

Responsible RestartOhio



Youth, Collegiate, Amateur, Club, and Professional Sports

Requirements

Youth, collegiate, amateur, club and professional sports must follow Ohio mandates for social distancing, masking, congregating, and responding to confirmed cases of COVID-19 as outlined in the [Director's Order for Social Distancing, Facial Coverings and Non-Congregating](#).

Guidance on the order is available on the [Responsible Restart Ohio: Social Distancing, Masking, and Congregating](#) page at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Youth, collegiate, amateur, club and professional sports must follow all relevant mandates in the order, including:

- Masks must be worn, with some exceptions. Among those exempt are anyone actively participating in athletic practice, scrimmage, or competition.
- Ensure no more than 10 people sit together, and seat groups 6 feet apart.
- At indoor events with fixed seating, limit the number of spectators to 25% of capacity.

Below are additional recommended best practices for youth, collegiate, amateur, club and professional sports.

Recommendations

The additional guidance below are recommended best practices for youth, collegiate, amateur, club, and professional sports.

Players, Coaches, Athletic Trainers, and Officials

- Coaches should have a parent/volunteer help monitor/ensure social distancing on teams of young children.
- Coaches should identify players at higher risk of developing serious complications from COVID-19, such as those with asthma, diabetes or other health problems, and take extra precautions to protect them.
- Event sponsors, coaches, and participants should review protocols for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

Spectators

- Family members should sit together, socially distanced from other individuals/family groups.
- School and organization officials should distribute tickets with an emphasis on allowing family and loved ones to see students participate.

Practices/Games/Tournaments

- Six-foot social distance should be maintained between individuals except when necessary on the field or court of play.
- Prior to competitive tournaments, tournament organizers should notify the local health department.
- During practices, consider putting players into small groups that remain together through practice stations rather than mixing groups for station to station.

Equipment

- Equipment and personal items should have proper separation and should not be shared. If equipment must be shared, proper sanitation should be performed between users.
- Do not share towels or facial coverings.
- Do not share water bottles or other drinks.
- Do not share food.
- Competing players/teams should not use the same equipment.
- Make sure there are adequate supplies of items and equipment to the extent possible to minimize the need for sharing (e.g., bats, protective gear, etc.).

Facilities/Venues

- Close shared spaces such as locker rooms, if possible. Otherwise, clean and disinfect between use.
- Limit the number of players sitting in confined player seating areas (e.g., dugouts) by allowing players to spread out into spectator areas if more space is available.
- Use contact-free ticketing to eliminate box office congestion.
- Develop a spectator pathway that allows for physical distancing as spectators move from parking, through box office lines, ticket scanning, and security screening to their seats.
- Time should be allotted between practices, games, and events sessions to allow teams and spectators to exit fields/facilities prior to new teams and spectators arriving and for proper sanitizing for shared spaces and high-touch surfaces (benches, equipment, etc.).
- Locker rooms, restrooms, weight training rooms, and athletic training rooms should be cleaned and sanitized between each use. Use should be staggered.
- Designate a compliance officer responsible for compliance of public health requirements.
- Require spectators to enter and exit gates or doors closest to assigned seats. Establish a plan to allow for social distancing when spectators leave, including during inclement weather for outdoor venues.
- Monitor elevators and escalators to ensure compliance with social distancing standards.
- Limit entrance to hospitality suites to ensure that physical separation can be maintained for both indoor and outdoor viewing sections.
- Establish one-way entry and exit in restrooms.
- Communicate with spectators before each event the importance of staying home if sick, the face covering requirement, and the need to maintain physical separation; install signage on hygiene, physical separation, and face covering.
- Communicate reminders of physical separation, face coverings, hygiene, and health symptoms through public announcements during the event.
- Have a written operations plan, prepared in consultation with the local health department.
- Set assigned arrival times.
- Block off unused seats, front rows (to avoid contact between sports participants and spectators), the last row of each section, and aisle seats (to prevent contact with people walking to and from seats).
- Use every other sink in restrooms.
- Offer partial event tickets. For example, for youth events that have tickets for a particular game or meet during a day that has multiple events.
- Have ushers actively monitor social distancing practices and encourage additional distance between spectators as appropriate.

Team Travel by Bus, Etc.

- Individuals traveling together by bus, etc., should wear a face covering and social distance whenever possible while in the vehicle.
- Conduct a pre-travel symptom and temperature check immediately prior to departure.
- For out-of-state travel, follow the COVID-19 guidance of the state and local public health jurisdiction to which the team is traveling.
- Consider traveling to and from games with parents, guardians, or members of household if possible.
- Limit use of carpools. Encourage players to only ride with others in their household if possible.
- Traveling outside the local community may increase the chances of exposing players, coaches, and fans to COVID-19, or unknowingly spreading it to others. Consider competing only against teams in your local area.

Suspected and Confirmed Cases

- Do not allow anyone who tests positive for COVID-19, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, to return to sports activities until a documented medical exam is performed clearing the individual for participation. The documented medical exam should specifically include an assessment of the cardiac/heart risk of high-intensity exercise due to the potential of myocarditis occurring in COVID-19 patients. More information on this issue can be found in the article [Returning To Play After Coronavirus Infection: Pediatric Cardiologists' Perspective](#).
- A team, school, or club should notify all athletes and parents/ guardians associated with the affected team regarding a positive test. Athletes and families must be reminded of proper daily health screening protocols.
- If the affected individual participated in competitive play, the team is responsible for notifying any opponents played between the date of the positive test and two days prior to the onset of symptoms. If the teams, schools, or clubs reside in different counties, the health departments in each county should be notified to help facilitate effective contact tracing.
- Follow protocol for cleaning and disinfecting if a COVID-19 case is identified at the venue.
- Teams, schools, and clubs should establish a partnership with a local healthcare provider to help accelerate testing if needed.