

Return to Orienteering (England) Step 4

The move to Step 4 on 19 July in England sees the removal of a large number of restrictions, with no set restrictions on the format or how many people can take part in sport and physical activity.

British Orienteering would like to thank all the volunteers and clubs who've worked hard within the previous restrictions to ensure the sport returned in a safe a manner as possible. Whilst restrictions have been lifted, COVID is very much still in circulation and we urge a continued responsible approach to running events and coach sessions. Some people will still be cautious so please be mindful to respect others personal choices as some normality returns.

The following simple overarching guidance of key considerations for participants, orienteering coaches, officials and athletes is a summary of relevant Government guidance.

An accompanying set of FAQs contain information on specific questions, whilst [Sport England has also published separate FAQs](#).

Step 4 Guidance (19 July)

The country has moved to Step 4 of the Government roadmap from 19 July, meaning that most legal restrictions have been lifted. There are no longer any restrictions on how many people can take part in orienteering activities, indoors or outdoors.

The Government has published guidance for the public and sports providers on how to organise and participate safely in sporting activity.

Orienteering remains a naturally socially distant sport and relatively low risk activity. However, undertaking the following key considerations can help to ensure the safety of participants, officials, coaches and volunteers, reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Orienteering Participants

Orienteers should take the following steps to reduce the risk of transmission when attending and participating in an orienteering activity.

1. Check for COVID-19 symptoms.

Before attending any orienteering activity, orienteers, including officials, volunteers and coaches, should self-assess for symptoms of COVID-19. These are:

- A high temperature.
- A new, continuous cough.
- A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste.

If you, or anyone you live with, have one or more of these symptoms you should not attend any sporting activity, even if your symptoms are mild.

You should follow [NHS guidance on testing and self-isolation](#). If you have been informed that you need to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace (or are required to self-isolate in relation to travel), you must do so. You should not leave your isolation location in order to participate in sport and physical activity. You can find more information in the [NHS guidance on how to self-isolate](#).

2. Follow your provider's safety measures.

The venue you are attending, coach or provider may put in place safety measures, which could include asking you to 'check in' using the NHS app to scan their QR code.

3. Take part safely.

As a naturally socially distanced sport, the risk of transmission of COVID-19 whilst participating is low. However, participants should continue to:

- Follow good hygiene practices, to reduce the risk of transmission in sport environments. Also consider the wishes of other participants (i.e. if they do not wish to shake hands to receive an award).
- Avoid sharing water bottles or other refreshment containers. Where possible, you should take your own drink.

Face coverings are no longer required by law, but the government expects and recommends that people should continue to wear them in crowded and enclosed settings, to protect themselves and others.

Coaches and Officials

Whilst orienteering is a naturally socially distant sport and the risk from taking part in the activity is low, coaches and officials **must undertake a risk assessment** - This should take into account any reasonable adjustments needed for staff and customers with disabilities and should be shared with any staff. More information is available in the [Government's guidance](#) and [HSE guidance](#). There is additional advice for event organisers in the [event and Attractions guidance](#).

Coaches and officials should also consider the following actions when organising coaching or competitions, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

1. **Provide communications and guidance to participants in advance of attendance** - including undertaking a self-assessment for symptoms of COVID, and that they should not take part if they need to self-isolate.
2. **Enable participants to check in** – it is not a legal requirement to collect participants' contact details for NHS Test and Trace. However, obtaining a list of attendees is good practice.
3. **Encourage participants to practice good hygiene** – including avoiding shared water bottles. Depending on personal choice, orienteers may wish to continue with some changes, such as not shaking hands after participating. First aiders, physios or other medical personnel should continue to ensure good hygiene standards when treating participants.
4. **Avoid shared equipment** – shared equipment should be avoided where possible and practical and cleaned between uses where required.
5. **Encourage use of face coverings where appropriate** – whilst no longer required by law, but the Government expects and recommends that people should continue to wear them in crowded and enclosed settings.

FAQs

What is the definition of organised sport? Are there certain criteria that must be met?

The Government defines 'organised sport' in England as sport which is formally organised by a national governing body, club, public body, qualified instructor, company or charity, and which follows the sport's national governing body's guidance.

Can we run relay events or mass starts

Any format of competition can be run.

Are there limits to the number of participants and spectators

There are no limits to the number of participants (in England) or spectators.

Do I need to use pre entry systems for Track & Trace purposes

There is no legal requirement to record details of competitors for Track & Trace purposes. However, feedback from using pre entry systems was that it reduced the burden on organisers at events in terms of managing entries and starting times.

Can non-members and beginners participate in activities and competitions

Yes they can but organisers should be aware that these groups may require more additional support at events.