

## Covid-19 Risks in Netball

The below information has been gathered from the England Netball guidance along with UK Government health directives and Ashtead All Stars internal resources

In every sport and leisure activity, there are risks of COVID-19 and team sports in particular pose slightly increased risks. COVID-19 can be transmitted in 3 ways;

- Droplet transmission when in close contact with others
- Fomite transmission by sharing of equipment like netballs and bibs
- Airborne transmission which is a risk particularly when indoors.

Thinking about netball specifically:

- It is a game that can be fairly static in nature
- You have 3 seconds to pass the ball, or 4 seconds if you're a walking netball or Bee Netball participant
- We defend face to face at a 3 foot (0.9m) distance
- A netball is passed by hand continuously around multiple people
- It is also a game that is often played indoors
- The Netball Family are a very friendly group and have traditions such as 3 cheers, handshakes and high fives in close circles.

All these things combined mean there are regular breaches to social distancing during 'normal' netball that lead to significant periods of time during a training session or netball match that carry an increased risk. These breaches would not be allowable in other parts of day to day life currently and is therefore the reason why modifications must be introduced. As part of the return to community netball, we need to mitigate some of the risks to both protect our club members and supporters, as well as ensure that netball is not responsible for an increased transmission of COVID-19 more broadly.

England Netball have also produced a useful video to explain some of the the relevant risk factors which can be viewed [here](#)

### How Will Ashtead All Stars Manage the Risks

The club is following the directive from England Netball to ensure that we are creating as safe an environment for all club members and supporters as possible. Specifically, we have:

- Appointed a designated Covid-19 Officer to lead and oversee the implementation of our plans
- Created a Covid-19 risk assessment for our planned activities to work alongside our existing one
- Produced a Covid-19 risk management plan

The Club will also be operating on the basis of an acting “opt-in” approach. All players, coaches, parents & caregivers will be responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the risks involved, are able to conduct a personal risk assessment and are then accepting of the requirements laid out by the club before participating in any organized activity.

Our internal risk reduction measures will continue to centre around AAS ensuring that we employ appropriate controls on social distancing and sanitisation throughout the session(s).

### Changes to Netball

Along with measures to actions required by players and coaches, to ensure that our sport could return, a number of modifications to the rules of netball have also been made by England Netball. Coaches will be conducting training on these modifications and all players will be briefed and continually reminded of the adjustments. These rules modifications have been created with two key principles in mind;

- To protect the netball family by reducing the incidences where face to face contact at less than 1m distance occurs, particularly when this is ‘non-fleeting’ contact (3 seconds or more)
- To maintain a game that is not too far away from the usual rules of netball.

More details on the modifications can be found on the [England Netball Restart Guidance](#) document. These modifications have been approved by Public Health England and Government and represent the ONLY allowable form of the game currently. These COVID-19 rule modifications will be temporary; however, it is unknown how long they will be applied in England. Any updates will be shared with England Netball members and posted on the England Netball website.