



OVERVIEW OF IMPORTANT RETURN-TO-PLAY TOPICS

***This document was updated on May 15, 2021.** Over time, this document will change. Please check back frequently for updates. The first four pages of this document feature easy-to-understand overviews of Spring 2020-21 COVID document-related guidelines. For more detailed answers, read this entire packet. Spring athletics will not be risk-free, but by following the guidance in this document, we all can help mitigate those risks. You should also consider your interactions outside of sports during this season in order to limit the potential for exposure in other portions of your daily routine.*

PROTOCOL FOR POSITIVE CASES: A detailed and more complete version of these protocols can be found on page 4 of this document (“What to Do When Someone Gets Sick”).

1. Contact health department and follow guidance.
2. Close contacts MAY have to quarantine for 14 days; follow health department guidance. “Close contact” is defined as someone who was within six feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, starting from two days before illness onset.
3. Notify all schools, families and officials involved without identifying the person involved.
4. Students, coaches, officials and others at the event but NOT in close contact should be closely monitored for symptoms and may not need testing. Follow health department guidance.
5. Clean the area.

FACE MASKS: The **May 15, 2021** order issued by Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) states that masks are no longer required for any outdoor activity. Individuals may opt to wear a face mask but there is no longer a requirement that face masks be worn outdoors by any player, coach, team personnel, official or spectators. Contact sport athletes in boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse and girls soccer are no longer required to wear a face mask while participating.

REGULAR-SEASON TOURNAMENTS, INVATIONALS, MULTI-TEAM COMPETITIONS: The following limitations are in place for regular season spring tournaments and invitationals, both home and away. Regular-season dual/head-to-head matchups, between multiple levels of two different schools, are not affected.

- Baseball – four schools/teams at a site
- Golf – traditional contest limits apply
- Lacrosse – four schools/teams at a site
- Soccer – four schools/teams at a site
- Softball – four schools/teams at a site
- Tennis – traditional contest limits apply
- Track & Field – 16 single-gender teams at a site

When determining the number of teams present at a tournament, count the school’s varsity team as one team, and its JV team as a second team. The goal is to achieve physical distancing at all possible times; teams not in competition should be provided adequate space, and spectator limitations must be followed. Consider staggered contest and team arrival times to maintain physical distancing.

Where two sites and/or facilities are used, there should not be any crossover competition between the two tournaments.

SCRIMMAGES: There are no scrimmages allowed for any sports this spring.

SPECTATOR LIMITATIONS: The current MDHHS epidemic order indicates that outdoor entertainment and recreation facilities must not allow more than 1,000 patrons to gather. Schools may limit spectators further (two per participant, as suggested by MDHHS) but the order defines the maximum number of spectators based on facility size and type. If local health department orders exist that are stricter than these updated MHSAA requirements, member schools and host venues are expected to follow those local orders.

Sideline cheerleaders, dance team members and pompon squads would be considered participants if a school allows. If a non-athletic support organization such as a pep band is allowed at a facility, all those individuals must be counted in the total number of spectators.

ENTRANCE/EXIT STRATEGIES: Event organizers and venues must consider proper scheduling, seating areas, and crowd entry and exit to facilitate needed sanitizing and physical distancing protocols.

PRE-WORKOUT AND PRE-GAME SCREENING: All coaches and students should be screened daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to participating, including with a temperature check. This check may take place onsite or be completed and verified prior to arrival onsite (at home, for example). Anyone with a temperature of greater than 100.3 degrees should not participate and be sent home. Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19. These records must be kept confidential. Any person displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed to participate, should self-isolate and contact his or her primary care provider or other healthcare professional. Continue to remind and insist that coaches and students disclose symptoms so all schools can compete safely. Involve local health departments if positive cases of COVID are discovered. Vulnerable adult individuals should not coach, supervise or participate in any competitions or workouts. School districts will make the decision on vulnerable individuals.

COVID GAME CANCELLATIONS: Any game or contest cancelled because of COVID issues is not considered a forfeit. It is considered a no-play, provided the contest has not started. For officials' payment purposes, this is considered an act of God.

TICKETS: Schools should strongly consider using a digital ticket or cashless system. Schools must work together to develop a distribution plan for the limited amount of tickets available per game. If a physical ticket is used, each school should consider conducting a pre-sale, with no onsite ticket sales – only tickets, not money, is collected at the event site.

TRANSPORTATION: The use of buses is a local school district decision. Cleaning and ability to physically distance should be part of the decision. Schools should also consider length of trips when determining the season schedule. When feasible, consider having parents drive athletes to and from games.

LOCKER ROOMS: Home teams are not required to offer locker room access. Visiting teams should arrive dressed and ready to play. Locker room restrooms should be available, and a cleaning schedule should be created.

FACILITY CLEANING: Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities. Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (bleachers, chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.). Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds before participating in workouts. Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.

CONCESSIONS: The current MDHHS order states that consumption of food or beverages is permitted only where patrons are seated and those groups of patrons are separated by at least six feet. The order also states that no more than six patrons may be seated at a table and those groups of patrons cannot intermingle.

BEST PRACTICES FOR NON-ATHLETES – THIS IS NOT SPORT-SPECIFIC

Administrators/Host Management

- Administrators are not required to wear face masks but may opt to do so at outdoor events. Proper physical distancing should be practiced.
- Obtain officials' information in order to trace contacts if necessary. (This information may be accessible through Arbiter.)
- Provide clear instruction to teams in advance of contests about entrance and exit points of the facility.
- At larger spectator events, consider providing volunteers to monitor entrances and spectator seating areas who can promote physical distancing.
- Schools should restrict spectators on both sides of the gym from sitting in the first two rows of bleachers closest to the gymnasium floor to allow for adequate spacing between the spectators and contest participants, permit a

scorer's table/judge's table and benches to be moved back or use the first row of bleachers for team bench seating if needed.

- When possible, officials and teams should be provided separate bathrooms and/or gathering areas.
- Scorer's Table/Press Box – essential personnel should be 6 feet apart when possible.
- A cordless microphone could be used.
- Cleaning supplies should be available onsite with devices sanitized between uses.

Coaches

- Coaches are not required to wear face masks but may opt to do so at outdoor events. Proper physical distancing should be practiced.
- Provide and review NFHS Playing Rule modifications with players and parents.

Spectators

- Spectators are not required to wear face masks but may opt to do so at outdoor events. Proper physical distancing should be practiced.
- Entrance and exit protocols and posted signs by host management must be obeyed.

Media Personnel

- Media are not required to wear face masks but may opt to do so at outdoor events. Proper physical distancing should be practiced.
- Press box/table accommodations should allow for appropriate physical distancing.
- Promote to local media the need to call in advance of the event to secure accommodations.
- Designate locations where photographers may shoot from and enforce it. Make sure photographers are aware of restrictions when they arrive. Photographers must be kept out of team box and bench areas.
- Limit postgame interviews to open-air areas. No locker room access.
- Establish times when the venue will become available to the media and when it will close.



SPORT: Spring Soccer
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This information is provided to schools to help conduct a high school soccer season. The intent of this information is to minimize and reduce risk as much as possible. As such, parents and athletes should discuss the risks and determine if these provisions allow participation for their child.

This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school, city and state to help prevent the spread of virus. Even when taking all precautions, there will still be risk of transmitting illnesses. Everyone should stay vigilant about the health of members of their teams.

The situation with COVID-19 continues to change and these considerations may quickly become outdated. Continue to keep up with the latest from the CDC and your local health department. A coach and the athletic director within the program should be designated to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.

The MHSAA/NFHS Guidance For Re-Opening School Sports lists Soccer as a moderate risk sport.

*Moderate risk sports involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. **Masks are no longer required for outdoor soccer.***

Competition and Spectator Limitations

- 2021 Spring regular season tournament competition limit – no more than 4 teams at a site.
- No scrimmages allowed.

Special Equipment and Facility Considerations for Girls Soccer

Sports Equipment	Facility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer Balls • Goals/Nets/Posts • Corner Flags • Scorer’s table • Ball Handlers • Goalie Gloves • Pennies • Cones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleachers • Team Area/Bench • Warm-up Areas • Bathrooms • Locker Rooms • Ticket Booths • Entry Gates • Concessions • Weight training facilities

GIRLS SOCCER – Return to Play Guidelines

PRACTICE

- Practice as normal. Contact and intra-squad scrimmaging can occur. Coaches should be cognizant of keeping physical space between athletes when they are not in active participation during a drill.
- Balls may be passed/shared, provided students wash their hands before and after practice.

COMPETITION

- No pre-game and post-game handshakes/high-fives/fist bumps.
- All equipment should be cleaned and sanitized after set up and before contest.
- Athletes should not share pennies.
- Each team is responsible for its own hand sanitizer and its own med kit.
- Face coverings no longer need to be worn during the captains meeting.
- Only athletes will touch the balls.
- Sanitized back up ball(s) should be available and should be rotated in regularly (someone needs to be designated to sanitize the ball.) Keep sanitized and non-sanitized balls separated.
- Players should use hand sanitizer before entering and when exiting the game during substitutions; no hand touching allowed during substitutions.
- Create additional space if possible, between officials and sideline benches. If benches are used for subs, maintain physical distancing.
- Limit sidelines to essential people.
- World Cup Walk out not allowed.
- Limit captain meeting to 1 athlete per school and officials, maintaining physical distance.

SOCCKER – NFHS Playing Rule Modifications

1. Soccer Rules Considerations

- ***Pregame Conference (5-2-2d)***
 - Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team.
 - Move the location of the pregame conference to center of the field. All individuals maintain a physical distance of 6 feet.
 - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***Ball Holders (6-1)***
 - Encourage physical distancing of 6 feet
- ***Team Benches (1-5-1)***
 - Encourage bench personnel to observe physical distancing of 6 feet.
- ***Substitution Procedures (3-4)***
 - Maintain physical distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.
- ***Officials Table (6-2; 6-3)***
 - Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

2. Pre and Post Match Ceremony

- a. Suspend the pregame world cup introduction line and send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.
- b. Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.

3. Soccer Rules Interpretations

- ***Rule 4-1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES***
 - Cloth face coverings are permissible.
 - Gloves are permissible.
- ***Rule 4-2 LEGAL UNIFORM***
 - Long sleeves are permissible. (4-1-1)
 - Long pants are permissible. (4-1-1)
 - Under garments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team. (4-1-1d)
- ***Rule 5-3 OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT***
 - By state association adoption, long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permissible. (5-1-3)
 - Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
 - Cloth face coverings are permissible.
 - Gloves are permissible.



Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick

Precautionary Measures (in addition to other protocols and precautions)

- Anyone attending or participating in an MHSAA regular season or tournament event should check his/her temperature before arriving. Spectators, participants or personnel displaying COVID-19 symptoms (*e.g., fever, cough or shortness of breath*), or with temperatures of 100.3F or greater, should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if symptoms persist.
- Prior to participation, the COVID-19 athlete/coach monitoring form should be used, which includes five questions plus a temperature check. **NOTE: Athletic Directors should consider requiring similar precautions for game officials.**

Protocol for Suspected Cases of COVID-19

- All schools should have an emergency action plan in place for each site. If a student, coach or official is or becomes sick on site with symptoms of COVID-19, they should be placed in a clearly identified and designated quarantine area with a mask in place until they can be picked up. Staff who are identified to care for students must wear a mask.
- A symptomatic student should be sent home with a parent or designated adult until they have tested negative or have been released from isolation according to the local health department's protocols.
- Students, coaches, and/or officials should be transported by their parent or guardian, emergency contact or ambulance (if clinically unstable) for off-site testing. If an ambulance is called, or someone is being brought to the hospital, there should be an attempt to call the hospital first to alert them that the person may have COVID-19. If a student, coach or official becomes sick, they must not use group transportation to return home.

Protocol for Positive Cases of COVID-19

- The local health department should be contacted by the school for further direction. They likely will initiate contact tracing, following regular public health practices.
- All schools, public and private, must cooperate with the local public health department if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified, and collect the contact information for any close contacts (*i.e., individuals less than six feet apart for more than 15 minutes*) of the infected individual from two days before he or she showed symptoms to the time when he or she was last at the event. Close contacts should be quarantined for 14 days at home. Local health officials may identify other contacts who require quarantine.
- Administrators of the schools involved, as well as students/families/officials in attendance, should be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 so there continues to be awareness and close observation of any symptoms. **NOTE: Student communicable disease related information is protected health information. The individual with COVID-19 should not be identified by name to non-family or non-health department officials. Even if a family/student acknowledges and publicly discloses a positive test, school staff and officials must not participate in discussion or acknowledgement of a positive test by identifying a specific student.**
- Students, coaches or officials who were at the event, but not in close contact with a positive case, should continue to be closely monitored for any symptoms of COVID-19. At this time, these individuals are not required to receive testing unless they develop COVID-19 symptoms.
- Areas that were used by the sick person should be closed off and should not be used until after cleaning and disinfecting them (this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area). If possible, cleaning and disinfecting of the area should not occur until at least 24 hours has elapsed. If 24 hours is not feasible, as much time possible should be allowed to pass before cleaning or disinfection occurs.

COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form DATE: _____



Name	Time	Circle Yes/No below										Temp (if higher than 100.3°F)
		Fever		Cough		Sore Throat		Shortness of Breath		Close contact, or cared for someone with COVID-19		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	