



## STATEMENT

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# SUSPENSION OF ATHLETICS COMPETITION EXTENDED TO 30 JUNE 2020

## ENGLAND ATHLETICS U20/U23 TRACK & FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS POSTPONED

**Wednesday 29 April 2020**

Following previous statements on 17 March and 24 March, England Athletics, in collaboration with the other Home Country Athletics Federations and UKA, can confirm that the suspension period relating specifically to **athletics competition** has been extended until at least the 30 June.

We have collectively taken the decision to extend the suspension of licensed competition activity due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and in recognition that event organisers, clubs, athletes, officials and coaches at all levels of the sport need clarity, advanced notice and time to plan.

In addition to this announcement, England Athletics can also confirm the postponement of its own U20/U23 Track & Field Championships – originally scheduled to take place on 6-7 June 2020 in Bedford.

We are mindful that licensed competition providers may need to make decisions relating to facility hire if they are contractually bound. We also need to be realistic in considering the likely availability of officials between now and June and first and foremost to ensure their safety. In addition, we are aware that securing the required level of first aid medical support for events has become increasingly challenging with providers such as the St. John's Ambulance ceasing to support major events until at least the end of June.

We recognise that some licensed competition providers have already taken the decision to postpone their competitions during this period and our latest domestic competition planning with UKA and the other Home Countries now makes provision for a 1<sup>st</sup> July start at the earliest. However, this may move back further depending on government guidance and advice on issues including insurance, health & safety and medical service provision

Whilst all licensed competition events in our sport scheduled up to 30 June 2020 are suspended, we will continue to review the wider suspension of all other athletics activity outside of competition (currently set to 31 May 2020). We will wait for a further announcement from the UK government in relation to the nationwide coronavirus lockdown period, expected during week commencing 4 May, before further reviewing and updating on the current suspension period covering all other athletics activity.

England Athletics continues to stress the importance of following UK government guidelines in relation to restrictions of movement, social distancing and out-of-home exercise. [Click here](#) to read previous statements, along with clarification of UK government guidelines and signposting to a range of useful information including virtual running, virtual coaching and insurance.

England Athletics CEO Chris Jones said: “This is a collective UK wide decision and whilst we would all love to see the return of athletics competition as soon as possible, the safety of our members and the general public is of utmost importance. We understand the challenges that athletes, coaches, officials, event organisers and clubs are facing at this time and it was important that we reviewed our suspension of competitions activity and provided an update as soon as possible. The coronavirus situation has added new layers of complexity to the planning and organisation of events and these logistical issues, as well as the need to help clubs and competition providers, were central to our decision making.

“England Athletics continues to work with the other Home Country Athletics Federations and UKA to help ensure that competition at all levels can take place in some form, if permitted, later in the year. We are working on a revised competition calendar with the input of our Regional Councils and established providers to shape this and will be communicating more about this in the coming weeks, including guidance on what an alternative schedule of competition may look like from July onwards. We are considering new initiatives in what will be a shortened season and are exploring virtual competitions as part of this approach, with recent partnerships enabling England Athletics member clubs and RunTogether groups to have access to the [OpenTrack](#) and [Racefully](#) virtual running platforms free-of-charge.

“We are also continuing to offer new digital activities, resources and partner initiatives through our [Athletics & Running for Everyone @ home campaign](#) which has seen fantastic engagement as we help the whole of the England Athletics family to stay active, stay connected and keep developing while spending more time at home.”

**ENDS**