



SPORT: Softball
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Andi Osters

andi@mhsaa.com

This document is about workouts/practices - **not competition**. Further guidance on contests will be coming prior to play.

Considering all recommendations by the [MISafeSchools Return to School Roadmap](#), [MHSAA Re-Opening Guidelines](#) and the SMAC guidelines, the following are the specific guidelines for Softball:

- **The MHSAA/NFHS Guidance for Re-Opening School Sports lists Softball 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.*
- Information could be updated after reassessing future epidemiology data and/or health department and CDC directives.
- Softball teams and individuals will be allowed a maximum of sixteen (16) coach-player voluntary contact days with more than four students on-site at school facilities if the school permits from September 8, 2020 to October 31, 2020. There can be no competition and sessions must include students from that school only. General conditioning with more than four players continues to be allowed out-of-season. Approved cooperative teams may work out together if all schools' administrations permit.
- Only outdoor practices may occur during these 16 contact days.
- Consider gradual workout sessions with a responsible progression of activity over several days.

Special Equipment and Facility Considerations for Softball

Sports Equipment	Facility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Softballs • Bats • Helmets • Gloves • Catcher's Equipment • Bases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleachers • Team Area/Bench • Warm-up Areas • Bathrooms • Locker Rooms • Ticket Booths • Entry Gates • Concessions • Weight training facilities

Note: This is not an exhaustive list and there might be additional steps in each school to help prevent the spread of the virus. Even when taking all precautions, there is still a risk of transmitting illnesses. The situation with COVID-19 continues to change and these considerations may quickly become outdated.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 within the program should be designated to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.

SOFTBALL – Return to Voluntary Coach-Player Contact Days

PRE-WORKOUT/CONTACT DAYS/PRACTICE SCREENING:

- **All students who are participating must have provided a Physical Examination or Health Questionnaire to the school prior to reporting to these contact days.**
- Clear instructions should be provided about entrance and exit points and face coverings must be worn by all individuals when arriving to and departing from the practice area.
- While screening, all individuals must be physically distanced.
- All coaches and students should be screened daily for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to participating, including a temperature check. Anyone with a temperature of greater than 100.3 degrees or any other positive signs/symptoms for COVID-19 should not participate and be sent home (see **Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick** on page 4 for additional guidance). Coaches must keep accurate records of athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is necessary (see **COVID-19 Monitoring Form** on page 5).
- Each individual (coaches and athletes) should wash and sanitize their hands prior to practice. All individuals should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth.
- Schools will make the determination regarding vulnerable individuals (*e.g. those with a medical condition or over age 65*) as to whether they should oversee or participate in any workouts or practices.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT – ALL OUT DOORS – DRILLS, INSTRUCTION AND INTRA-SQUAD SCRIMMAGES ARE PERMITTED

- Locker rooms should not be used. Players should come dressed and ready for conditioning/practice and shower at home.
- Allow adequate space between spots where players deposit gear and water bottle for breaks.
- All coaches must be cognizant of guidelines, but we recommend each team designate an Asst. Coach as a Safety - Hygiene Coordinator whose main responsibility is to ensure safety protocols.
- Where possible, workouts and practices should be conducted in “pods” of students with the same small group (includes coaches and participants) always working out together. This minimizes contacts and assists in contact tracing.
- Coaches must wear face coverings at all times. Currently, players are also required to wear face coverings when in active participation of practice or intra-squad scrimmage (*i.e., pitching, playing defensively in the field, or while actually batting or running on offense*), and while sitting on the bench and during arm warm-ups or hitting soft toss in close proximity with another individual.
- Appropriate clothing and shoes, gloves and required protective gear must be worn at all times.
- Participants should be appropriately spaced in and around the dugout to ensure proper physical distancing (6 feet) and participants should minimize contact with other participants.
- Coaches should be cognizant of keeping physical space between athletes whenever possible especially if they are not in active participation during a drill (avoid lines where players are less than 6 feet apart). Spread out all drills and use entire team bench areas to maintain 6 feet distancing. Seeds, gum and spitting are not permitted. Participants may not bring their hands in contact with their mouths, or apply spit to their hands or gloves, even if normally permitted by the playing rules.
- Practicing or scrimmaging with any other teams or student not enrolled in your school is not permitted. Only high school students may participate in these coach-player contact activities.
- Shared equipment should be reduced to the minimal extent possible. When equipment must be shared, it should be isolated to as few players as possible. For instance, if there are not enough helmets for each player to be assigned his/her own, a single helmet should be reserved/assigned to as few players as possible to minimize contacts and assist on contact tracing.
- All athletic equipment and clothing should be cleaned/sanitized/washed after use.
- Balls may be thrown, pitched and caught by athletes and coaches, provided they wash their hands before and after practice and sanitize as often as possible. Sanitized back up balls(s) should be available and should be rotated in regularly. Sanitized and non-sanitized balls should be kept separated.
- Any common equipment, such as bat, balls and helmets, must be cleaned as permitted, before, during and after practices/workouts.

- Each individual should bring their own water bottle which must be marked with name and cannot be shared. Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized.
- No huddles, chest bumps, hugging, handshakes, high-fives, fist bumps, etc. Spread out players for meetings.
- Coaches should work to continue to reinforce safe and healthy habits. This includes reminding players to avoid their face, maintain physical distancing of 6 feet between individuals, and constant hand washing. Always remind players that what they do away from the field is very important in stopping the spread of the virus and helping to ensure that sports will continue.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

No spectators, officials or parents should be at these voluntary coach-player contact days.

- Additional guidance and Information could be updated after reassessing future epidemiology data and/or health department and CDC directives.
- See attached document **“Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick.”**



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.

Sources: CDC, MI Safe Start Plan, MI Safe Schools Return to School Roadmap, MHSAA/NFHS SMAC Reopening Guidance

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	

