**The risk of COVID-19 in netball and the approach to mitigate the risks together**

The below information has been taken from the England Netball guidance to re-start netball activity – the full document can be [**viewed here**](https://d2cx26qpfwuhvu.cloudfront.net/englandnetball/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/18163154/EN-Restart-Guidance.pdf)

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

• 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 County netball, we need to mitigate some of the risks to both protect all of our participants, as well as ensure that netball is not responsible for an increased transmission of COIVD-19 more broadly.

To ensure that our sport could return, a number of modifications to the rules of netball have been made by England Netball. 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 that 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.

Coaches will be conducting training on these modifications and all players will be briefed and continually reminded of the adjustments.