



## **HOW TO RESTART CHESS COVID19 & CHESS PROTOCOLS**

### **REPORT OF THE MEETING**

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During the ECU Online Forum with doctors, Public Health professionals and European federations' representatives dedicated to the challenges that the current COVID-19 pandemic is posing on live Chess events, the following areas requiring further discussion and decision-making in each territory and according the local restrictions were highlighted:

The decisions that Chess Events Organizers and National Federations will have to make broadly can be divided into 3 major categories;

- (a) Personal Safety Measures,
- (b) Ensuring Safe Environment,
- (c) Safety Policy and Legal Issues.

#### **A. Personal Safety Measures:**

##### **1. Face Masks:**

- Cloth masks - protect against spread of infected droplets in the environment (that means I am not protected if I wear it but I do protect others in case I am infected with Covid-19). Additional benefit of a cloth mask is that it can be washed and used repetitively.

- Disposable Surgical Masks - have additional benefit to cloth masks in that they are usually more convenient to use as people wearing them have less choking sensation and offer somewhat better protection from the transmission of the virus to the person. They are disposable, so they should be available in sufficient amounts at the event venue and provided by the organizers.
- N95 - these masks usually offer the best protection, but if one aims at reusing them, because of their high price, they should be disinfected with UVC light and even then, they only can be reused no more than 3 times.

## 2. Thermo-screening

Measuring core body temperature at the entrance of the Playing Venue will catch players with febrile conditions (including Covid-19 infection), given the patient has had no incentive to cheat (regulation is adjusted accordingly not to provide such an incentive) and come to the playing hall premedicated with temperature lowering medicines. Organizers need to think about what happens if a player is found to have fever or signs of Acute respiratory infection.

## 3. Screening for Acute Respiratory Infections:

In the form of a fill-in questionnaire. The participants should be strongly encouraged by the regulations and contract not to conceal the truth about their health conditions. Again, requires the organizers to plan ahead what to do in case any of the participants falls sick.

## 4. Walking restrictions in the Playing Hall:

With the current situation it was found highly advisable to not allow any unnecessary walking of the participants in the Playing Hall. One can reinforce this by providing clear direction guides and signs to and from the Toilets, Exits and other areas of need for the participants.

## 5. Hand Sanitizers:

- Hand sanitizers should be hanging at the Entrance of the Playing Hall as well as the Exits of the Toilets, Smoking Areas and any additional needed areas for the participants.
- One can also think about placing individual hand sanitizers on the Playing board for each participant.

6. Social Distancing measures:

- This includes provision of the safe social distancing (approximately 1.5m) from everyone except the opponent.

7. Gloves are not believed to provide additional benefit to the listed measures for the safety of the participants but can be worn at the decision of the individual player.

8. Individual Boards or Bubbles are not believed to provide any significant benefit to the named measures for the safety of the participants.

9. Immediate Penalty Measures if rules and regulations concerning personal safety measures are broken by any of the participants. This might require Arbiter training and provision of information to the participants regarding Rules and Regulations.

**B. Safe Playing Environment:**

1. Adequate ventilation of the closed spaces:

- Open space or open windows that provide adequate supply of the fresh air is the best.
- Ventilation system that provides adequate circulation of the air inside the closed hall.

2. Daily disinfection of the touched surfaces in the Playing Venue:

- clear disinfection protocol using either Hydrogen peroxide, or with UVC lamps
- all touched surfaces, including handles, furniture, chess pieces, chess clocks, backs of the chairs should be disinfected in between games.

3. Open Area where one can be allowed to take off the mask in case, they need to wipe their nose? (especially if people with acute respiratory infections are allowed to continue playing)

4. Doctor's Room/Isolation room where one can wait for the arrival of medical services in case anyone feels sick

5. Hand Sanitizers at designated places with clear directions of use.

6. Toilets - one should not be allowed to take off the mask even in the toilet, as mostly toilets have limited space and are not so well ventilated

7. No visitors-parents allowed in the playing venue

8. Safety Protocols and Special Rules and Regulations hanging in clearly visible places.

### **C. Policy and Legal Issues:**

The following questions should be addressed by the federations and organizers in order to ensure an informed and safe playing environment for all.

1. Who is allowed to play?
2. What are the health requirements (having done the PCR test in the previous 72hours is not recommended due to its limited availability and high price) in order to participate?
3. How to avoid misinformation by hiding the symptoms?
4. What if someone gets sick? Should the organizers provide medical insurance or request travel insurance covering Covid-19 treatment to be purchased by all the participants?
5. What are the Penalties for breaking rules and regulations and who has the right to operate them?
6. What should be there in the signed agreement (disclaimer) of the participant/organizer?
7. What happens if someone is diagnosed with Covid-19 during the tournament? Should the organizer have the insurance covering tournament cancellation in case of Covid-19 case?
8. Organizing safe accommodation and dining conditions for the participants.

ECU Board will evaluate further this information and prepare protocols for future ECU competitions and players' disclaimers that can be used and by any organiser.