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**and Club Matters:**

**A Guide to Safeguarding  
Adults during the  
Coronavirus (COVID-19)  
Pandemic**

## Why is Adult Safeguarding Important During the Coronavirus Emergency?

We know that these are challenging and worrying times for everyone. Across the country, sports clubs and delivery organisations have had to stop running their usual activities and events. It is encouraging to see that some have found new, innovative ways to stay connected to their members and participants and encourage them to continue to be active at home.

As well as the everyday challenges that come with a pandemic, social distancing and self-isolation, the Coronavirus emergency has also given rise to important adult safeguarding considerations. Some people, particularly those that have care and support needs, are socially isolated, or live in residential/supported living environments, attending their local sports club/group and socialising with other members may be the only social outlet they have. They will undoubtedly be missing the contact and the social, physical and mental wellbeing benefits they are used to getting from their clubs and groups.

Safeguarding leads, friends, coaches and volunteers within sports clubs and delivery organisations may also have concerns about their more vulnerable members. They may be considering different ways to keep in touch and ensure people are safe and well during this difficult time.





# Things to Think About

To help you decide what to do and how best to do it, we would offer the following advice and guidance:

## 1. Ongoing Safeguarding Responsibilities:

Your club/organisation does still have some key responsibilities regarding Adult Safeguarding during the Coronavirus emergency.

## 2. Changes to Pathways and Contacts:

It is likely that referral and support processes and contacts may have changed in response to the emergency. We recommend that you get in touch with local statutory agencies and partners to check if anything has changed. This will ensure you can continue to provide good advice to your members/staff and volunteers. Local organisations you should consider contacting include: Adult Social Care, the MASH team, Mental Health Services and other key workers for adults at risk.

## 3. Safeguarding / Welfare Officer Support:

Make sure your club/organisation's safeguarding lead or Welfare Officer(s) is able to continue their role and have a contingency plan in place. Check they have the capacity, time and resources to carry on with their responsibilities, and make sure you

identify any extra support they might need. At no point should their responsibilities be transferred to anyone without the necessary experience and safeguarding qualifications.

## 4. Review your Safeguarding Arrangements:

Review your existing policies and procedures for safeguarding adults. If any of these have altered because of local changes, or changes to your club/organisation's reporting channels, make sure this is reflected in them. Depending on the extent of these changes, you might want to add an addendum to your current Safeguarding Policy and procedures documents, or even create a separate, temporary policy in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. You may also want to review codes of conduct and online safety, risk management and social media use policies. We would recommend that you share any changes to these policies with your members, committees, workforce and any carers.



## 5. Online Safety:

Review the information and any resources you've made available to your members/customers on your website, social media sites and apps. Consider including information on how to keep safe for people isolated at home or those who may be at risk of abuse, such as helpline numbers and websites. Before you share this information, check it is still correct and up to date as things are changing very rapidly at the moment.

## 6. Virtual Sessions:

During the lockdown period, virtual, online sessions are proving to be a great way for clubs and sports organisations to stay connected with their members, committees and workforce. However, there are some important safeguarding considerations to be mindful of if you're considering using online teaching or coaching as a way to promote continued activity.

The key principles of online safeguarding still apply, so please consider the following:

- Do you have online and social media safety policies and an acceptable use statement? It would be useful to revisit these and reissue them to coaches, volunteers and members.
- Are there specific procedures for reporting and addressing any concerns about online interactions? These can be linked directly to your existing safeguarding procedures, but they

need to be clear and accessible for all members.

- Do all those likely to provide or access coaching online know what the codes of conduct are for these environments? Does anything differ from your existing codes? This is a great opportunity to review your codes of conduct and re-promote them to all members, reminding them of the consequences of not following these codes.
- Can you ensure coaches who deliver online sessions have the correct qualifications and are covered by insurance to offer online coaching?
- Are the privacy and confidentiality settings of the platform you want to use appropriate? Many organisations are using Zoom – check out this helpful [guide to safeguarding considerations for using Zoom](#).
- Make sure all your members have access to sessions to avoid anyone feeling excluded from the group!
- To reduce any anxieties about new ways of training, be clear on what your sessions will involve so members/participants know what to expect.
- Make sure a robust risk assessment has been taken of your sessions and you know how risk will be managed.
- Do group members interact directly, or is this only via the coach? If it's the former, how can this be monitored and moderated? How will you prevent the risk of cyber bullying?

## 7. Offer Support to Individual Members:

Consider if there are particular concerns for any members, staff or volunteers based on your knowledge of their individual circumstances. If there are, get an appropriate person to offer them support or inform them of the support that is available to them while they are at home. Please don't just rely on social media to do this and make sure you think through the most appropriate way to contact those who may be at risk in their home environment.

## 8. Keep in Touch:

Keeping in touch at this time is really important, especially with anyone that might rely on your club/organisation as their main social outlet – if they live alone, for example. However, this must be done with regard to safeguarding principles and in response to individual needs. People are feeling isolated and concerned, which may increase their vulnerability. Be creative and consider how you can keep in touch with people on a regular basis, without relying on social media, to ensure that your members and workforce are safe. Have regard for their mental as well as their physical well-being too. For example, you can share information and tips on getting active from Sport England's [#StayInWorkOut campaign](#), or encourage people to check out the advice from the NHS' [Every Mind Matters website](#) on looking after their mental health during the Coronavirus pandemic.

**Safeguarding remains everybody's business. For more information and advice on safeguarding adults during the pandemic, go to the [Ann Craft Trust website](#) or email [ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk).**

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