



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Pregnancy and Football – Guidelines for Officials

This note has been developed by The Football Association for anyone involved in women's and girls football. This includes, but is not restricted to, County FA Women's and Girls Development Officers, Referees in women's football, Regional and National Development staff, and officials in women's clubs and leagues.

This note should be read in conjunction with The FA's Pregnancy and Football Guidelines for Players, which are attached. The Guidelines will be made available through the women's leagues and via Women and Girls Development Officers and Referee Development Officers, and also at The FA's website, www.TheFA.com.

Pregnancy and football

- The FA does not have a formal policy on pregnant players. The FA's Pregnancy and Football Guidelines for Players do however provide a general and purely advisory recommendation that pregnant players should not continue to play beyond 12 weeks of pregnancy, and should not return to football until at least two weeks after childbirth.
- It is however an individual decision for each pregnant player as to whether, and for how long, she continues to play football. All referees and officials should respect any player's wish to continue playing while pregnant, and treat pregnant players no differently to players who are not pregnant. Coaches should continue to select players on the basis of merit and capability.

If you receive an enquiry from a pregnant player

- You should provide her with a copy

of The FA's Pregnancy and Football - Guidelines for Players.

- You should direct the player to obtain the medical advice of her GP. You should not provide your own medical advice to the player.
- You should state to the player that it is her decision as to whether to continue playing, but stress that she does so at her own risk and on an entirely voluntary basis.

Considerations for clubs and venue owners

- You should check whether your insurance policies provide appropriate cover and whether cover should be extended. This is a decision for each club to make.
- You should ensure that The FA's Pregnancy and Football - Guidelines for Players is displayed and copies made available at your premises.
- Clubs and venue owners should remember that they remain responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that foreseeable risks of injury to participants relating to the condition of the grounds, pitch and facilities are minimised, so far as it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Further information

For further information and guidance please contact:

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