



Department for

Communities

An Roinn

Pobal

Máinnistrie o

Communities

**Level 9
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG**

e-mail: private.office@communities-ni.gov.uk

A chairde,

SOCIAL DISTANCING AT SPORTING EVENTS

The Executive announced a number of changes to the current Covid-19 restrictions on 29 July. These included a number of changes to the guidance on social distancing at outdoor gatherings which will have implications for those planning outdoor sporting fixtures/events.

The Executive has therefore decided that:

- For outdoor venues, the guidance will continue to note the health benefits of 2 metres social distancing;
- The guidance will further advise that social distancing requirements are **strongly advised but are not a requirement**; and
- Where possible, those organising fixtures/events and venue operators, should maintain a minimum of 1 metre social distancing and ideally 2 metres.

It is important to note that the Executive remains concerned about the spread of the virus and its transmissibility.

Governing Bodies and venue operators should continue to consider appropriate mitigations that will help reduce the risk of the virus spreading at large gatherings as part of the risk assessment process.

The Executive has also announced a number of changes to the arrangements relating to international travel. Again given the fluid situation, it is essential that those involved in planning events and who take part in competitions that require inbound or outbound international travel keep up to date with the travel regulations.

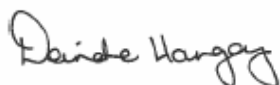
In recent days, my Department has received a number of travel exemption requests in respect of the current Covid regulations for upcoming sporting fixtures and I fully expect that other exemption requests will materialise as various international competitions commence. I would ask that sports Governing Bodies and clubs submit any requests for travel exemption well in advance of when travel arrangements need to be confirmed.

I can confirm that officials are committed to providing assistance where they can but the onus remains on those involved in organising competitions and running events to keep themselves fully informed of the current guidance and to have contingency plans in place given that the situation remains fluid and uncertain.

The latest public health advice and updated regulations continue to be available on NI Direct; in addition, the Return to Sport Team in SportNI remains in place to provide ongoing advice.

I trust this information is helpful.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deirdre Hargey', written in a cursive style.

Deirdre Hargey MLA
Minister for Communities