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Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs

No. 33, Maitland Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.



දිනය 2020/06/05  
Date

**Standard Operating  
Procedures  
for  
Safe, Successful,  
and  
Sustainable Re-Openings  
for  
Health, Wellness,  
and  
Fitness Industry**



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**Standard Operating Procedures for Safe, Successful, and Sustainable Re-Openings for Health, Wellness, and Fitness Industry**

**Background**

Physical exercises of any form specially when does in moderate and high intensity is found to have health benefits.

Those who are doing regular exercises will improve their health fitness that will help them to not only prevent and control Non-Communicable Diseases but also fight against COVID 19 by boosting immunity.

Wellness and fitness centres are helping not only sporting community and public, but thousands of lively hoods depend on this industry. At present Sri Lanka has nearly five thousand commercial fitness centres.

It is high time to introduce standards to the fitness centres since thousands of people use these centres to improve their fitness. Standards for fitness centres will help to improve the quality of services given and will boost the fitness industry. With the participation of people in the fitness industry, Sri Lanka Standard Institute recently published Sri Lanka Standard 1640:2019 UDC 613.12 "Guidelines for Health and Fitness Facilities" to standardize the centres. This allows people in the industry to regulates and upgrade fitness establishments.

As per recent research it is evident that most equipment of the fitness centres are colonized with bacteria and other germs, means these places may be an epic of disease spread if mitigation measures not taken to disinfect the surfaces in standard manner.

Fitness facility varies from those only with resistance exercises area, or with other basic facility to multi purposes sport facility even with studios where various aerobic and strength activities could take place.



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### **National Principles for resumption of sport activities**

- Resumption of sport and recreation activities should not compromise the health of individuals or the community.
- Resumption of sport and recreation activities will be based on objective health information to ensure they are conducted safely and do not increased the risk of COVID-19 local transmission rates.
- All decisions about resumption of sport and recreation activities must take place with careful reference to these National Principles following close consultation with relevant National/ Local Public Health Authorities
- These national general guidelines are providing a guide for the re-introduction of recreational sport
- Resumption of activities in a fitness centre should take place in a stage fashion.
  - During first stage - only healthy adults will be allow and will have limited time slot. The same group of exercisers and staff will be having their exercise session together, no mix up allowed.
  - During second stage - vulnerable groups such as people with NCD, over the age of 60years and immune compromised people will be allowed into the fitness centres.
- If identified any risk by not following the advices, or changing the country's COVID -19 situation, MOS or Public Health Authority could stop activities until further evaluation.
- Please note that these guidelines reflect the information and research available at the time of writing with the existing COVID -19 situation in Sri Lanka, and subject to change with new evidence and country's COVID-19 situation in the future



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## Health, Wellness, and Fitness Industry Standard Operating Procedures

### Phase One: Re-Opening Through COVID-19

#### Step 1 – Plan

#### Step 2 - Prepare

### Phase Two: Operating Through COVID-19

#### Step 3 – Practice

- Only healthy adults
- Vulnerable groups

#### Step 1- Planning

#### General information

- Since fitness facility is a known place for harbouring pathogenic germs it is mandatory to clean the fitness facility adequately and frequently.
- Seeing cleaning practices in action, instils confidence among your exercisers and staff. This has never been truer or more important to your business than now.
- Safety and security are a shared responsibility among your staff and exercisers.
- With limited time slot and limited space 50% members will allow into fitness centres at initial stages.
- Vulnerable groups will be allowed later.
- For members who are not allow into fitness centres, it is suggestive to conduct virtual training sessions. This is possible even for other members when not being able to visit into fitness centres.
- Those who are having symptoms or signs of COVID 19 or suspected symptoms and those who had close contact with COVID 19 confirm or suspected person will not entertain into fitness centre. (**Questionnaire 1 – Pre -Training screening**)
- In this stage it is mandatory to plan on **Risk Communication** and its material. (**Annexure 1**)



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**Risk communication** - Education and awareness, ensuring public health advice to all exercisers, gym staff, and other relevant stakeholders before commencing activities in the fitness centre with daily updates.

- **Communicate Resumption plan with Customers** - Thoroughly and clearly communicating how you plan to help keep your fitness centre safety helps to increase member and staff confidence. communicate your new arrangements, limitations during reopening and customers responsibilities through digital and physical methods. (**Annexure 2**)
- **Code of conduct for customers will be implemented (Appendix 3)**
- **Staff Communication** - Establish internal messaging and a **new code of conduct (Appendix 4)** for your staff to ensure everyone's safety and consistent communication.
  - Share fact sheets with members and staff on this information.
  - Ensure they understand and effectively communicate the re-opening program guidelines.
  - Establish a regular cadence for communicating updates with staff.
  - Consider your communication and re-opening plan for absent staff members.
  - Appoint "**COVID Coordinators**" on your staff to be the leaders and inspectors of your program.
  - Their responsibility is to stay abreast of the ever-changing COVID-19 data and your local health authority's response and share information with the staff and members of the fitness centre.
  - In addition, COVID coordinators are responsible for routine check-up whether the safety and security measures taken are smoothly functioning in the fitness centre.
  - If using a professional cleaning contractor, ask for documentation on their protocols that align with health ministry and local guidelines.
  - Establish a new cleaning protocols like daily or weekly deep cleans and maintain a clear roster for cleaning, identifying a responsible person and frequency of cleaning.
- Like you have with members, emphasize your commitment to operating within reasonable standards and accommodations to minimize the potential transmission of the virus.



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## Step 2 – Prepare

### Reception / Front desk and Check in

- Wash basin/Hand wipes/sanitizers will be on offer (or directed to where people can clean their hands)
- Provide clear separation between entryway, sanitary hygiene station, and temperature check-in station, adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- Queue management - 2m spacing markings on the floor and if necessary, outside the entrance.
- Determine what new signage is needed in the facility and where it should be displayed.
- Enforce maximum capacity standards for your facility that allow safe social distancing. This could be handled in ways such as scheduling appointments with your members.
- Maintain a register daily for entry and exit with the names and times. (provided their general information and contact details are available) suggestive to provide contactless electronic methods for member registration and daily entrance and check outs.
- Gloves are not mandatory as the World Health Organization (WHO) advice is that it is preferable not to wear gloves but to regularly wash your hands.
- Take the temperature of all staff and members who enter your facility. If someone has a high fever, keep them separate and inform COVID 19 coordinator the coordinator convince that the person does not have COVID 19 symptoms, member will be asked to leave and get medical advice if appropriate. You should log your screening data and contact details for reference in confidential manner.



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### Facility Lay out

- Establish new capacity guidelines limiting the number of people within your facility and within designated areas.
- Only equipment that is 2m apart will be used – as an example this can either be done via moving equipment or marking every other piece of equipment in the gym out of order to facilitate social distancing – ensure six feet between each machine
- Provide a hygiene towel and personalized spray bottle of sanitizing solution that members can use to clean equipment. Touch points of equipment should be cleaned thoroughly. The towel should be returned for cleaning when the member leaves.
- For high-traffic areas, use visible tape and/or signage to establish traffic flow. This can be achieved by creating “one-way” sides of walkways to encourage social distancing.
- If the facility has more machines for each exercise, consider rotating machines after each work out or after each day.
- Cardio equipment can be adjusted to set a maximum time limit for individual workouts.
- Remove unnecessary or damaged equipment.
- Place signage around all equipment and machines requesting members to sanitize before and after use and provide adequate supply of disinfectants and clothes at each machine.
- Exerciser should always use their own water bottle, when water dispenser is available make sure gloved staff member opens and allow the exerciser to fill their own water bottles.
- In ideal setup maximum gym capacity will be based on 3m<sup>2</sup> per person.

### Lockers and showers

- Apart from bathroom essentials, consider closing off your lockers and showers.
- Include signage of recommended 20-second handwashing time.





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## Studios/ group exercise areas

- Determine new layouts for group exercise areas that align with health authorities' guidelines.
- Social distancing guidelines must be followed (2m apart).
- There will be a minimum of a 10-minute window in between classes, so no 'waiting around' in groups.
- Equipment (including mats etc) will be cleaned in between use. This can either be done by the customer or staff member using spray and cloths provided. **Strongly recommend using your own.**
- If possible, markings will be made on the floor to show the area for individuals.

## Sport/Training Halls

- If social distancing can take place, courts and halls will be open. However, for any activity where social distancing is not possible, these facilities/activities will remain closed/not played.
- Cleanliness protocols must be followed.
- If you are not sure which sports are suitable, please contact the relevant national governing body

## Planning for Cleaning and disinfection

- Cleaning disinfection should be given highest priority.
- Plan and monitor your deep cleaning and routine cleaning and keep records.
- Cleaning equipment and instruments are shared responsibility of members and staff.
- Prepare to provide adequate supply of disinfectant to the facility and plan for continuous supply.
- Provide readily available, hand-sanitizing stations with at least 70% alcohol throughout the facility.
- Keep cleaning products nearby. Ensure that disinfectant supplies are near machines and exercisers, so they're a visual reminder to clean before and after their workout.
- Further cleaning guidelines see **(Annexure 5)**.





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### Staff Training

- Provide structured, thorough training to staff on new cleaning and safety protocols.
- Consider daily temperature testing for staff to verify they don't have COVID-19.
- Consult health authority guidelines and consider measures for creating a safe work environment, including for example, personal protective equipment (PPE).
- To the extent that you mandate employee health checks or questionnaires, ensure that resulting documentation is retained in a separate file from the employee's larger personnel file.
- Ensure that any employee medical screening adheres to health authority guidance, recognizing that such guidance may evolve over time.
- Ensure separate resting facility for employees and maintain social distancing and refresh air as much as possible.

### Step 3 Practice

- Create an operational checklist including every function of the fitness centre and give responsibilities of each functional area to staff member. Operational check list (**Annexure 6**)
- COVID 19 coordinator must make sure everything going smoothly.
- Create an operational emergency team consisting of staff in essential functions.
- Establish information flows such as situation reports and backups of essential information.
- Plan for communications and dissemination of information for all stakeholders. Only healthy adults will be allow in to fitness centre at the initial stages and vulnerable groups will be allowed when the health status improved and until such time virtual training program will be introduced to them.
- Create contingency plans to address the impact of a virus resurgence after re-opening.
- Assess supply needs and explore options for purchasing additional supplies required.
- The same group of exercisers and staff will be having their exercise session together daily at the same time, no mix up allowed.



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**Annexure 01 - Risk communication on:**

- Clinical features of COVID-19 and preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette, and hand-hygiene practices.
- The criteria for asking individuals with symptoms to leave the training venue or retreat to a designated area.
- Relative high risk inside a close busy environment.
- Information on physical distancing - 6 feet inside training facility.
- Information on the use of face coverings and medical masks.
- The meaning and practical implications of quarantine, self-isolation, and self-monitoring in the context of the training.
- Cover the mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing. Practice respiratory etiquette (maintain distance: at least 6 feet inside training facility), cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or flexed elbow, wash hands). If coughing persists, isolate and seek medical advice
- Avoid contact with anyone if ill.
- Towels should not be shared.
- Athletes should not share clothing, bar soap or other personal items.
- Avoid shaking hands.
- Avoid steam rooms or saunas and Gym (if previously not approved).
- Be aware of regular cleaning of frequently touched items (door handles, elevators, gym equipment, etc.).
- Importance of using an own water bottle.



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## Annexure 2 - Resumption plan

- Consider all available communicating methods.
- Digital methods include SMS, email, website, social media, and ads.
- Physical methods include direct mail flyers, posters, and pop-up banners that are placed throughout your facility.
- Provide an update of when you will reopen, new hours of operations, new occupancy updates, and other changes.
  
- Share state and local official health guidelines for fitness facilities.
- Communicate that walk into fitness center is not allowed and must take prior appointments before resume training.
- Before resume activities it is mandatory to fill up health declaration form. (**Questionnaire 1 – Pre -Training screening**) and every day will have to answer daily health status questionnaire (**Questionnaire 2 – Daily screening**).
- Communicate with members that only one group of people will be allow to use the gymnasium during a one time slot and the next day also the same group of people will be allow to do work out and there is no mixing up.
- Only limited number of working out time will be allocated. (One hour to one and half hours).
- Provide your exercisers with the additional preventative safety measures you are taking beyond the official local guidelines.
- Share new expectations of cleaning behaviors that exercisers and staff must adhere to.
- Communicate the code of conduct of members and workers with members. (Appendix 3 and 4)



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### Appendix 3 - Code of conduct for members

#### Member Code of Conduct – Example

- All members and visitors must go through each station before fully entering the facility: Hand Sanitizing Temperature Check Reception and Entry.
- No equipment may be taken in by members unless otherwise permitted. No food or drink can be taken in by members unless otherwise permitted. (Water bottles that are already filled are permitted).
- Members should carry two towels, one for covering surface and other for wipe sweat.
- Otherwise facility should provide them clean towels and after use put them in to a towel bin.
- Members should remove their footwear at the entrance and wear their exercise shoes. Removed footwear should keep separately
- Beyond Check-In All members and visitors must wear a cloth facemask whenever possible.
- All members must clean equipment before and after each use.
- All members must wash hands as per health guidelines.
- No showers are permitted at this time.
- No physical assisting in the weight room is permitted and exercise schedule will be change accordingly.
- No contact of any kind is permitted.
- All members and visitors must always maintain six feet of distance.
- Exit Members are highly encouraged to follow health guidelines outside of the facility to mitigate risk of transmission.
- Showers as soon as possible recommended. Members must take home workout clothes and supplies in a closed bag. Workout clothes should be washed either with warm water washing machine or after drying the clothes at least two hours under sun and then hand wash or machine wash.



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## Appendix 4 - Code of conduct for staff

### Staff Code of Conduct - Example

- All staff must go through each station before fully entering the facility : Hand Sanitizing Temperature Check
- No equipment of any kind may be brought in by staff from their home. No food or drink can be taken in by staff unless otherwise permitted. (Water bottles that are already filled are permitted.)
- Staff should remove their footwear at the entrance and wear their exercise shoes. Removed footwear should keep separately.
- Beyond Entry All staff must wear a cloth facemask or and face shield.
- All staff must clean equipment before and after each use.
- All staff must wash hands per health guidelines.
- No showers are permitted at this time.
- No client physically assisting in the weight room is permitted.
- No contact of any kind is permitted.
- All staff must always maintain six feet of distance.
- Wear disposable gloves to handle all used towels, wipes and instruments.
- Exit Staff are highly encouraged to follow health guidelines outside of the facility to mitigate risk of transmission. Staff must immediately report potential known contact with the COVID 19 virus.
- Staff must take their clothes and supplies in a closed bag. Worn clothes should be washed either with warm water washing machine or after drying the clothes at least two hours under sun and then hand wash or machine wash.



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### Annexure 5 - Cleaning and disinfection guidelines

- Clear written cleaning and disinfections procedures should be in place and communicate with members and staff.
- General cleaning should be done according to the health authorities' guidelines and records should be kept.
- Deep Cleaning routines should be displaced.
- Cleaning and disinfection should be done after every exercise session. Preferably 30 minutes break should be taken between each exercise session and windows, doors should be widely open for fresh air. Use disinfectants approved by health authorities Eg Isopropyl alcohol, sodium hypochlorite.
- Equipment should be clean before and after use and is a shared responsibility of users and staff.
- Remind them that everybody gets to share in the satisfaction that comes with being part of the solution. Frequently and publicly acknowledge staff and exercisers for their efforts. When actions are praised, they can turn into healthy, lasting habits.
- When cleaning equipment, train your staff and exercisers to spray the cloth first. DO NOT spray the equipment itself. Squeeze excess liquid from disinfectant wipes. A 90% isopropyl alcohol solution is recommended for screens and displays. Improper disinfectants and cleaners can harm the finish and function of your equipment, and liquid infiltration can damage electronics. Use recommended cleaners from manufactures whenever possible.
- Wipe less contaminated area first and then wipe more contaminated areas and keep one piece of cloth for each machine.
- Beware of hidden hot spots. Some fitness equipment may have upward-facing seams, deep pockets, exposed hardware, or complex surfaces which will require extra effort when cleaning and disinfecting.

### Air disinfection

- If affordable plasma air sterilizers can be used and continuously run for air disinfection in an environment of human activity. If there are no plasma air sterilizers, use Ultraviolet lamp for one hour each time perform and do this at least three times a day.
- Alternative methods are to rearrange your facility with more windows, doors, and exhaust fans in a way that more fresh air come into the facility.
- Disinfect and wash use clothes and towels
- Wash clothes and towels separately with hot water washing machine or dry clothes and towels for at least two hours under sunlight and wash them with water separately.



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### Annexure 6 - Operational check list

- Risk communication strategies
- Communication resumption plan with members
- Staff communication.
- Code of conduct for members.
- Code of conduct for staff.
- Appointment of COVID 19 coordinator.
- New facility lay out with six feet distance with each station.
- Adequate and appropriate signage at different spaces.
- Front desk and check in arrangements to avoid congestion and separation between entryway, sanitary hygiene station, and temperature check-in station maintaining social distancing.
- Locker room and shower room restrictions and sanitary arrangements.
- Cleaning and disinfection procedures and monitoring and evaluation procedure.
- Staff training.
- Create an operational emergency team consisting of staff in essential functions.
- Establish information flows such as situation reports and backups of essential information.
- Plan for communications and dissemination of information for all stakeholders.
- Create contingency plans to address the impact of a virus resurgence after re-opening.
- Assess supply needs and explore options for purchasing additional supplies required





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**Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs**

No. 33, Maitland Place, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.



දිනය 2020/06/05  
Date

## Annexure 7 - Important definitions

**Definition of close contacts** — “Face-to-face contact in any setting with a confirmed or probable case, for greater than 15 minutes cumulative over the course of a week, in the period extending from 48 hours before onset of symptoms in the confirmed or probable case, or

—Sharing of a closed space with a confirmed or probable case for a prolonged period (e.g. more than 2 hours) in the period extending from 48 hours before onset of symptoms in the confirmed or probable case

— Contact is considered to have occurred within the period extending 48 hours before onset of symptoms in the patient, until the patient is classified as no longer infectious by the treating team (usually 24 hours after the resolution of symptoms)”.

### Managing a confirmed COVID-19 case

If a suspected COVID 19 patient found need to identified place to isolate patient and promptly inform the health authorities .COVID-19 is a notifiable disease and Local public health authorities must be informed. Training facilities may be closed on the instruction of the local Public Health Authority or the CMO. Re-opening of the training facility should only occur after close



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**Questionnaire for athlete and supporting staff to prevent infection pre-training**

(National Guidelines for safe Return to Sport – During COVID 19)

Name - .....

Sports - .....

**Have you noticed any of the following symptoms within the last 14 days?**

	Symptoms	YES	NO
1.	body temperature over 37.5 °C		
2.	dry cough		
3.	sore throat		
4.	sudden onset of shortness of		
5.	sudden onset of vomiting and/or diarrhoea		
6.	sudden onset of articular and/or muscle pain		
7.	In the last 14 days did anyone from your house had any of the above symptoms		

	Are the following statements true for you?	YES	NO
1	In the past 1 month have you or anyone in your household met a presumptive or declared Covid-19 infected person or anyone who got into close contact with such person?		
2	Is anyone in your household under self or officially imposed quarantine?		
3	Do you live in the same household with an exposed and frail person (> 70 years old, cardiac pathology or chronic pulmonary pathology? immunodeficiency)		
4	Had any contact with someone who travel from abroad in last 21days ?		

Temperature: .....

Remarks : .....

Signature of the Team Physician: .....



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**Daily questionnaire for athletes and supporting staff to  
 prevent infection during training**

(National Guidelines for safe Return to Sport – During COVID 19)

Name - .....

Do you have any of the following:	Yes	No
1. Cough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Fever	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Chills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. New loss of taste or smell	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Nausea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Fatigue or muscle pain without a known cause	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Temperature: .....

Fit to train without any further examination

Need further examination

Signature of the Team Physician/Team Physio/Authorized official: .....



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