



ENGLAND BOXING

**OFF THE ROPES: GUIDANCE TOWARDS
A FULL RETURN TO AMATEUR BOXING**

July 2020



**OFF THE ROPES:
GUIDANCE TOWARDS A FULL RETURN TO AMATEUR BOXING
10th JULY 2020**

Dear Members,

Following the Government's latest update on 9th July 2020, set out below are key considerations and guidance in order that this stage of reopening can be safely completed from 25th July 2020.

Please be assured that England Boxing's number one priority continues to be the safety and wellbeing of our clubs, members, volunteers and staff. The organisation will continue to communicate regularly and directly with our clubs and members, and issue further guidance and supporting documentation as it becomes available.

As stated in previous updates, by its very nature, boxing poses a greater risk from COVID-19 than most other sporting activities. This reality is reflected in international advice as well as in this country. We also have to recognise that some members of the boxing community are more vulnerable to this virus than those in some other sports.

Unfortunately, it is therefore likely that the full return of amateur boxing will occur later than many other sports. It is essential, however frustrating this is, that we follow the government regulatory advice, so we remain as safe as possible and also, as indicated in the government advice, there is a legal obligation to do so. It is also our view that, wherever possible, training activity should take place outside in order to reduce the chance of infection.

It should also be noted that, as per Government regulation, professional boxing and elite level boxing (GB Boxing) may be permissible and return sooner than club level amateur boxing.

England Boxing would like to, once again, recognise and pay tribute to those within the boxing community who have lost their lives and their loved ones.

England Boxing would also like to thank the boxing community for coming together at this difficult time, whether you are a boxer, coach, official, volunteer or staff member supporting our sport and our local communities.

Detailed below is a summary of what is required in order to move to the next stage of the return to boxing. There are, of course, likely to be many other issues, some foreseeable and others not, that will need to be overcome before amateur boxing can fully resume. In the meantime, England Boxing will do everything it can to provide as much information, guidance and support to you through these unprecedented times.

If you have any specific queries, please do not hesitate to contact England Boxing via enquiries@englandboxing.org, or through your Club Support Officer.

Yours faithfully,

Gethin Jenkins
Chief Executive
England Boxing

Reopening Amateur Boxing Clubs

Following the latest government advice (9th July 2020) these are the considerations and obligations that need to be undertaken in order to reopen indoor boxing facilities, outside of the household environment.

These considerations and advice, understandably, cannot cover every situation. So, each club should also review the government advice / guidelines and how it specifically affects them.

This advice can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/providers-of-grassroots-sport-and-gym-leisure-facilities>

We understand that some of the requirements will be in some cases difficult to implement. It remains our opinion that wherever possible, training activity should take place outside, where the risks are significantly reduced.

The government advice states;

COVID-19 is a public health emergency. Everyone needs to assess and manage the risks of COVID-19, and in particular businesses should consider the risks to their workers / volunteers and customers. As an employer or as an operator of sports or leisure facility, you also have a legal responsibility to protect workers, volunteers, customers and users from risk to their health and safety. This means you need to think about the risks they face and do everything reasonably practicable to minimise them, recognising you cannot completely eliminate the risk of COVID-19.

This applies to boxing clubs.

Clubs should also be aware that the following guidelines are in addition to the usual England Boxing Club Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

In the coming days, alongside this advice, we will try to provide further updates to help manage this process, so the risk is minimised, including a risk assessment form.

1. Medical Considerations.

When looking to reopen a boxing club and resume activity, the following medical considerations need to be factored in.

- Full consideration should be given to the medical implications of the virus, taking into account the way it is transmitted and individuals and groups who may be more vulnerable – for example, due to age, ethnicity, and underlying medical conditions.
- COVID-19 is highly transmissible from person to person and easily spreads to those who come in close contact with infected individuals. The disease spreads through droplets from the nose or mouth when a person coughs, sneezes or exhales. These droplets can also land on surfaces or objects which other people can touch and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.
- There are increasing reports that there is the potential for airborne transmission which is relevant for confined and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Both these issues make stringent hygiene – personal, facilities and equipment – of the utmost importance.
- There is currently no widespread immunity, vaccine or medication for this virus, or fully confirmed antibody test.
- It should be noted there is increasing research into the effects on multiple organs as a result of coronavirus infection – for example, potential damage to the heart and kidneys, abnormal blood clotting and damage to nerves and muscles. There is also uncertainty about long-term implications.

Medical Considerations - for the Individual

- No club member should attend a boxing club or sports environment if unwell and should follow public health guidelines in regard to their own health and the risk to the local community.
- Individuals should not return to training if, in the last 14 days, they have been unwell or had close contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19. This includes those with symptoms such as cough, sore throat, fever or shortness of breath, loss of taste / smell – even if mild. Again, Public Health England guidelines must be followed.
- It should also be factored in that anyone returning to sport and exercise after a period of social isolating and not exercising regularly may be at a greater risk of increased injury. Clubs and individuals should apply a gradual return in order to mitigate injury risk.
- Vulnerable groups and individuals should consult appropriate medical advice before returning to boxing / sport Please follow this link for guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing-after-4-july>

Returning to Exercise / Boxing / Sport After Confirmed Case of COVID-19:

- Individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 need firstly to ensure they no longer pose a risk to the local community, and secondly to ensure they have sufficiently recovered to safely participate in physical activity.
- If you have had COVID-19 in the community and feel well then you can return to training 14 days after recovery and rest. If you get greater shortness of breath than normal, or chest pains, on your return to training, you should seek medical advice. If you have attended hospital with COVID-19, then you should seek medical advice before returning to training.
- A gradual return to exercise is also recommended.
- **Ahead of entering the club, coaches should check whether the participants are showing any signs of symptoms or have come into contact with someone who has, or is recovering from, the virus. Basic questions would be whether they are feeling unwell or if they have a temperature above 37.8C.**

If so, they should not be permitted to enter / participate, should return home and should phone 111. We will endeavour to provide further information in this regard, including a questionnaire.

2. General advice.

- **It is essential that all activities are consistent with government advice.**
- **Due to the two metre social distancing requirement, pad work, sparring, skills bouts, or any form of competitive boxing is not permitted.**
For the avoidance of doubt, due to the level of exertion and face-to-face close nature of pad work, unfortunately the one metre+ exemption does not apply. We continue to seek further guidance on this.
- **It is clear that the risk of infection is greatly reduced in outside areas. Consideration should be given to whether more boxers can be accommodated in this way; and if it is safer to do so, to hold the training sessions outdoors.**
- **Indoor facilities must be ventilated as much as possible.**
- **Group Numbers / Capacity**
Currently and as previously advised groups meeting outside of the household should be limited to 6 persons, with social distancing in place.

We are aware of summer club's guidance from the Department of Education and we will provide an update once its confirmed if Club training through the holidays is eligible.

Capacity: Maximum capacity of the club should be fixed based on social distancing guidelines, the activity undertaken e.g. how much movement, and the location of equipment etc. As a minimum, this is distance of two metres in all directions allowing for corridors, pinch points entries and exits etc.

Government advice references the following:

The maximum occupancy of each gym should be limited by providing a minimum of 100sqft per person. For this figure, the area is the net useable gym space available to members to use, including changing rooms, toilet and wash facilities. Reducing capacity in this way whilst sustaining ventilation flows, will increase the typical current 10l/s/p flow rate of ventilation to at least 20l/s/p, as fewer people are being served by the ventilation system.

We are clarifying whether this applies to boxing clubs, but in any event a minimum distance of two metres of space in all direction is required per each entrant.

- Vulnerable / extremely vulnerable, or those with a member of household in such a position, should consult the specific government advice on this matter before they consider whether it is appropriate to return to training / coaching or volunteering.
- It is essential that the recommended hygiene, including washing hands / use of sanitiser and cleaning of equipment and surfaces before and after training, is followed e.g. sanitiser available at entrance / exits.
- Towels, water bottles etc should not be shared. Water fountains within clubs should not be used, except to fill up individual water containers. Members should refrain from spitting.
- Social distancing whilst traveling to and from the club should be maintained. Entrance and exit routes to and from the gym carefully planned / marked and facilitated. This can be exit and entry through different doors, one-way systems, equipment spaced out etc.
- First Aid: If someone gets injured then its preferable that a member of their household treats them unless it is an emergency, in which case social distancing can be compromised. On other occasions, those treating the individual should wear appropriate PPE and ensure others keep their social distance.
- Clubs and members should be aware that the relaxing of the regulations can be reversable and the government may reintroduce some restrictions.
- Consideration need to be given as to whether any local lock down restrictions apply.

3. Before Reopening To Members

Before the reopening of a boxing club the following recommendations should be followed:

- We would strongly recommend that, on a **weekly basis**, all water outlets (taps / showers etc) are run for a minimum of a minute whilst clubs are closed. This will help prevent the spread of disease.
- Prior to the reopening of a boxing club, a deep clean using appropriate disinfectant / antibacterial cleaning product of all floors, surfaces, waiting areas, changing rooms, toilets etc, together with the equipment fixed and mobile e.g. weights, gloves, headguards, ropes, bags, pads etc, should take place. Those doing the cleaning should use appropriate PPE.

Once reopened

- It is essential that the gym is regularly cleaned and that surfaces and equipment that are touched by individuals is cleaned with antibacterial cleaning product before and after each training session and after each use of the equipment.

- Boxers, coaches etc should come already changed and changing rooms, other than for toilets, or the exceptions below, should not be used. Showering should take place at home.
- Toilets and Changing Rooms: Clubs have a responsibility to ensure the toilets and changing rooms are cleaned before and at the end of each session and, in the case of toilets, also after each use. As well as maintaining a high level of personal hygiene, the key is reducing the spread of droplets, so toilet lids should be closed when flushing, hand dryers should not be used and there should be an allowance of sufficient time between users. There must be personal cleaning and sanitising / antibacterial equipment / liquid and gels available.

Access

- Access to toilets and changing rooms should be restricted as much as possible to minimise any transmission of the virus, but may be required for medical reasons, reason of feminine personal hygiene, emergencies and unforeseen circumstances.
- For clubs, people must access the rooms singularly whilst the numbers are to be restricted and controlled by the coach or designated person, to maintain the two metre social distancing rules. They should be cleaned after each use.

4. Gym Training

- Social distance of two metres in all directions should be maintained. There should be no physical contact unless from a member of your household. Training back to back or side by side is far safer than face to face.
- Clubs will need to work out how many people can be accommodated in the training area allowing for the two metre space in all directions (even if outside). Individual training areas accommodating the two metre distance in every direction should be marked / taped out.
- Participants should wash their hands and use antiseptic wash prior to the start and finish of training and after use of each piece of equipment.
- Equipment should be handled by as few people as possible. After each bit of equipment is used, e.g. bags, skipping ropes, weights etc, they need to be thoroughly cleaned with antibacterial product and the tissue safely disposed of. This would include the ring itself if being used as one of the areas for training.
- Gloves: Due to problems with cleaning the inside of the gloves, it is preferable for each boxer to have their own gloves, but still cleaned before and after use with antibacterial cleaning product.

- Where this is not possible, the gloves should not be shared and be cleaned before and after use and then not used for 72 hours.

If this is not possible, then boxers should wear non-sterile examination gloves under their wraps. Wraps should not be shared and washed after each training session. Again, gloves need to be cleaned before and after use.

Boxers must wash their hands thoroughly before and after use and avoid touching their face with their hands.

At this stage there is no reason to be wearing head guards. This is clearly going to be an issue going forward and we continue to push for greater clarity regarding this.

- Loud music should not be played and shouting / raised voices should be kept to a minimum.

5. Gym guidelines and signage

- The minimum amount of people should be allowed into in the gym. Waiting areas, car parks corridors etc also need be operated in such a way that social distancing is maintained, with those waiting remaining outside, including, wherever possible, parents / guardians etc.
- Clubs must have appropriate social distancing and hygiene signage clearly displayed inside and outside the rooms. Examples are to be provided.
- The gym should be well ventilated, with windows and doors open, as much as possible.
- Clubs will need to communicate with members as to how they are going to operate and accommodate the reduced numbers as a result of social distancing requirements in the various training sessions. Wherever possible training groups / session should be kept to the same groups / bubbles to reduce the amount of contact with different people.
- Shorter sessions should be held to reduce contact time, and a gradual return to intensive training, in order to prevent injury.
- Sufficient time between training sessions should be made in order to allow for cleaning movement in and out etc.
- Details of those attending each session should be recorded and kept securely for 21 days and only to be used in order to support Test and Tracing. After this time, the relevant data should be destroyed. Details to include; Name, address, phone number, date / times of arrival and exit.

6. Dealing with Young People

The role boxing clubs play in the support of young people within their community is widely recognised and admired. However, as well as ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are maintained, it is important to recognise and listen to the young people attending the boxing clubs after the break caused by the pandemic.

Whilst most may have coped well with the lockdown, others may not. For some young people, and indeed adults, the experience may have been very difficult.

Consideration should be given to the fact that the coaches / volunteers in the club may be one of the first people outside the family / household unit that a young person has come into contact with.

As a result, they may be struggling for various reasons. These can include:

- Lacking confidence, having been cut off from family and friends.
- Being confused and stressed about social distancing or the change of rules / environment / routine, especially those with learning difficulties.
- Grieving for someone they care about who has passed away or concerned for someone who has been, or still is unwell.
- Hearing that people from BAME communities may be more vulnerable to COVID-19;
- Being neglected, encountering bullying (possibly online) or other similar issues.

Please check in with the young people in your club. If it is an emergency, please contact 999. However, if there are other concerns, please contact your welfare officer, who can seek guidance as required.