated Protect Scotland website, the app is an extra tool complementing existing person-to-person contact tracing which remains the main component of NHS Scotland's Test and Protect system.

17.13.3. Further information on the Protect Scotland app is available at [www.protect.scot](http://www.protect.scot).

### 18: FURLOUGHED STAFF

18.1. It is for each club and/or programme owner to decide when it is the appropriate time to return staff to work from the Coronavirus Government Job Retention ('furlough') scheme.

18.2. A furloughed employee can take part in volunteer work if they do not provide services which generate revenue for, or on behalf of, your organisation or a linked or associated organisation.

18.3. Changes to the furlough scheme took effect from 1 August 2020. Further information is available at [UK Govt: Job Retention Scheme Changes](#).

### 19: BOOKINGS AND PAYMENTS

19.1. Online or phone bookings should be taken where possible. Contactless or online payment options should be made available where possible to avoid handling cash. However please be aware that a proportion of athletes will not have a bank account or have access to online banking in these cases cash should be allowed.

19.2. A register of class participants should be maintained for each session, in line with data protection legislation. Further information on data collection for the purpose of Test and Protect can be found [here](#).

19.3. Where bookings and payments cannot be made online additional risk mitigators should be in place i.e. face coverings and 2m physical distancing.

### 20: COMMUNICATIONS WITH ATHLETES, STAFF AND PARENTS

20.1. Programme owners and coaches should communicate clearly and regularly what the club is doing to mitigate the risks of transmission at cheerleading classes and give clear advice on what is expected of athletes before, during and after training.

20.2. Ensure all coaches and staff are aware of any changes to operations and any additional expectations you may have of them.

20.3. Update all athletes and parents with clear information on all changes to their normal procedures including any changes to access, class times and payment methods. Programme owners and coaches should ideally publish an action plan detailing their plans to re-open safely.

20.4. Ensure up to date signage on guidelines for participating safely and promoting hygiene measures are displayed clearly.

20.5. Communicate clearly opening times and how people can safely access a facility, if relevant, for example through a booking or queuing system.

20.6. It is more important than ever to consider inclusive guidance for people who need support to be active and sports facility operators should consider this as part of their work to encourage people to return.

20.7 The Scottish Government has advised that the protection level within each area will be reviewed weekly and as such may change frequently, at short notice and have an impact on your sessions. You should therefore ensure that your staff, athletes and their parents/carers receive updates in a timely fashion to allow them to plan.

### 21: SCREENING

21.1. Due to the close contact nature of cheerleading, SportCheer Scotland recommends the screening of all participants to ascertain whether individuals are able to train safely.

21.2. Before leaving the house to participate in cheerleading, athletes should be asked to consider the COVID-19 Screening Form, available on page 29.

21.3. Any positive responses to questions on the COVID-19 Screening Form will mean that the individual cannot attend the session and they should be advised to return home to self-isolate as per Scottish Government and NHS Scotland guidance.

21.4. There should be no pressure placed upon an athlete to attend a training session or competition if they have symptoms or they feel like the environment is unsafe for them.

21.5. If at any time an individual feels uncomfortable with the management of the session, then there should be no pressure placed on that individual if they decide to opt-out of that session.

21.6. Clubs should ensure that where screening takes place it is conducted in a suitable area away from venue entrances, ensuring good social distancing practices.

21.7. Staff and coaches should be provided with education on COVID-19 and in identifying any potential symptoms. These have been identified as:

- High temperature over 37.8 °C
- New and persistent cough
- Loss of taste or sense of smell

In addition, other symptoms can include:

- Shortness of Breath
- Hoarseness
- Sneezing
- Wheezing
- Tiredness
- Sore Throat
- Runny Nose

21.8. Any information recording in screening participants should be securely stored for 21 days before being destroyed.

21.9. Screening forms should not be collected by the coach or programme owner.

## COVID-19 SCREENING FORM

Club/ Programme Name:

Athlete:

Date:

Please answer all questions accurately and honestly:

Are you experiencing any of the following?

- A high temperature? Yes / No
- A new continuous cough? Yes / No
- A loss of taste and/or smell? Yes / No

Are you awaiting a Coronavirus test result? Yes / No

Have you been told by NHS Scotland Test and Protect service that you have been in contact with a person who has Coronavirus within the last 14 days? Yes / No

Have you travelled from outside the UK in the last 14 days? Yes / No.

Has anyone from your household displayed any of the COVID-19 symptoms outlined above?

**If you have answered yes to any of the above, you should NOT attend the session.**

You should self-isolate as per NHS Scotland advice and avoid contact with any other participants for 14 days from time of return. If you are symptom free for 14 days you may return to cheerleading activities



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