

Covid-19 Certification – Q&A

Do I need COVID-19 certification to attend a match?

From Wednesday 15 December, Covid-19 Certification became a legal requirement for entry into settings where large crowds gather – the Stadium of Light falls within the “over 10,000 supporters” category for most fixtures.

This means the Club are legally required to check COVID certification at point of entry. In addition, the Club have had to submit detailed documents to Public Health England to obtain prior approval for the matchday operational plan.

This means fans will need to be prepared to provide evidence of Covid-19 Certification, known as a “COVID Passport” to enter the ground.

All clubs have the authority to refuse entry to the ground if a supporter does not provide the necessary COVID-19 status evidence.

Will I be allowed entry into the Stadium of Light if I don't have COVID certification?

No. The Club would be breaking the law if we knowingly allowed you to enter the stadium with COVID certification.

What counts as Covid-19 certification?

People can demonstrate their vaccine status via the NHS Covid Pass on the NHS App. People will be able to demonstrate proof of two vaccine doses via the app. Note that a “booster” jab is not a requirement for certification.

If you don't have a Smart phone, official paper versions can be used (more below).

Having considered the evidence since the emergence of Omicron, the Government has determined that proof of a negative lateral flow test will also be accepted within the preceding 48 hours.

Supporters should also ensure they have photographic identification with them in order to verify their identity if requested.

How do I get my NHS COVID pass?

To ensure that fans can continue watching their teams in person this season in a safe manner, it is imperative that all football supporters play their part by ensuring they have valid COVID-19 Passes in advance of match day.

The simplest way of obtaining certification is with the COVID Pass through the [NHS app](#) or [website](#).

The COVID Pass can be generated on the app following:

- You have been fully vaccinated over two weeks earlier

- You have returned a negative COVID test in the previous 72 hours
- Or you have registered a medical exemption with the NHS

How should I store my online COVID pass?

Additional checks may delay your entry time to the ground so fans are urged to save any online pass to your device – such as an Apple Wallet – so that you can access the pass offline and not rely on 4G or WiFi.

To add your NHS COVID Pass to the device's wallet, tap the 'Add to Apple Wallet' button within the NHS COVID Pass service.

If you store an offline version of your NHS COVID Pass into your Apple Wallet it will only be valid until the expiry date shown on the COVID Pass. The expiry date will not refresh automatically. This means you will need to store an updated NHS COVID Pass to your Apple Wallet before you next plan to use it if your original COVID Pass has or is due to expire.

I cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons. Will I still be allowed entry?

The Government has determined that proof of a negative lateral flow test (LFT) will also be accepted as certification. This should be taken within 48 hours of kick off to prove their Covid-19 status.

Where do I get a lateral flow test from?

Lateral flow tests are available for free from your local test centre or pharmacy. You can also order tests [here](#).

How do I prove I have undertaken a negative LFT?

Record the result via the NHS <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> and bring the result with you to the stadium.

I don't own a smart phone. How do I prove my COVID-19 status?

You can receive a paper copy of your COVID-19 status. More details are available [here](#).

Please carry this with you so you can show your COVID-19 status when attending a match.

I don't have the NHS App; how do I get it?

The latest guidance on the NHS app is available [here](#).

Do I need to take a PCR test?

No, a PCR test is not necessary to attend matches, but fans are urged not to attend if they are displaying any COVID-19 symptoms.

If you do not have proof of vaccination, you should be able to show you have had a negative lateral flow test result in the 72 hours prior to kick-off.

What about people aged under-18?

Under-18s will not need to certify their COVID status.

I am concerned about attending matches. Is it safe?

Sunderland AFC have worked tirelessly to ensure they are 'Plan B ready' so that supporters have been able to return as safely as possible.

Football is one of the most regulated industries in crowd management Sunderland AFC have huge experience of the operational delivery of football matches.

Supporters should ensure they fully understand these guidelines before attending a match and all fans should continue to follow the latest public health guidance.

Fans should not attend matches at the Stadium of Light if they are unwell or if there is any risk they can pass on COVID-19.

What are the entrance requirements?

Ticket holders must agree to follow the conditions set by:

- Ticketing terms and conditions
- Supporter Code of Conduct
- Ground Regulations

The Supporter Code of Conduct sets out COVID-19 regulations and behaviours that supporters must follow to help keep everybody safe on matchday.

You will be asked to read and accept the conditions at the point of purchase. If you are booking on behalf of others, you must also ensure they are aware of the regulations and are able to comply with the terms.

Are away supporters allowed at matches?

Yes, away supporters are permitted to attend matches, provided they have obtained a ticket for the correct area of the stadium.

Visiting clubs will sell tickets to their own supporters, so please contact your own club for information, or to make a purchase.

Entrance requirements will be set by the host club and may differ from some of the processes you are used to following.

Please ensure you are aware of these before attending matches. Information will be available from either the host or the visiting club.

What about staff?

All staff working within the Stadium of Light (with the exception of the emergency services) are required to meet the same COVID certification criteria as supporters.

What time should I arrive at the stadium?

Turnstiles will open earlier, 2 hours prior to kick off. Fans should always arrive as early as possible prior to kick-off and should make allowances for time required to complete any additional security or COVID-status checks.

Do I need to wear a face covering?

From Friday 10 December, and in line with Government guidance, all supporters aged 11 and over will be required to wear a face covering when located in indoor areas, other than when eating or drinking, or where exempt.

Face coverings are advised though not required to be worn by supporters when they are in their allocated seats in the stadium bowl.

What other rules or guidance are supporters expected to follow?

Supporters are asked to:

- Follow the Supporter Code of Conduct
- Remember your face covering
- Wash your hands or use sanitiser regularly
- Be considerate of others and help to keep everyone safe
- Only occupy your designated seat
- Follow one-way systems throughout the stadium and adhere to any other signage
- Follow any instructions issued to you by stewards or other stadium staff

Are catering services available inside stadiums?

Yes, catering services are available, although supporters may notice some changes to the location or queuing and service systems used at these outlets.

Please be considerate to others, including staff members, and follow any instructions.

In line with existing Government legislation, alcoholic beverages must not be taken into the seating bowl and may not be consumed within sight of the pitch.