



michigan high school athletic association

Mark Uyl, Executive Director

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TO: MHSAA Community
FROM: Mark Uyl, Executive Director
DATE: January 6, 2021
SUBJECT: MHSAA Update

We hope you had a restful holiday break and are ready for the new year. Allow us to provide an update on winter sports as we've received a number of questions over the past two days along with updated guidance from MDHHS.

Under the current epidemic order and guidance recently received from MDHHS, the only allowed in-person, face-to-face activity involving winter sport coaches and students is voluntary **OUT-DOOR CONDITIONING** activities if permitted by your school. These conditioning sessions must be planned to keep 6 feet of physical distance by all persons at all times and face masks must be worn by all individuals at all times. These outdoor activities cannot be sport-specific or use sport-specific equipment; generic conditioning equipment such as cones, weights, jump ropes, and other fitness apparatuses are permitted.

Virtual contact and virtual meetings continue to be allowed for all coaches and students in all seasons. No face-to-face team meetings or sessions can be held indoors under the current orders as all meetings must be held virtually. The four player allowance is not in effect at the present time – it is a zero player rule for all sport-specific activity for fall sports not currently participating in the MDHHS pilot program, all winter sports and all spring sports.

The MDHHS order is clear that no coach-player activity is allowed to occur **indoors** at any school facility or non-school facility (e.g. ice rink, bowling center) at this time, including workouts in individual or small group settings and open gyms. From the MDHHS order, it appears that weight rooms are able to be open and used during the school day but cannot be open when in an extra-curricular setting before or after school. These prohibitions come directly from Sections 5 and 6 in the MDHHS Epidemic Order of December 18. Remember that skiing may practice and compete now because it is a non-contact, outdoor winter sport.

We understand that many schools have noted clear conflicts between what is allowed to take place during the school day (full classrooms, hallways, etc) but no indoor athletic activity is currently allowed, even in individual and small group settings. Simply put, the MHSAA and member schools have no options other than to follow the current MDHHS epidemic orders of Dec. 18 that specifically addresses gatherings for extracurricular activities at schools and organized sports. As you know, these current orders are set to expire on January 15. If changes or modifications are made to the order by MDHHS prior to Jan. 15, please know we will communicate all changes with schools immediately. Note that further guidance on winter sport spectator limits will be shared with schools once we have them from MDHHS.

One last item regarding winter scheduling flexibility. The Representative Council approved and reaffirmed for all winter sports, including basketball and ice hockey, that regular season contests may be played up until the date of the MHSAA Finals in each sport. This would allow schools to schedule regular season games during the MHSAA tournament series, even after a school has been eliminated from the District or Regional tournament, for example. Schools would need to follow both seasonal and weekly limits of competition when scheduling regular season contests in weeks where MHSAA tournament competition also takes place. This action suspends for the winter of 2021, only, portions of Reg. II, Section 10 (allowing basketball non-tournament games in a MHSAA tournament week) and Reg. II, Section 11-G (allowing regular season hockey games to be played after the last Saturday in February).

Thank you.