

# UPDATE - January 7<sup>th</sup> 2022

Firstly, I would like to wish all in the Irish Squash community a happy New Year. Since indoor sports were permitted a more meaningful re-opening in October 2021, the pandemic has continued to provide an ever-changing landscape in which we have to operate. Thankfully, under current government and public health guidelines, indoor sports may proceed with recreational and competitive play.

Due to demands created by the Omicron wave of the pandemic, we have had to adjust our Covid guidelines for competitions and training sessions. This update is somewhat later than planned, also due to the impact of Covid infection amongst key board members.

Irish Squash is responsible for ensuring that our events can be run with appropriate safety measures in place. The updated guidelines are in keeping with and proportionate to the current public health restrictions and the accepted high risk status of an indoor sport like squash. These guidelines apply to our junior, senior and masters players.

Irish Squash takes responsibility for ensuring that the necessary measures are in place and administered at our registered events. The extra measures cannot be added to the already busy role of our Tournament Directors. Irish Squash will ensure that a designated Covid officer is available for each registered event and the event cannot proceed without one (anyone interested in volunteering for this role please contact the squash office).

Equally, our events cannot go ahead if we do not have sufficient officials to run them due to Covid infections. Notice of any postponements/cancellations will be provided in a timely manner.

## Updated COVID guidelines

### **All players on arrival at the venue must check in with the Covid officer:**

- Proof of immunity must be provided (by those aged over 18 years) <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3361b-public-health-updates/#measures-in-place>
- Junior players who are playing in senior tournaments must produce proof of immunity. Juniors playing in junior tournaments do not have to produce proof of immunity.
- Confirm that they have no symptoms suggestive of Covid infection
- Confirm that they are not currently identified as a close contact of confirmed Covid case
- Antigen testing carried out at the venue (kits provided by Irish Squash and administered/supervised by Irish Squash designated Covid officer) - negative result essential (if positive, player must make arrangements to go home, self isolate immediately and arrange for PCR swab test)
- Players must arrive 30 minutes in advance of their match to allow for antigen testing

- Players are advised to travel to squash venue independently of each other to avoid inadvertently becoming a close contact of fellow passenger
- Players ideally should arrive in gear ready to go on court; if not, there is no entry to the changing room facilities until the Covid screening process is completed satisfactorily
- Use of changing rooms/showers to be minimised as much as possible

**For officials/parents/guardians attending the venue:**

- Proof of immunity must be provided on arrival at venue
- Confirm that they have no symptoms suggestive of Covid infection
- Confirm that they are not currently identified as a close contact of confirmed Covid case
  
- Spectator numbers should be restricted as much as possible at each venue
  
- Masks to be worn at all times by everyone at the venue, except for players on court or when showering.
  
- As per current Government regulations the tournament must finish by 20.00hrs each day.
  
- Please note that as a proviso to these guidelines, certain host venues may require additional measures to also be in place.

In order to ensure that our events may proceed as smoothly as possible, additional volunteers will be required. Please contact tournament organisers and your provincial associations if you are available to help out. Alternatively, please make contact with Irish Squash at [info@irishsquash.com](mailto:info@irishsquash.com).

Check our website and social media links for further updates.

I would like to thank most sincerely all those who are working hard in the background to support our sport and keeping things going at such a challenging time.

Rosie Barry

President Irish Squash