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Football
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LFE Assessment Trials COVID-19 Protocol

Version 1: June 2021



Established by



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A. INTRODUCTION

1. The public health crisis associated with the Covid-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for LFE, clubs and all associated individuals.
2. LFE has traditionally run a series of Assessment Trials for U18/U19 players who have:
 - i. not been offered a professional contract (U18)
 - ii. been released from a first-year professional contract (U19)

These events are again to be held at the end of the 2020/21 season, from 28th June 2021 onwards.

3. The events are planned for after the government has removed all legal limits on social contact but will continue to operate under the following principles:
 - i. Hands – regularly sanitised.
 - ii. Face – covered when inside.
 - iii. Space – one metre plus, or as far as reasonably practical at all times.
4. The remainder of this document sets out a series of operating procedures, applicable to all Assessment Trial attendees, to ensure that the events held from 28th June 2021 onwards are in as safe an environment as possible for all such attendees and other individuals on site, in the event that Step 3 Government restrictions are still in place.
5. For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this protocol replaces, reduces or affects in any way the obligations imposed on individuals by statute and/or common law in the fields of medicine, occupational health and/or health and safety.

B. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

6. This document comprises the LFE Assessment Trials 2020/21 COVID-19 operational policy, which will be communicated to all Assessment Trial attendees.
7. In addition to this policy, a risk assessment of the Assessment Trial events as a whole by each venue, to include COVID related matters, has been undertaken with specific regard to the optimisation of social distancing and all hygiene measures.
8. Any individuals with increased personal vulnerabilities to COVID-19 should take appropriate precautions in regard to activities at the events. Such precautions should include not attending the events, should they deem the risk to be significant.
9. Daniel Jolley (LFE Projects Manager) is the LFE Assessment Trials COVID Officer.
10. Each individual attending the Assessment Trials (players/parents/guardians/supporters/scouts) will be required to have provided written confirmation prior to, or upon arrival at the event, that they have received and agree to be bound by the terms of this COVID-19 operational policy. For confirmation, this policy will be distributed to all attendees in advance for consideration.

C. TESTING AND TRACING

11. No attendees will be required to take or provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test.
12. All attendees must check in with the NHS Test and Trace system using the QR codes provided by the venue.

D. ARRIVAL AND PREPARATION

13. All individuals present must ensure that:
 - i. social distancing measures in line with current government guidance must be maintained from arrival – it is strongly recommended that these distances are kept as far as reasonably practical at all times
 - ii. there is to be no congregation in communal areas
 - iii. face coverings must be worn at all times in any indoor area
14. Attendance at the Assessment Trials is limited to the following:
 - i. Players who have registered in advance to attend.
 - ii. Player support (e.g. parent/guardian/partner).
 - a. The ability of such individuals to watch the games is determined by the government guideline capacity for each host venue.
 - b. LFE will be able to accommodate **at least one** individual per player as support.
 - c. LFE will accommodate additional player supporters until the government guideline capacities for each venue have been reached.
 - iii. LFE/PFA/EFL staff.
 - iv. Scouts who have registered in advance to attend.
 - v. Scouts who arrive without prior registration must read and sign a COVID protocol form on arrival.
 - vi. Match officials and physiotherapy staff.
15. Any food or beverages provided by the event organisers and consumed on-site will not be served or eaten in a formal restaurant/cafeteria environment, but should be consumed by individuals while maintaining social distancing. Face masks should also be replaced as soon as possible after eating/drinking indoors.
16. Changing room usage (both before and after the games) will be kept to a minimum. Ventilation in these areas will also be maximised.
17. Use of medical treatment (and equipment) will be minimised to as low as reasonably practical, thus limited to injury and illness management.
18. Pre-match team talks will be conducted outside.
19. Briefings of scouts, match officials and physiotherapy staff may be conducted indoors with the following factors being applicable: wearing of face masks, social distancing, ventilation being maximised.
20. Hand sanitiser will be available on-site.
21. Facemasks will be available on-site.
22. Players shall not share drinks or drinks containers. Each player will be required to bring their own water bottle. Individual energy drinks will be provided.

E. MATCH PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE

23. All attendees, including players and staff, should refrain from spitting while at the events.

24. All attendees (including players) must continue to keep a distance from one another of at least one metre plus where possible when entering and leaving the pitch before and after the matches. This shall also apply during the warm-up.
25. All attendees (including players, scouts, player support, etc) must continue to keep a distance from one another of at least one metre plus where possible when observing the games.

F. INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

26. Each individual must ensure that manual therapy treatment must be limited to essential only. Where permitted, it must last no longer than 15 minutes and be conducted in a well-ventilated area. Players must wear a facial covering as a minimum and the practitioner must wear a standard surgical face mask.

G. EXIT

27. Each individual must ensure that:
 - i. after the matches, there is no congregation of players, player support (e.g. parents/guardians), scouts or other individuals in any area of the venue
 - ii. recommendations for showering, changing and dining are followed, as per Section E of this document
 - iii. the 'pick-up' arrangements for players are followed as per directions on the day

H. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

28. It must be ensured that:
 - i. any member of staff performing essential physiotherapy or soft tissue treatment wears appropriate PPE throughout the treatment – at present, Government guidance indicates that this should include (as a minimum):
 - a. fluid resistant surgical mask (type IIR)
 - b. disposable gloves
 - c. disposable plastic apron
 - ii. every member of staff involved in such physiotherapy or treatment disposes of their apron and gloves in between attending each player and puts on clean replacements after handwashing and before seeing the next player
 - iii. every member of staff involved in such physiotherapy or treatment replaces their face mask whenever it becomes moist or soiled
 - iv. where a member of staff is conducting an examination of a player's mouth, head or ear, nose and throat areas, they wear a **fluid resistant visor** (in addition to the PPE referred to in paragraph 28i)
 - v. all used PPE items are disposed of appropriately
29. Providing social distancing measures are carried out, there should be no requirement for any additional staff members to wear PPE.

I. SYMPTOMS AND NON-ATTENDANCE

30. Each individual intending to attend the Assessment Trials, in whatever capacity, must ensure that if they, or a member of their household, experience symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the events or while at the events:
 - i. they inform the event organisers immediately
 - ii. they stay at home unless advised otherwise by medical personnel

- iii. under no circumstances, if they are not at the venue, do they attend the Assessment Trial events

J. CLEANING

- 31. Should changing rooms be used for more than one team throughout the day, cleaning of surfaces will be undertaken before being reused.