

Coronavirus Statement

17 March 2020

The UK government has advised that everyone in the UK should now avoid “non-essential” travel and contact with others to fight coronavirus. Whilst it has not issued any ban on public gatherings of any size either indoors or outdoors at this stage, the advice is to avoid non-essential contact with others, [including going to sporting events, pubs, clubs, theatres and social venues](#).

As a result, England Athletics advises that all face-to-face activity such as club training sessions, events, competitions, club committee and face-to-face meetings, athlete camps, running groups and social events should be suspended until at least the end of April.

The decision has been taken in the interests of athletes, runners, officials, coaches, volunteers, supporters and the wider athletics and running communities. This decision is also in alignment with actions taken by the home country athletics federations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and is similar to action taken by other sports.

Where possible, athletes and runners at all levels are encouraged to maintain their own personal fitness and keep active during this time, while following government guidelines about safe distance and safe exercise environments.

England Athletics will continue to review and monitor government advice and will provide detailed updates on the impact to our sport in the coming weeks. We appreciate that the current situation will undoubtedly place our member clubs in a difficult situation and we are working with UKA and the other Home Country Athletics Federations on the best way to help alleviate the situation and will update you as plans evolve.

Social distancing and advice

Social distancing measures (as defined by Public Health England as spending more than 15 minutes and within a 2-metre distance talking to someone) are now advised not only if we test positive or have symptoms, but in day to day life. As well as current travel advice, the current UK government is advising anyone with a “new, continuous” cough or high temperature and those they live with need to self-isolate for 14 days.

[Click here for NHS advice on infection control](#)

[Click here for the government's advice if you have symptoms](#)

At Risk groups

The latest advice from the government’s chief medical adviser is that those over 70 currently do not need to be self-isolating. However, in the coming days, every Briton over the age of 70 and those in at-risk groups over the age of 70 will be advised to be “largely shielded from social contact” for 12 weeks to help protect themselves. Those with underlying medical issues such as high blood pressure, lung complaints and weakened or compromised immune systems are more likely to develop serious illness as a result of the disease.

Anyone with a higher risk from viruses such as cold or flu should take sensible steps to reduce the risk of picking up infections. [Click here for NHS advice on infection control](#) - it is summarized below:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus
- use phone, online services, or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services

[Click here for the government's advice if you have symptoms](#)

Courses

All qualification and development courses have been postponed. Everyone who has booked onto a course will be sent an email asap informing them of the postponement and will be able to defer their booking.

Where we can, we will attempt to continue with education via online methods (e.g. webinar, Skype etc). However, this may not be practically possible for all activities. Where not, the aim will be to re-schedule courses to a later date wherever feasible.

Qualifying races

We are currently undergoing a contingency planning process for qualifying races and will keep everyone updated as soon as possible.

Road Races

We will be working with our partner runbritain to coordinate a communication detailing appropriate advice and guidance to road race organisers in the immediate future.

Competitions

No emergency services will attend large gatherings so it is unavoidable that competitions will now be suspended until at least the end of April. We are in contact with event organisers to find suitable alternative dates within the competition calendar and the our cancellations page link is kept up to date:

www.englandathletics.org/cancellations.

Our latest updates can be accessed any time using

www.englandathletics.org/coronavirus
