

GUIDANCE FOR UMPIRES AND SCORERS WHEN OFFICIATING SOCIALLY DISTANCED CRICKET MATCHES IN ENGLAND

To enable recreational cricket to resume, adapted playing conditions have been introduced and this document details the guidance for umpires and scorers who choose to make themselves available.

It is the duty of the umpires to manage these new adapted playing conditions and guidance on operating them and any sanctions are also included.

This guidance is divided into five sections:

- Before the game – guidance for both Umpires and Scorers
- During the game – guidance for Scorers
- During the game – guidance for Umpires
- Additional Advice for Umpires
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please read this guidance carefully and should you have any queries, please read the FAQs. This guidance applies to **England** only.

The ECB ACO insurance scheme will cover anyone who chooses to officiate these matches irrespective of whether they are friendly or league matches, providing the games are played in adherence to Government guidance.

Please note the policy covers public liability and personal accident injury but does not cover any illness e.g. COVID-19

Before the game – Umpires and Scorers

1. If you are showing symptoms of COVID-19 do not travel to the game and get a test.
2. Officials are encouraged to follow best practice for travel including avoiding use of car sharing and you should arrive changed.
3. Please ensure that you bring your own hand sanitiser and food and drink as the clubhouse may not be open.
4. On arrival at the ground you will need to provide your name & contact details for NHS Test & Trace.
5. The host club are responsible for the implementation of all facility guidelines (including the scorebox) as well as the provision of hand sanitation gel.
6. The host club are responsible for setting up the stumps which should also have been sanitised; the umpire is responsible for the provision of the bails.
7. To maintain social distancing, batting lines will be created.
8. All officials are encouraged to wash their hands/hand sanitise before play starts.

During the game – Scorers

1. Where possible, scoreboxes should not be used.
    - As an alternative, the host club to consider providing a gazebo so scorers remain dry even if play continues during light rain.
    - Consider using a small portable scoreboard instead of a full scoreboard, or alternatively have only one scorer inside the scorebox, with less frequent updating.
2. Scorers should remain socially distant from others at all times and specifically:
    - In the scorebox if it is large enough for 2 scorers
    - When interacting with any players; ideally players should not be allowed in the scorebox
    - When interacting with other officials
    - During any interval or break in play
3. Equipment should not be shared including laptops and tablets.
4. Communal scorebooks which are passed from one person to another should be avoided.
5. Scorers will not hold any item of players clothing, sunglasses or any valuables.
6. Scorers will not collect/handle team subs.
7. Leagues using DLS will be advised to ensure that alternative arrangements are in place to calculate the result in the event that the DLS Par Score Tables cannot be produced electronically. Scorers should ensure that they have pen/paper to produce the necessary manual calculations and the outcome should be verified verbally with the umpires.
8. Where Scorer Pro is being used, scorer(s) can produce the relevant Par Score Table and save it as a pdf file that can be emailed to the captains and umpires if this is required.
9. Where D/L is being used, the captains should be encouraged to use the Play-Cricket Scorer Apps to calculate the D/L Par Score. Guidance on how to use the App can be found here
10. If a walkie-talkie is being used, usage should be kept to a minimum and only used by one of the two scorers. The equipment should be sanitised before use.
11. Scorers should either regularly wash their hands or use hand sanitiser.
12. In the event of rain, scorers should remain in the score box if that is where they are sitting, or return to their own vehicle if there is insufficient outdoor cover from the rain to maintain social distancing.

During the game – Umpires

1. Umpires should remain socially distant from others at all times and specifically:
    - At the toss
    - When interacting with any players
    - When interacting with other officials
    - During any interval or break in play
2. Umpires will ensure that all players maintain social distancing during the match and in particular, when players are fielding, discussing tactics, having refreshments or celebrating the fall of a wicket. Batters must remain on their lines.
3. No sweat or saliva on the ball is allowed under any circumstances.
4. Umpires will not deliberately touch the ball at all during play.
5. The ball will be returned direct to the bowler either on the full or rolled along the ground. It should not be passed around the field.
6. The umpires will not collect the ball at a fall of a wicket or at any breaks; instead, the ball will be returned to the base of the stumps.
7. Only umpires should replace bails and remake the wicket including after any attempted stumpings or run outs.
8. Umpires will not provide bowlers markers or cloths for drying the ball.
9. Players will be required to sanitise their hands after every 6 overs or 20 minutes whichever is shorter; the umpires should call "time" after every 6 overs or 20 minutes to facilitate this.
10. At each break, it will be the responsibility of the fielding Captain to sanitise the ball before play recommences. The umpires should ensure that this happens and manage these breaks by waiting until the end of the over or a fall of a wicket.
11. The umpires should sanitise their own hands at every drinks or innings break and after every contact with stumps or bails.
12. Umpires will not hold any item of players clothing or sunglasses. They will need to place these themselves beyond the boundary.
13. There is no requirement for officials to wear any form of PPE although some individuals may wish to do so.
14. Scientific research has shown that there is a minimal risk of infection when the bowler fleetingly passes the umpire so there is no need for the bowler's end umpire to change his normal position or to move into position once the bowler has passed by.
15. Bowlers returning to their mark should maintain social distancing when passing the umpire.
16. Bowlers should maintain social distancing when making any appeals.
17. If a walkie-talkie is being used, usage should be kept to a minimum and only used by one of the two umpires. The equipment should be sanitised before use.
18. In the event of rain, umpires must remove the stumps and bails before the covers are pulled on. Umpires should return to their own vehicle if there is insufficient outdoor cover from the rain to maintain social distancing.

Additional Advice for Umpires

ECB has worked with MCC on the necessity to alter any Laws or Playing Conditions to enable recreational cricket to take place during the COVID-19 pandemic. MCC has clarified that it will not change any of the Laws of Cricket in response to the crisis, feeling that amending Playing Conditions is a better route to take.

ECB and MCC have discussed how new regulations may be applicable to various levels of the game, and both bodies are pleased to offer the advice below as a means of getting cricket played.

In order to effectively manage cricket through this phase, Officials will be empowered to ensure measures are adhered to through appropriate interventions designed by the ECB Association of Cricket Officials (ECB ACO). In essence, this means that instances of breaching of the measures will be dealt with Under Law 41 (Unfair Play). However, Law 42 (Unacceptable Conduct) remains as an option if umpires believe conduct is unacceptable.

Prior to Play – Umpires will have read the ECB guidance and conduct normal pre-match protocols and check pitch for 'batting line' markings

At the Toss – Captains will be advised of their responsibilities for directing their team on and agree the following:

1. No sweat or saliva on the ball is allowed
2. Players to maintain social distance at all times.
3. Ball to be returned directly to the bowler (On the full or rolled along the ground)
4. Not to remake the wicket once the ball has become dead, this is the role of the umpire.
5. Players to ensure that any drinks, sweaters or other paraphernalia to be placed at least 1m from boundary edge where at all possible.
6. Players understand the batting lines.
7. Hygiene breaks will take place every 6 overs or 20 minutes whichever is sooner (A wicket break can be used to restart the process).

Captains should be made aware that any breach of the above could result in a first and final warning and any subsequent transgression will result in the award of 5 penalty runs.

During Play – Umpires will not deliberately come into contact with the ball. Any breach of 1-7 above, will result in a first and final warning, under Law 41.

If deemed Unacceptable Conduct, penalties under Law 42 shall apply.

- A player intentionally moving within 1 metre of anyone else for non-cricketing purposes will be treated as a Level 3 offence
- A player intentionally spitting or coughing at and within 2 metres of, another person will be treated as a Level 4 offence

After Play – Umpires are to leave the stumps in the ground, bails on the ground (if they're not their own) next to the stumps and leave bowling markers for the Club Representative to collect.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

In the event there is a local lockdown and cricket is suspended, would I still be insured if I officiated at a match during the lockdown?
No. You would not be covered as it would in contravention of Government guidelines.

I am over 70, am I allowed to umpire or score?
Please refer to the latest Government guidelines which you can find here

Can my league make me umpire if I don't want to?
No-one can force you to do so. ECB ACO have suspended umpire grading for 2020 so your grading will not be affected if you do not umpire.

What about the coin toss?
It is the responsibility of the home team Captain to provide the coin and for umpires to supervise the coin toss. The toss should be completed whilst complying with social distancing.

Who is responsible for the spare balls?
The host club will provide sanitised spare balls and they should be left off the field until needed. The chosen spare ball should be cleaned by the fielding Captain before use.

Should a player apply sweat or saliva to the ball, either deliberately or out of habit, is the ball to be changed for a spare?
The umpire should ask the fielding captain to sanitise the ball and play recommences with the existing ball.

When operating with 'batting lines' whose responsibility is it to move when a fielder may be stationed in direct line of the runner?
The batter must avoid the fielder. The fielder must not impede the batter when running unless moving to field the ball or back-up a throw.

If a player fails to run within a 'batting lane' what does the umpire do?
This is covered under Point 2 in the additional advice for umpires (At the Toss) and can be covered under Law 41 Unfair Play

Where does the ball need to be once a wicket has fallen?
At the bowlers' end by the stumps.

During rain breaks who is responsible for the ball in use?
Fielding team Captain.

Our scoreboard is a manual one with strings to pull and it takes two scorers to work all the numbers. What should I do?
If you have to use that scoreboard only one scorer should be seated inside if you cannot sit 1m+ apart. Only display the minimum requirement, which is total runs, wickets, and overs.

I use a Linear back-up sheet when I score on PCS Scorer PRO. Should I still do that?
You should bring a pre-prepared sheet with you and ensure that you are the only person handling that sheet. No printing should be done at the match.

I'm concerned that if I score from a gazebo or outside the scorebox, I will not be able to stop players coming to look over my shoulder at their statistics.
The guidance is clear. Players must refrain from approaching scorers and should maintain social distancing at all times.

Who can I contact for any other questions?
Please email any further questions to ecb.aco@ecb.co.uk