

LTA Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Advice for coaches



21/03/2020

The guidance below reflects updated advice following the Government's announcement on Friday (20 March). Further guidance will be added to this page in due course relating to the statement made by the Chancellor as part of this announcement.

The information has been produced based on the latest information available to us and in consultation with both Tennis Scotland and Tennis Wales and follows our continued dialogue with Government.

The guidance on this page is intended to be read in conjunction with the information on the LTA's [main coronavirus \(Covid-19\) page](#) which provides links to the latest Government and NHS advice.

Clubhouses, Gyms & Social Spaces

Following the Government's announcement (Friday 20 March) that social spaces such as pubs, gyms and leisure centres must close, **all tennis clubhouses and similar social facilities should be closed as soon as possible.**

Courts however can remain open for use to help ensure people remain active, subject to strict social distancing and hygiene practices being employed. Further details on how this can be done are provided below.

Running Recreational Coaching Programmes and Tennis Activity

We all know tennis is a unique sport which has many benefits – the main one being health and wellbeing. While the LTA has suspended its organised activity, the Government have currently indicated that physical exercise (including grass roots coaching) that takes place at a safe distance from others and in safe exercise environments is something that can continue at this time.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has specifically advised us that tennis is one of the best examples of social distancing in practice, and so should be encouraged as long as the guidance permits.

Venues and coaching businesses across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. They are also independent organisations and businesses. Making an assessment of whether a safe exercise environment can be provided also depends on a range of factors, which will apply differently at each venue – it is the responsibility of coaching organisations and venues to make that assessment together based on their local environment.

If a venue decides to continue coaching or tennis activity, we want to provide some practical suggestions to help you to operate in line with the Government's advice:

Adapting sessions to accommodate the advice on social distancing.

- Closure of all social spaces at a venue, including changing and toilet facilities
- Use online booking for courts and sessions where at all possible – click [here](#) to access CTC court booking page
- A buffer period be implemented between court booking slots to allow time for players to leave before next players arrive
- Activity should only take place where travel to and from the courts can be done in a way compliant with social distancing advice, with players not travelling together unless they are part of a group residing in the same place
- Activity should be in line with the Government's advised social distancing measures at all times (defined by Public Health England as spending no more than 15 minutes and not within a 2-metre distance talking to someone), including when arriving to and departing from a court
- If you are not confident that you can adhere to the social distancing guidance when undertaking tennis and coaching activity in doubles format, you should only facilitate activity with two players per court
- Players are advised not to change ends during play

- Coaches to avoid close proximity when giving feedback, or when players are resting
- Ensure no physical contact between players during warm-ups or games
- No extra-curricular or social activity should take place

Further Government information around social distancing is available [here](#).

The Government is advising those who are particularly vulnerable to risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.

Adopting best practice in relation to hygiene, especially before and after training sessions, including but not limited to:

- Players should wash hands before and after a tennis session without exception (or use an alcohol gel if washing hands is not possible)
- Clean and wipe down equipment, including rackets, courtside benches, cones. Do not allow racket sharing or use of communal rackets
- For tennis balls, consider using new balls where possible, and consider using a small number of balls for a lesson so fresh balls can be used for each session; achieve this in a financially feasible way, coaches can consider using a small number of balls (1-2 cans) for a lesson so fresh balls can be used for each session
- Adaptations to drills will be needed, such as the use of live ball drills over basket drills; furthermore, it is recommended that only coaches touch the balls and players avoid touching the balls. Alternatively, each player could have their own tennis ball(s) clearly marked with their own initials and ensure that they are the only person to touch that tennis ball with their hands. For other tennis balls, other methods could be used such as lifting with a foot and racket or scooping up from the ground with the racket
- Avoid touching your face
- Outdoor courts and open spaces are preferable to indoor spaces

Coaching programmes and venues will want to make sensible decisions around what is practically feasible and review this on a daily basis, in line with the current and evolving Government advice. Be aware that this is liable to change at very short notice and so should be checked ahead of every session. We recommend you keep checking the official LTA position on this web page and at this [link](#) to stay abreast of all current recommendations.

LTA Programmes and Initiatives

All activity relating specifically to the Big Tennis Weekends, Tennis for Kids (see below for more information) and Team Challenge is on hold until further notice.

Tennis for Kids Delivery (LTA Youth)

Following on from the communication that LTA Youth training days are postponed until further notice, all activity relating to Tennis for Kids will also be placed on hold.

LTA will shortly be closing the Tennis for Kids course search finder and implementing measures on ClubSpark to avoid new courses being uploaded for the time being. The fulfilment of coach and participant packs will also be postponed.

Following the Government's statement on Monday to keep social gatherings to a minimum and avoid unnecessary travel, LTA provides the following recommendations to coaches:

- Avoid uploading any new Tennis for Kids courses
- Cancel any courses that have 0 bookings
- Take immediate steps to postpone or cancel courses due to start in the next few months and which have bookings, offering a refund to parents (£25) if cancelled
- For any courses that are part way through, postpone or cancel the remaining sessions, offering a partial refund to parents (dependent on the number of sessions remaining). Please note that partial refund for Tennis for Kids cannot be actioned through ClubSpark so will need to be organised independently.
- For courses starting later in the year, change the status from 'Public' or 'Direct Link Only' to 'Hidden'