



# **Return To Interscholastic Athletics 2020-2021**

*This resource was prepared by NYSPHSAA staff, Section Executive Directors, Sport Coordinators and the NYSPHSAA COVID-19 Task Force to assist member schools when providing interscholastic athletic opportunities for students.*

**The contents of this document are subject to change**

**September 4, 2020**

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## Overview

In response to questions and concerns expressed by member schools, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), offers this document as a recommended resource on how schools **may** consider approaching the “*Return To Interscholastic Athletics.*”

As NYSPHSAA and its 11 member sections continue to gather information pertaining to the COVID-19 virus and receive continued feedback the contents of this document may be revised.

NYSPHSAA is committed to maximizing the interscholastic athletic opportunities for students across the state. Furthermore, NYSPHSAA will remain flexible in considering that certain sports may be impacted differently, and play may need to be modified at some point during the season.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is certainly voluntary for both the individuals and the schools. NYSPHSAA recognizes school district superintendents and boards of education have the authority and autonomy to administer their district’s athletic programs as they deem appropriate.

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), the ability to participate in sports and recreation activities is determined by a combination of the risk for COVID-19 transmission (1) inherent in the sport or recreation activity itself and (2) associated with the “type of play” (e.g. individual practice vs. game). Sports and recreation activities are categorized by NYSDOH as “low” risk, “moderate” risk, and “high” risk. (Pg. 3-5)

### Low Risk (NYSDOH)

- Lower risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
  - Greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually;
  - Greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all...

### Moderate Risk (NYSDOH)

- Moderate risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
  - Limited ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually;
  - Limited ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all...

### High Risk (NYSDOH)

- Higher risk sports and recreation activities are characterized by:
  - Least ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually;
  - Least ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all...

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NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)) states the following related to interscholastic athletic participation:

**“Extracurriculars:** Policies regarding extracurricular programs and which activities will be allowed, considering social distancing, PPE usage, and cleaning and disinfection, as well as risk of COVID-19 transmission (e.g., interscholastic sports, assemblies, and other gatherings). Policies should consider how to maintain cohorts, if applicable, or members of the same household. Responsible Parties must refer to DOH’s “Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency” to assist in development of these policies and the conduct of school-sponsored sports.

Further, lower- and moderate-risk sports (e.g., tennis, soccer, cross country, field hockey, and swimming) may practice and play, effective September 21, 2020. However, travel for practice or play is prohibited outside of the school’s region or contiguous regions/counties until October 19, 2020. Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective September 21, 2020, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020; in accordance with the State-issued guidance, such practices are limited to individual or group, no- to low-contact training (e.g., skills development) whereby contact between players may only be incidental and any activities that are specifically designed to promote close physical contact are prohibited. If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction.” (Pg. 4)

Upon reviewing this resource, NYSPHSAA member schools are encouraged to contact NYSPHSAA at [website@nysphsaa.org](mailto:website@nysphsaa.org) or their Section Executive Director with questions.

#### **DISCLAIMER**

*This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to replace, change or supplement any of the state issued guidance. Member schools should always follow and refer to the state issued Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation (August 15, 2020) and the Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools (August 26, 2020) as well as federal, state and local health guidance for any specific questions. This information may change depending on current situations. The NYSPHSAA gives no express or implied assurances as to accuracy of the information presented. This document is not intended to provide legal advice. Member schools should consult their legal counsel for legal advice on any matter.*

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## **NYSPHSAA 2020-2021**

### **Fall, Winter, Spring**

#### **Fall Sports** (September 21<sup>st</sup> – TBD)

- Sections determine Fall sports end date; cannot exceed 15 weeks
- No Regional/ State championships
- Practice requirements – 10 practices for all Fall sports; 12 for Football & Gymnastics; training for Golf
- Low & moderate risk sports (*Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Gymnastics, Soccer, Girls Swimming & Diving, Girls Tennis*)
  - May practice
  - In accordance with approved NYSPHSAA rules, teams must play games within their section or league until October 19<sup>th</sup>; games may be played beyond a school's section or league after October 19<sup>th</sup>
- High risk sports (*Cheerleading, Football, Volleyball*)
  - May practice
  - May not participate in games
- In accordance with approved NYSPHSAA rules, seven consecutive day rule waived starting on October 12<sup>th</sup>
- Game/ Contest limits – no change
- Modified/ Junior Varsity – individual school district decision

#### **Winter Sports** (November 30<sup>th</sup> – TBD)

- Revised start date of Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>
- Sections determine Winter sports end date; cannot exceed 22 weeks
- State Championships as scheduled (*Subject to change*)

#### **Spring Sports** (March 15<sup>th</sup> – TBD)

- Sections determine Spring sports end date; cannot exceed 15 weeks
- State Championships as scheduled (*Subject to change*)

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## Important Reminders

### Affirmation:

Please be reminded that in accordance with NYSDOH guidance a school official must affirm they understand and meet the requirements ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)) (Pg. 1)

#### Link:

<https://forms.ny.gov/s3/ny-forward-affirmation>

### Student-Athletes

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)) responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)
- Students should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- No hugging, high fives, shaking hands, or fist bumps.

### Coaches

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)
- Set clear expectations for student-athletes from day one.
- Communicate guidelines in a clear and consistent manner to students and parents.
- No hugging, high fives, shaking hands, or fist bumps.

### Parents/ Spectators

- As per NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), spectators must maintain six feet of physical distance between individuals and/or family/household units at all times and all spectators must wear face coverings when they are in common areas and situations where six feet of distancing is not able to be maintained, so long as they are over the age of two and medically able to tolerate such covering. (Pg. 6)
- Disinfect student's personal equipment after each game or practice.

### Officials

- Officials are responsible for game management, which does not include monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, face coverings, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring obligation remains with the responsible parties.

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)

### Screening

- NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)), states the following pertaining to screening:
  - **Screening:** Responsible Parties must implement mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff, and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. (Pg. 2)
- NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)) states the following pertaining to screening:
  - Responsible Parties must implement mandatory daily health screening practices for employees and, where practicable, vendors, but such screenings shall not be mandated for delivery personnel or patrons/players/spectators. Responsible Parties are encouraged to offer optional health screenings for patrons/players/spectators. (Pg. 13)
  - Responsible Parties cannot mandate that patrons/players/spectators complete a health screen or provide contact information but may encourage patrons/players/spectators to do so. (Pg. 14)

### Fall Sports - Low/ Moderate Risk (Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Gymnastics, Soccer, Girls Swimming & Diving, Girls Tennis)

- First official practice date is September 21<sup>st</sup>
- Games and scrimmages may be played following the completion of 10 practices; 12 for the sport of Gymnastics.
  - **Note:** As per NYSPHSAA Handbook only one practice session per day may count and must include “vigorous activity”.

### Fall Sports - High Risk (Volleyball & Football)

- First official practice date is September 21<sup>st</sup>.
- No games or scrimmages are permitted until authorization is granted by state officials or December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Important Dates

### September 21<sup>st</sup>

First official Fall sport practice date as per NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)) for low, moderate and high-risk sports:

NYSDOH guidance states: *“Further, lower- and moderate-risk sports (e.g., tennis, soccer, cross country, field, and swimming) may practice and play, effective **September 21, 2020**. However, travel for practice or play is prohibited outside of the school’s region or contiguous regions/ counties until October 19, 2020. Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective **September 21, 2020**, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020;...” (Pg. 4)*

### October 12<sup>th</sup>

Seven consecutive day rule waived:

NYSPHSAA rules stipulate teams may not practice or play on seven consecutive days during the regular season. As a result of the shortened Fall season, NYSPHSAA will waive the seven consecutive day rule starting on October 12<sup>th</sup> to allow teams to participate or practice on seven consecutive days.

### October 19<sup>th</sup>

First date low & moderate risk sports may play outside of their section or league.

Although NYSDOH guidance states: *“Further, lower- and moderate-risk sports (e.g., tennis, soccer, cross country, field, and swimming) may practice and play, effective September 21, 2020. However, travel for practice or play is prohibited outside of the school’s region or contiguous regions/ counties until **October 19, 2020**.” (Pg. 4)*

NYSPHSAA will restrict play of low and moderate risk sports to their section or league until October 19<sup>th</sup>.

### November 30<sup>th</sup>

Winter sports official start date has been revised to Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. The original Winter sports start date was Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Adjusting the start date will afford the Fall season two additional weeks before the Winter season begins.

### December 31<sup>st</sup>

NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)) states:

NYSDOH guidance states: *“Further...Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective September 21, 2020, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than **December 31, 2020**; in accordance with the State-issued guidance, such practices are limited to individual or group, no- low-contact training (e.g., skills development) whereby contact between players may only be incidental and any activities that are specifically designed to promote close physical contact are prohibited.” (Pg. 4)*

### March 15<sup>th</sup>

Spring sports official start date will be Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.



## **NYSPHSAA Considerations For Interscholastic Athletics**

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS (APPLY TO ALL SPORTS):**

- Make sure to emphasize to all participants the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after competitions.
- Schools must ensure facilities have been properly sanitized and have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available for practices and contests.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls. Please use recommendations by ball manufacturers - [Spalding ball cleaning recommendations](#).
- No hugging, high fives, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- **Note:** NYSDOH guidance for physical education classes requires 12' feet for aerobic activity, however NYSPHSAA is abiding by NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)).
  - In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)
- Social distancing should be maintained during the National Anthem and on sidelines.
- Outdoor sports may need to extend bench areas to permit social distancing. Indoor sports may need to use bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure social distancing. Schools should consider using paint or tape as a guide for students and coaches.
- Have a hydration plan and ability to provide water to student-athletes and coaches in a safe manner. Coordinate with visiting teams to ensure that they have safe access to water for their participants.
- Practice/ competition site – Only essential personnel should be permitted on the practice/ competition site as authorized. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials (competition), etc.
- Personal Items – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own bag for personal items. All personal items should remain in the bag when not in use. Bags should be placed in a predetermined area six feet apart for the duration of practice or game.
- Media –Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry, available workspace and determine school policies.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES:**

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing)

requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)

- Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose. (Pg. 5)
- Teams should consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing.
- Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Students are encouraged to keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition/ practice, however, if this is not possible, proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before doing so.
- Students should be advised to bring and use their own water bottle.
  - High school athletes should drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
  - Student-athletes should follow established guidelines for hydration.
  - Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource:
    - [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- Student-athletes are encouraged to shower at home as quickly as possible after practice and games.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES:**

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)
  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose. (Pg. 5)
- Communicate guidelines in a clear and consistent manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice and game/contest in case contact tracing is needed.
- Coaches should limit game day team/ roster sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

A family’s role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), spectators must maintain six feet of physical distance between individuals and/or

family/household units at all times and all spectators must wear face coverings when they are in common areas and situations where six feet of distancing is not able to be maintained, so long as they are over the age of two and medically able to tolerate such covering. (Pg. 6)

- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must limit spectators to no more than two spectators per player. (Pg. 6)
- Provide personal items to children and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student's personal equipment after each game or practice.

## **CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

### **Teams and Programs:**

- Individual school districts have the authority and autonomy to administer their district's athletic programs as they deem appropriate.
- School districts may consider scheduling practices, games and competitions to accommodate bus transportation availability (i.e. start times at 5:30 PM or Saturday and Sunday).
- Schools should limit game day team/ roster sizes for social distancing purposes.
- The determination of modified, junior varsity, varsity teams is made by individual school districts.
- Combined/ Merged Teams
  - NYSPHSAA rules and regulations permit merged and combined teams with league and section approval.

### **Traveling to competition or game:**

- Make sure to communicate with the host school prior to the competition to discuss plans.
- Follow all policies and guidelines the host school has communicated.
- Make sure your team is bringing its own medical supplies and emergency action plans.
- Students should be made aware of the locker room availability and advised to bring additional shirts or clothing to easily change into, if locker room use is limited or not available.

### **Hosting a game or contest:**

- Make sure to have an administrative contact (cell number and email address) for all events.
- Since the COVID-19 crisis is fluid and ever evolving, it is recommended schools host "senior" recognition games at the beginning of the season rather than at the end.
- Communicate ahead of time with the incoming schools, event personnel (i.e. scorekeepers, timers, announcers) and officials about procedures, policies and guidelines.
  - Examples to be covered include but not limited to, the following:
    - Parking;
    - Where to enter facility;
    - What equipment should the visiting team bring;
    - Water availability;
    - Bench area seating (how many players can be accommodated to maintain social distancing);
    - Locker room availability and resources;
    - Emergency action plans;

- How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange of information is preferred).
- Make sure facilities have been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived.
  - Have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available.
- It is recommended to make frequent announcements prior to and during the competition, pertaining to face coverings being required and social distancing requirements.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls.

### **SCREENING:**

NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)), states the following pertaining to screening:

- **Screening:** Responsible Parties must implement mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff, and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Specifically, all individuals must have their temperature checked each day. If an individual presents a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, the individual must be denied entry into the facility or sent directly to a dedicated area prior to being picked up or otherwise sent home. Responsible Parties must also use a daily screening questionnaire for faculty and staff reporting to school; and periodically use a questionnaire for students, particularly younger students, who may require the assistance of their parent/legal guardian to answer. Remote health screening (e.g., by electronic survey, digital application, or telephone, which may involve the parent/legal guardian) before any individual reports to school, is strongly advised. *(Pg. 2)*

NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)) states the following pertaining to screening:

- Responsible Parties must implement mandatory daily health screening practices for employees and, where practicable, vendors, but such screenings shall not be mandated for delivery personnel or patrons/players/spectators. Responsible Parties are encouraged to offer optional health screenings for patrons/players/spectators. *(Pg. 13)*
- Responsible Parties cannot mandate that patrons/players/spectators complete a health screen or provide contact information but may encourage patrons/players/spectators to do so. *(Pg. 14)*

### **CONFIRMED CASES & RETURN TO SCHOOL:**

NYSDOH Guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)) states:

Responsible Parties must establish protocols and procedures in consultation with the local health department(s), about the requirements for determining when individuals, particularly students, who screened positive for COVID-19 symptoms can return to the in person learning environment at school. This return to school protocol shall include at minimum documentation from a health care provider following evaluation, negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result and symptom resolution, or if COVID-19 positive, release from isolation. Responsible Parties should refer to DOH's '[Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#)' regarding protocols and policies for faculty and staff seeking to return to work after a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or after the faculty or staff member had close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19. *(Pg. 3)*

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Furthermore, NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)) states:

If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in-person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction. (Pg. 4)

Once a student has been cleared for participation following a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, schools should reference the following NYSPHSAA Handbook information:

*“The Handbook Committee recommends that each incidence of prolonged absence should be reviewed individually by the coach and the athletic director, consulting with the school physician when necessary, and a reasonable amount of practice time and playing time be established based on the athlete’s readiness for safe return to competition.”*

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## Considerations For Facilities

### GATHERING LIMITATIONS & SOCIAL DISTANCING:

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), the following could be utilized to ensure appropriate social distancing during interscholastic athletic participation.

- Responsible Parties must ensure that for any indoor sport or recreational activity, capacity is limited to no more than 50% of the maximum occupancy for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy, inclusive of employees and patrons/players/spectators. *(Pg. 5)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. *(Pg. 5)*
  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose. *(Pg. 5)*
- Responsible Parties should put in place measures to reduce bi-directional foot traffic of patrons/players/spectators walking through the space using barriers, tape, or signs with arrows on sidewalks, walking paths, aisles, or hallways. *(Pg. 9)*
- Responsible Parties should clearly designate separate entrances and exits, to the extent practicable. *(Pg. 10)*
- Responsible Parties should rearrange waiting areas (e.g. lines, parking areas) to maximize social distance among other patrons/players/spectators and minimize interaction with others in the area. *(Pg. 10)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure the cashier or ticket-taker wears a face covering when interacting with any patron/player/spectator. This process should be contactless to the extent practicable. *(Pg. 10)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure individuals not participating in sports or recreation activities (e.g. coaches, spectators) wear appropriate face coverings when they are within less than six feet of other individuals, unless a physical barrier is present. Additionally, employees must wear face coverings any time they interact with patrons/players/spectators, regardless of physical distance. *(Pg. 10)*

**For spectators**, the following additional safety measures apply:

- For sports events (e.g. games), Responsible Parties must limit spectators to **two** spectators per player. *(Pg. 6)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure spectators maintain six feet of physical distance between individuals and/or family/household units at all times and all spectators must wear face coverings when they are in common areas and situations where six feet of distancing is not able to be maintained, so long as they are over the age of two and medically able to tolerate such covering. *(Pg. 6)*

- Responsible Parties may facilitate appropriate distancing through the use of markings on the ground or seating areas, and other signage. *(Pg. 6)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure that, among all spectators, no individual group exceeds the gathering limit that is currently in place for the region. *(Pg. 6)*
- Responsible Parties may facilitate appropriate gathering size through the use of signage and/or staff to ensure groups are aware of and adhere to guidelines. *(Pg. 6)*

#### **CLEANING AND DISINFECTION:**

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), the following could be utilized for proper hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting: *(Pgs. 11-12)*

- Responsible Parties must ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and DOH, including [“Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19,”](#) and the [“STOP THE SPREAD”](#) poster, as applicable. Responsible Parties must maintain cleaning logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties must provide and maintain hand hygiene stations on site, as follows:
  - For handwashing: soap, running warm water, and disposable paper towels.
  - For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
  - Hand sanitizer must be placed throughout the site for use by employees and patrons/players/spectators. It should be placed in convenient locations such as points of entrance/exit. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties should post signage indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties must provide appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces and encourage employees to use these supplies, following manufacturers’ instructions, before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties must conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the site and frequent cleaning and disinfection for high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and should occur at least after each shift, daily, or more frequently as needed. Please refer to DOH’s [“Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19”](#) for detailed instructions on how to clean and disinfect facilities. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use. *(Pg. 11)*
- Responsible Parties must ensure distancing rules are adhered to by using signage, occupied markers, or other methods to reduce restroom capacity where feasible. *(Pg. 12)*

## Considerations For Officials

### OFFICIALS' GUIDELINES WHEN RETURNING TO OFFICIATE

#### CONTACT THE HOST SCHOOL:

- Contact should be made with school athletic administration leading up to the contest about (1) school expectations, (2) to determine where you should enter the host school's property and (3) to obtain other information that you or the school may want to communicate to each other prior to your arrival.
  - Officiating crews should designate one crew member to contact the host school and provide information to other members of the crew.
- Request hand sanitizer be available at scorer's table, if applicable, and use it between periods and during time outs; officials are encouraged to bring their own in the event none is available.
- Conversations should occur with the host school administration regarding the size of changing areas or locker rooms to ensure social distancing can occur.
- When possible, officials should come to contests fully dressed in uniform.

#### GENERAL OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:

- Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, face coverings, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring obligation remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.
- Be prepared to have a health screening conducted upon arrival at a school campus.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), responsible parties must ensure a distance of at least six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, whether indoor or outdoor, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. practicing, playing) requires a shorter distance. If a shorter distance is required, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings, unless players are unable to tolerate a face covering for the physical activity (e.g. practicing, playing); provided, however, that coaches, trainers, and other individuals who are not directly engaged in physical activity are required to wear a face covering. (Pg. 5)
- Upon conclusion of the contest, officials should leave the contest area and not interact with others.
- Officials must pay special attention to playing rules that require distances between players during play.
- Reminders should be issued for situations that involve hygiene (spitting, etc.).
- Officials should maintain distance from players if an altercation occurs and minimize the times they are within six feet of others.
- Officials should be aware of the location of medical personnel while on school property.
- Limit the exchanging of documents between officials and others.
- Once the contest begins, avoid conversations within six feet with coaches.
- Wash hands frequently.
- Officials' Uniforms and Equipment.
  - Electronic whistles are permissible.
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.



- Be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Bring own towels and hygiene materials. Do not share them with others.

#### **GAME DAY:**

- Complete a personal health assessment on the day of the contest.
- Communicate with school athletic administrator prior to the contest pertaining to school expectations.
- Upon arrival at the host site and throughout the contest, officials should wash and sanitize hands.
- When traveling to contests, considerations should be given to limiting carpooling or traveling with other individuals.
- Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel and equipment.
- Maintain social distancing of six feet at all times, including while in the locker room and/or on the court/field.
- Bring own water bottle or rehydration beverages.
- Use a mask when communicating verbally within six feet of others.
- To maintain social distancing, officiating positions may need to be changed in a manner that are not necessarily in conformance with standard officiating mechanics.

#### **PREGAME CONFERENCE:**

- Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team, while maintaining social distance.
- Pre-contest official crew meetings should be held outside when possible and where social distancing is more easily accomplished.
- Coin Toss – should involve only the Head Referee (wearing a face covering) and 1 captain and head coach from each team.
- Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the court/field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of six feet.
- No handshakes are permitted.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities.

#### **OFFICIALS' TABLE:**

- Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials' table and observing social distancing requirements.

#### **PREGAME AND POSTGAME CEREMONY:**

- No shaking hands during introductions.
- Traditional pre-game introductions should be altered to ensure social distancing occurs.
- No postgame handshakes.

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**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Training
  - Review current and past year rule and case books.
  - Attend online and in-person meetings to review the rules for the coming year.

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# Sport Considerations

The following sport specific information is intended to provide athletic administrators and coaches with basic guidance and considerations related to Fall interscholastic sport programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a myriad of challenges to high school athletic and activity programs. To help address some of those challenges, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has developed "COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators" linked below:

<https://www.nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>

The online course presents helpful information and materials to assist school administrators and coaches conduct workouts, practices, and contests as safely as possible.



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## **Competitive Cheerleading (Practice Only)**

The NYSDOH has determined that competitive cheerleading is a high risk sport (Least ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; least ability to: 1) avoid touching of shared equipment, 2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or 3) not use shared equipment at all).

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)):

*“Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective September 21, 2020, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020; in accordance with the State-issued guidance, such practices are limited to individual or group, no- to low-contact training (e.g., skills development) whereby contact between players may only be incidental and any activities that are specifically designed to promote close physical contact are prohibited. If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction.” (Pg. 4)*

**NYSPHSAA is seeking clarification pertaining to the practice activities that will be permissible for high risk sports.**

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## **Cross Country**

The NYSDOH has determined that cross country is a low risk sport (greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually; greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### **General Considerations:**

- Schools are encouraged to comply with NFHS Rule 8-5, that events contested with 4 or fewer teams be limited to a maximum of 12 participants from each team.
- No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- Cross country meets should consider using staggered, wave or interval starts, with a minimum of one (1) minute.
- Meet organizers should take into account using FAT timing, course layout, use of waves, and social distancing in consideration of determining the size of an invitational meet.
- In non-dual meets, it is recommended athletes wear numbers for easy identification.
- It is recommended a course is 200 yards from the start line to the narrowing point.
- Possible Rule Modifications:
  - 8-1-3a: Consider widening the course to at least six feet at its narrowest point.
- Finish:
  - Consider using finish corrals and FAT timing for larger meets as easier to distance at finish.
  - With no FAT timing system consider alternative means of finish place and time to address congestion at finish line.
  - Consider using image-based equipment at finish to assist with picking place to avoid congestion.
- Event organizers should have a hydration plan for the end of the race.

### **Pre and Post Meet:**

- Establish cross country specific social distancing meet protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.
- The use of team tents on site is discouraged.
- Teams are expected to provide individual water for their athletes and discourage the use of water stations and open cups.

### **Considerations for Officials:**

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Don't share equipment.
- Follow social distancing guidelines:
  - Pre and Post Meet conferences,
  - Clerking at the start line,
  - Tabulations and posting of results.
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre and post-game ceremony guidelines established by state association.

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**Considerations for Coaches:**

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

**Considerations for Students:**

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.

**Considerations for Parents:**

A family’s role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Spectators should not congregate around the finish area.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)

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## Field Hockey

The NYSDOH has determined that field hockey is a moderate risk sport (limited ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; limited ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### General Considerations:

- No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and exercise equipment including balls.
- Ball Retrievers should be placed on the opposite side of the team bench.
- Balls – Each player should bring their own ball or use the same school-issued ball during practice. Skill training, conditioning, agility, etc. can be done with the one player/one ball concept. Balls should be sanitized before and after each practice/game.
- Bench area may be extended to the 15 for teams with 30+ players. Coaches are still restricted to remain between the 45 and 25. There must still be 5 yards between the sideline and the bench area.

### Pre and Post Game Ceremony:

- Establish field hockey specific social distancing game protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.
- Limit attendees to one official, 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 should maintain a social distance of six feet during the conference.
- Suspend handshakes prior to and following the pregame conference.

### Considerations for Officials:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently.
- Do not share equipment.
- Follow social distancing guidelines. Consider six feet minimum distance when carding or talking to others (players, coaches, other officials).
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and maintain social distancing guidelines during pre and post-game ceremonies.
- Use of radios to communicate with partner is permissible.
- Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials' table and observing social distancing requirements.
- If a team member is carded, it is recommended to mark a location of where the individual is to stand that is socially distant from the officials' table.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.

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- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
  - Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

**Considerations for Students:**

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.

**Considerations for Parents:**

A family’s role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)



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## Football (Practice Only)

The NYSDOH has determined that football is a high risk sport (Least ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; least ability to: 1) avoid touching of shared equipment, 2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or 3) not use shared equipment at all).

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)):

*“Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective September 21, 2020, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020; in accordance with the State-issued guidance, such practices are limited to individual or group, no- to low-contact training (e.g., skills development) whereby contact between players may only be incidental and any activities that are specifically designed to promote close physical contact are prohibited. If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction.” (Pg. 4)*

**NYSPHSAA is seeking clarification pertaining to the practice activities that will be permissible for high risk sports.**

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## Golf

The NYSDOH has determined that golf is a low risk sport (greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually; greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### General Considerations:

- Single tee starts should be staggered – refer to golf course protocols.
- When directed to, each group of players will move to the 1<sup>st</sup> tee, remaining socially distanced. Scorecards and pencils will be handed out to players by the home coach who may wear protective gloves during the process. Each player will receive a scorecard for their own scorekeeping and the other player's score. At no time will players exchange scorecards.
- All safety protocols put in place by the golf course must be followed. Social Distancing must be adhered to in the locker rooms and Pro Shop.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Prior to each match, visiting coaches should send a list of participants to the home coach. The home coach should send a copy of the local rules to the opposing coach to eliminate the need for any handouts, other than scorecards.
- All coaches should make sure that their players are familiar with the Rules of Golf and Golf Course modifications specific to COVID-19, especially local rules for bunker play and not touching the flagsticks.

### Considerations for Students:

- Consider making each student responsible for their own equipment.
- Golf towels should not be shared and should be washed after every practice and match.
- Players should only touch and use their own golf ball and not touch other players golf ball or equipment.
- Bring own water bottle.

### Considerations for Parents:

A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Spectators should not congregate around the tee box, greens and clubhouse areas.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)

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## Gymnastics

The NYSDOH has determined that Gymnastics is a moderate risk sport (limited ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; limited ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### General Considerations:

- No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps.
- Equipment should be cleaned and sanitized after every practice and competition. Contact equipment manufacturers for specifics on proper cleaning protocols for their equipment. Continued use of disinfectant chemicals may reduce the life of the product.
- No outside equipment is allowed with the exception of springboards, a sting mat, round off entry mat and a vault safety collar.
- Remove common chalk bowls.
- Social distancing should be in practice while waiting for a turn on the apparatus or moving from one event to another.
- Communicate gym policies clearly to participants and parents.
- Everyone should wash and sanitize their hands before entering and leaving the gym and must wash/sanitize their hands between rotation to different events.

### Meet Protocols:

- March in: socially distant six feet in-between gymnasts and for the National Anthem.
- There will be no presenting to the judges. Teams go directly to the first event.
- There will be no improper uniform deduction for wearing a face covering..
- Non-competing athletes must be in a designated area.
- Judges should be six feet from events, athletes/crowd. Judges workstations will be cleaned in between events.
- Runners/score flashers/timers must remain at least six feet away from judges/events will remain with the same judges throughout the competition.
- There should be a designated waiting area, socially distanced, for athletes waiting to compete.
- Each team should have all floor music on a device and managed by only one coach/athlete (per team).

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together on apparatus in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Athlete spotting is permissible.
- Expectations regarding spotting or alternative teaching/coaching methods should be clearly communicated during practice.

### Considerations for Students:

- Student athletes should sanitize their hands after every event.
- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Bring own water bottle.

### Considerations for Judges:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Sanitize the judges' desk in between events.
- Follow social distancing guidelines.
- Space judges six feet apart at judging tables.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre and post meet ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- Develop a procedure for reporting scores that limits contact.

### Considerations for Parents:

A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
  - Gym bag, water bottle, grips, tapes, pre-wrap, wrist guards, personal chalk bag etc. (See gym bag document)
  - Individual chalk bags, plastic bins, buckets or other storage containers should be used and stored in the athlete's gym bag.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)

## Gym Bag

### Supplies needed for your personal gym bag:

1. Grips, wristbands and any braces that are normally used during practices must stay in student's gym bag when not in use.
2. You may bring travel size water bottle filled with water to spray your grips. The water bottle must remain in your bag until use.
3. Disinfectant wipes for personal use can be alcohol wipes. These must be used when starting an event, after each event and before exiting facility.
4. 1 ½" white athletic tape and any other tape used during practice is permitted.
5. Fingernail clippers must be flat edge.
6. Shoes must be stored in your gym bag, in a separate compartment or bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
7. A **gallon size bag** or container for personal chalk. There will not be any shared chalk buckets available in the gym.

Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice. The interior and exterior of the bag should be disinfected as well.

## Soccer

The NYSDOH has determined that soccer is a moderate risk sport (limited ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; limited ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### General 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. (Rule waiver)
  - Move the location of the pregame conference to center of the field. All individuals maintain a social distance of six feet.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- Team Benches (1-5-1)
  - No linear bench area, adjust backward from the touch line.
- Substitution Procedures (3-4)
  - Maintain social distancing of six feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line. Hand sanitizer should be used prior to entering the game.
- Officials Table (6-2; 6-3)
  - Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials' table and observing social distancing requirements.
- Goalkeepers may not spit on their gloves. They can wet them with a water bottle. If the official determines this happens, gloves will be taken out of play. (NYSPHSAA Rule)
- A mandatory two (2) minute hydration/mask break will be taken at the first dead ball situation after the 20-minute mark. Players must stay on the field during the break and may remove their mask as long as they maintain social distancing. Substitutes who report to the table prior to the break taking place, may enter the game following the break. (Waiver of the NFHS Rule)
- The use of a dropped ball is suspended. To replace this procedure, an indirect kick will be awarded to the team whom the referees deemed to be in possession at the time of stoppage. (Waiver of the NFHS Rule)

### Pre and Post Match Ceremony

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

## Soccer Rules Interpretations

- Rule 4-1 EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES
  - No hard material should be worn on face covering.
  - 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)  
(Waiver of the NFHS Rule)
  - Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
    - Fox 40 Mini –
    - Fox 40 Unisex Electronic - 3 tone
    - Ergo-Guard - (3 tone) - orange
    - Windsor - (3 tone) grey
    - Check the market for other choices
  - Gloves are permissible.

### Considerations for Officials:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Do not share equipment.
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and maintain social distancing guidelines during pre and post-game ceremonies.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

### Considerations for Students:

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing)
- Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.

### Considerations for Parents:

A family’s role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)

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## Swimming & Diving

The NYSDOH has determined that swimming & diving is a low risk sport (greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually; greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

On June 11, 2020 NYSDOH provided [Interim Guidance for Pools and Recreational Aquatic Spray Grounds During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#). Schools should review this guidance for swimming & diving teams.

The following is included in the aforementioned NYSDOH pool guidance:

- Ensure that all individuals maintain a distance of at least six feet from other individuals at all times, unless they are members of the same household or family unit, or safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance.
  - However, any time individuals are within six feet of individuals outside of their household or family unit and not in the water, they must wear an acceptable face covering that covers both the nose and mouth. Individuals must be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within six feet.
  - For health and safety concerns, ensure face coverings are not worn by individuals while they are in the water;
- Limit the maximum size of any single group of people on the premise or in the water to 10 or fewer individuals; **however, there may be more than one group on premise or in water so long as they are able to be separated by at least six feet;**
  - Occupancy of the premise and pool should be limited to the number of individuals and groups who can be safely and appropriately spaced such that each individual and group is at least six feet away from others.
  - Ensure different groups of people are separated by at least six feet on the premise or in the water, to the extent possible;
  - However, if physical barriers are used to separate groups of individuals, they must not present a health or safety risk by obstructing supervision or impairing air flow, heating, cooling, or ventilation.

### General Considerations:

- **Swimming Warm-up Areas** - Establish multiple sessions for warm-up periods to limit number of swimmers per lane. Restrict the number of swimmers in competition area. Limit number of swimmers per lane during warm-up and warm-down periods.
- **Diving Warm-up Areas** - Limit number of divers during warm-up by creating multiple sessions. During competition, divers may not approach the board until their turn to compete. Hot tubs should not be permitted. Dive order sheets should be posted in multiple areas to reduce number of divers viewing at the same time.
- **Teams Seating and Lane Placement** - Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool.
- **Preparing Athletes for Competition** - Athlete clerking areas should be eliminated.



- **Warm down for Relay teams** – Keep proper social distancing of six feet.

#### **Rule Considerations:**

- **Conduct (1-3-2)** - Recommend athletes to arrive at venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for swimmers and divers to change that allows for six feet of social distancing.
- **Lap Counting (2-7-6, 3-4)** - Only one person per lane should be permitted at turning end. Provide hand sanitizer and require lap counters to clean hands and wipe down devices.
- **Pre-Meet Conference (3-3-6, 4-2-1d)** - Decrease number of participants or hold one conference with coaches and one meeting with captains. The referee can use P.A. system or starting system microphone to allow participants to hear but keep them properly separated. Participants in the pre-conference must wear masks and only one captain per team is allowed.
- **Meet Officials (4-8, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-13)** - Officials responsible for information processing are often located together at a desk/table adjacent to the competition course or in an office/remote location. Develop alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information. Require a distance of six feet between individuals seated at the desk/table.
- **Timers (4-9)** - Timers must assemble at the finish of each race, at the edge of the pool within the 6-8 feet confines of the lane which they are timing.
- **Submission of Entries to Referee (5-2)** - Alternative forms of entry submission can be designed to reduce face-to-face interaction when submitting a proper entry, where/how/to whom entries are submitted, and a reduction or elimination of certain penalties currently attached to improper entries.
- **Relay Takeoff Judges and Relays (8-3)** - Require all takeoff judging from the sides of the pool. Space relay swimmers apart from one another.
- **Diving Officials (9-6)** - Alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information will be required. Recommendations include a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table. Create a six foot space between judges by spacing groups of judges on opposite sides of boards or on one side of the board on a multi-level platform.

#### **Considerations for Officials:**

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently.
- Don't share equipment.
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and maintain social distancing guidelines during pre and post-game ceremonies.

#### **Considerations for Coaches:**

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in "cohorts" of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

**Considerations for Students:**

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.

**Considerations for Parents:**

A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Spectators should not congregate around the finish area.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participant are permitted. (Pg. 5)

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## Tennis

The NYSDOH has determined that tennis is a low risk sport (greatest ability to maintain physical distance and/or be performed individually; greatest ability to (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect any equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

### General Considerations:

- Maintain social distancing when changing ends.
- Consider spraying tennis balls briefly with a disinfectant spray (e.g., Lysol or Clorox) at the conclusion of play. Using new balls on a regular basis is encouraged.
  - When possible consider using one separate can of balls per player per match. Players should serve their own tennis balls throughout the match.
- Tennis practice equipment should be touched only by the coach and should be cleaned frequently. Use alcohol-based disinfectant to clean all tennis gear, including racquets, towels, target cones, ball machines, etc.
- Consider using a ball machine for giving lessons. Using ball tubes and basket pickups to pick up loose balls after a ball machine rotation also limits contact.
- Avoid using unnecessary equipment such as throw-down lines.

### Considerations for Officials:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently.
- Do not share equipment.
- Consider using electronic whistle.
- Do not shake hands and maintain social distancing guidelines during pre and post-game ceremonies.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “cohorts” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.

### Considerations for Students:

- Consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout immediately upon returning home.
- Bring own water bottle.
- Use the racquet/foot to pick up balls and hit them to your opponent. Avoid using your hands to pick up the balls.
- If a ball from another court comes to you, send it back with a kick or with your racquet.

### Considerations for Parents:

A family’s role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others:

- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Spectators should not congregate around a court without maintaining social distancing.
- In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Sports and Recreation](#)), only two spectators per participants are permitted. (Pg. 5)

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## Volleyball (Practice Only)

The NYSDOH has determined that volleyball is a high risk sport (Least ability to maintain physical distance and/or be done individually; least ability to: (1) avoid touching of shared equipment, (2) clean and disinfect equipment between uses by different individuals, or (3) not use shared equipment at all).

In accordance with NYSDOH guidance ([Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#)):

*“Higher-risk sports (e.g., football, wrestling, rugby, hockey, and volleyball) may practice, effective September 21, 2020, but not play until authorized at a later date, but no later than December 31, 2020; in accordance with the State-issued guidance, such practices are limited to individual or group, no- to low-contact training (e.g., skills development) whereby contact between players may only be incidental and any activities that are specifically designed to promote close physical contact are prohibited. If school is closed for in-person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in person education is resumed; provided, however, that this restriction does not apply to schools that are conducting only remote instruction.”*

**NYSPHSAA is seeking clarification pertaining to the practice activities that will be permissible for high risk sports.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

(as of 9/4/20)

### NYSPHSAA COVID-19 Response

**Q: What is NYSPHSAA doing to address the ongoing COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** *The NYSPHSAA continues to work with state officials in response to the COVID-19 crisis. NYSPHSAA has also established a COVID-19 Task Force with member representatives to examine the impact of the virus and provide guidance and recommendations to NYSPHSAA member schools. The Task Force is comprised of NYSPHSAA staff, superintendents, athletic directors, principals, section executive directors, and athletic trainers within the NYSPHSAA membership. NYSPHSAA and its Task Force continue to analyze rules for each sport it sponsors to determine additional safety guidelines to minimize risk.*

**Q: Where is the best source of information for interscholastic athletics related to the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** *The NYSPHSAA has created a dedicated page on its website to provide up-to-date information related to the COVID-19 crisis. The website link can be found [HERE](#).*

**Q: Who has the authority to amend or change the state issued guidance related to interscholastic athletics?**

**A:** *State Officials (New York State Department of Health, New York State Education Department) are the only entities that have the authority to modify, amend or revise the guidance provided to schools. NYSPHSAA is required to follow state issued guidance. NYSPHSAA only has the authority to amend NYSPHSAA rules or regulations.*

**Q: How often is the NYSPHSAA COVID-19 Task Force meeting?**

**A:** *The Task Force meets as needed to ensure the most updated information can be examined and reviewed. The Task Force has met on June 10, June 30, July 16, August 25, and August 31. The committee will continue to meet as concerns arise during the 2020-21 school year.*

**Q: How will NYSPHSAA decisions be made moving forward?**

**A:** *Both the NYSPHSAA COVID-19 Task Force and NYSPHSAA Officers will be part of the decision making process between quarterly NYSPHSAA Executive/Central Committee meetings. The Task Force is a recommending body and will forward its recommendations to either the officers or Executive/Central Committees of NYSPHSAA. In the absence of quarterly Executive/Central Committee meetings, the NYSPHSAA Officers have the authority, as per the NYSPHSAA constitution, to approve recommendations as needed.*

### Eligibility Standards & NYSED

**Q: If a student is fully remote, are they eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics?**

**A:** *According to the New York State Education Department, a student may participate in interscholastic athletics if he/she is taking three courses plus physical education (Bona Fide Student) regardless of the education platform being utilized (fully remote, hybrid, etc.). [See NYSED September 1, 2020 MEMO in Attachments]*

**Q: Do students need a physical exam to participate in the Fall interscholastic athletic season?**

**A:** *No; NYSED has waived the physical exam requirement for students for the 2020 Fall season. According to the New York State Education Department, any student who had a physical during the 2018-19 or 2019-20 school year is eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics this Fall (2020) providing they submit an updated healthy history form to the district. At this time, no extension has been granted to Winter or Spring athletes. [See NYSED May 21, 2020 MEMO in Attachments]*

**Q: Has the NYSPHSAA Transfer Rule been amended or revised because of the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** *There have been no revisions to the current NYSPHSAA Transfer Rule.*

**Q: Has the NYSED Athletic Placement Process (APP) been modified or revised as a result of the COVID-19 crisis Testing?**

**A:** *No revisions have been made to the APP. According to the New York State Education Department, students must complete all components of the Athletic Placement Process (APP) including a current physical, maturation test and physical fitness test.*

**Q: Has the NYSED recommended any revisions to the Health History update?**

**A:** *No revisions have been recommended for the Health History update form. According to the New York State Education Department, all students are required to provide the school district an updated health history form if they have not had an updated physical within 30 days of the season.*

**Q: Will students be provided additional years of eligibility because of the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** *As per the New York State Education Department's Duration of Competition Regulation, students are limited to 4 consecutive years of athletic eligibility upon entering the 9th grade (5 years for students who participate at the high school level as an 8th grader and 6 years for students who participate at the high school level as a 7th grader). Students are able to apply for an extension of eligibility, as per the regulation, if the student experiences an illness, accident or social/ emotional condition which causes the student to miss a semester of eligibility AND the illness, accident or social/ emotional condition requires the student to take additional semesters to graduate. The current interpretation is students who repeat a grade because of the COVID-19 crisis would not be candidates for an extension of eligibility since school has continued to occur and credits towards graduation have not been interrupted.*

**Q: Can DASA training be conducted online?**

**A:** *On March 20, 2020, the NYSED provided the following guidance on DASA training:*

*"Some institutions of higher education and other organizations that provide the six clock hour Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) training are no longer holding classes in-person due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency, preventing them from conducting the required minimum three clock hours of face-to-face instruction in the DASA training.*

*To allow DASA training to continue, all approved DASA training providers, and institutions of higher education that include the DASA training in their educator preparation program curricula, may offer the DASA training entirely online during the time period of the state of emergency in New York State for the COVID-19 virus.*

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Contact the Office of Teaching Initiatives at [otidasa@nysed.gov](mailto:otidasa@nysed.gov) if you have any questions regarding the DASA training.” [See NYSED March 20, 2020 MEMO in Attachments]

**Q: Have NYSED coaching certification requirements been amended because of the COVID-19 crisis?**

**A:** Yes. NYSED’s June 23<sup>rd</sup> memo states:

*“All coaches of extracurricular sports must complete a sport-specific theory and techniques of coaching course within five years of their initial appointment as a coach. One of the requirements in this course is an internship experience. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, coaches are currently not able to complete the internship experience in-person with P-12 students, mentors, and/or supervisors given the closures of schools, sports teams, and other athletics settings.*

*For the internship experience during Summer 2020, we encourage course instructors to provide opportunities for coaches to work with P-12 students, mentors, and supervisors in-person or virtually using distance education instructional methods and technologies, wherever possible. If this type of interaction is not possible for the entire experience, course instructors may supplement the internship experience with alternative methods of instruction. However, the internship must include some virtual and/or in-person interaction with P-12 students.*

*Alternative methods of instruction must ensure that the coaches develop the knowledge and skills expected during internship experience. Examples of alternative methods of instruction include, but are not limited to, simulations, video case studies, and other coaching exercises.”* [See NYSED June 23, 2020 MEMO in Attachments]

A second, June 23<sup>rd</sup> NYSED memo states:

*“Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, current and prospective coaches may not be able to maintain or gain first aid and CPR/AED certification, respectively, with certification courses not being held in-person. Given the lack of in-person certification courses, the Department is providing the following flexibility regarding the first aid and CPR/AED certification requirements for coaches.*

*Extension. Current coaches who previously earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through a course from a NYSED-approved provider, and whose certification expires between March 1, 2020 and November 30, 2020, will have the certification expiration date extended to November 30, 2020. If opportunities for in-person certification courses are not available by November 30th, the Department will revisit the extension and provide a new expiration date. Coaches who earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through NYSED-approved courses offered by a national provider would not have the certification expiration date extended by NYSED, and must update their first aid and/or CPR/AED certification per certifying agency requirements. For coaches who earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through American Red Cross course(s), possible certificate extensions are described on the American Red Cross COVID-19 Guidance webpage.*



*Online Content. For first aid and/or CPR/AED certification courses from a NYSED-approved provider, the content can continue to be taught either online and/or in-person. However, candidates must demonstrate their (psychomotor) skills to earn first aid and/or CPR/AED certification. Candidates who complete NYSED-approved first aid and/or CPR/AED certification courses offered by a national provider must complete their first aid and/or CPR/AED certification per certifying agency requirements. [See NYSED June 23, 2020 MEMO in Attachments]*

### **Fall 2020 Season**

**Q: If the Fall sports season is interrupted, could the condensed season model still be considered?**

**A:** *With regional differences, schools and areas will continue to be impacted differently by the COVID-19 crisis. If the Fall sports season is interrupted or impacted by the COVID-19 crisis then a condensed seasons plan could still be implemented. That decision will be made by the NYSPHSAA officers with the information available at that time.*

**Q: Has the NYSPHSAA Seven-day rule been waived?**

**A:** *The NYSPHSAA Officers waived the 7-day rule starting on October 12, 2020. The rule was waived to allow schools and teams more days to complete Fall schedules.*

**Q: Can sections decide to move the Football and Volleyball seasons to a different time of the year?**

**A:** *Yes; sections have the autonomy and authority to move any sport to a different season.*

**Q: Will there be Regionals and State Championships this Fall?**

**A:** *No; NYSPHSAA Regionals and State championship events will not be conducted this Fall.*

**Q: Can sections host a Sectional Championship this Fall?**

**A:** *Yes; sections can host a Sectional Championship this Fall. Sections will have 15 weeks to conduct the Fall season and may schedule a Sectional Tournament following their regular season.*

**Q: Will Modified and Junior Varsity athletics be permitted this Fall?**

**A:** *The hosting of interscholastic athletics this Fall is at the sole discretion of the individual school district.*

### **Winter 2020-2021 Season**

**Q: When can high-risk Winter sports start practicing and competing?**

**A:** *NYSPHSAA announced November 30<sup>th</sup> has been approved as the official Winter sports start date.*

**Q: Will there be Regionals and State Championships during the Winter Season?**

**A:** *Yes, however it is subject to change.*

### **Spring 2021 Season**

**Q: When can high-risk Spring sports start practicing and competing?**

**A:** *NYSPHSAA announced March 15<sup>th</sup> has been approved as the official Spring sports start date.*

**Q: Will there be Regionals and State Championships during the Spring Season?**

**A:** *Yes, however it is subject to change.*



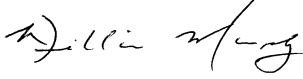
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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Deputy Commissioner  
Office of Higher Education  
Room 975, Education Building Annex  
Albany, New York 12234  
Tel: (518) 486-3633  
hedepcom@nysed.gov

March 20, 2020

To: Approved Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Training Providers  
Deans/Directors of NYS Institutions Offering Educator Preparation Programs

From: William P. Murphy 

Subject: Approval to Offer the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Training Entirely Online

Some institutions of higher education and other organizations that provide the six clock hour Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) training are no longer holding classes in-person due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency, preventing them from conducting the required minimum three clock hours of face-to-face instruction in the DASA training.

To allow DASA training to continue, all approved DASA training providers, and institutions of higher education that include the DASA training in their educator preparation program curricula, may offer the DASA training entirely online during the time period of the state of emergency in New York State for the COVID-19 virus.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Teaching Initiatives at [otidasa@nysed.gov](mailto:otidasa@nysed.gov) if you have any questions regarding the DASA training.



Kathleen R. DeCataldo, Esq.  
Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Student Support Services  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 318-M EB  
Phone: (518) 486-6090 Web: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/>

**Date:** May 21, 2020

**To:** BOCES District Superintendents, Superintendents of Public School Districts, Principals of Public Schools, Charter School Leaders

**From:** Kathleen R. DeCataldo

**Subject: School Health Examinations in Light of COVID-19 Pandemic**

In the April 16, 2019 NYSED memo [Required New York State School Health Examination Form Update](#), the New York State (NYS) Education Department (Department) asked schools to accept any physical examination form from students for the 2019-2020 school year, regardless of whether it is on the *NYS Required Health Examination Form*.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact that it is having on our health care providers, we are asking schools to:

- Continue to accept any physical examination form from students for physicals conducted on or before January 30, 2021, regardless of the form used;
- Continue to follow [Commissioner's Regulations 136.3 \(c\)\(1\)\(iii\)](#), which requires schools to notify the parent/guardians of any student who does not present a health certificate within the 30 days from the start of the school year for new entrants and students entering into Grades Pre-K or K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 & 11 that if the required health certificate is not furnished within 30 days from the date of such notice, the director of school health services shall conduct an examination by health appraisal of the student;
- Allow additional time for parents/guardians to obtain a health examination from a private healthcare provider before scheduling an appraisal with the director of school health services (a.k.a. medical director) if private healthcare providers are unavailable due to the COVID crisis. We encourage schools not to schedule health appraisals with the medical director until early 2021, although that may change depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the fall;
- School nurses and medical directors should continue to exclude students and staff who show symptoms of any communicable or infectious disease in accordance with [Article 19, Section 906](#); and
- Permit student athletes to participate in the fall 2020 sports season if they have previously had a health examination for school attendance in the 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 school years and provide a health history completed ([Sample Recommended NYSED Interval Health History for Athletics](#)) and signed by the parent/guardian within 30 days of the start of the season. Student athletes who have not previously had a health examination must still obtain a health examination prior to participation in the fall 2020 sports season. At this time, students should plan to obtain the required health examination prior to participation in the winter or spring 2020-21 seasons, although that may change depending on the status of COVID-19 in the fall. The Department will provide updated information as needed.

Beginning January 31, 2021 - although that may change depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the fall - physical examinations for school are to be documented on the [NYS Required Health Examination Form](#) or an electronic health record equivalent form. The [Instructions for Completion of New York State School Health Examination Form](#) provides direction to healthcare

providers on the details of the required components and the required presentation order of those components for an electronic health record form to be an equivalent form. Both of these documents are available on [NYSED's School Health Services Webpage](#).

Please contact the Office of Student Support Services if you have questions by email at [studentsupportservices@nysed.gov](mailto:studentsupportservices@nysed.gov) or at 518-486-6090.



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

June 23, 2020

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Public School Administrators  
Charter School Administrators  
Deans/Directors of NYS Institutions Offering Educator Preparation Programs

FROM: Kimberly Young Wilkins, Office of P-12 Education *Kimberly Young Wilkins*  
William P. Murphy, Office of Higher Education *William P. Murphy*

SUBJECT: Theory and Techniques of Coaching (Sport Specific) Course Internship Experience Flexibility in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

All coaches of extracurricular sports must complete a sport-specific theory and techniques of coaching course within five years of their initial appointment as a coach. One of the requirements in this course is an internship experience. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, coaches are currently not able to complete the internship experience in-person with P-12 students, mentors, and/or supervisors given the closures of schools, sports teams, and other athletics settings.

For the internship experience during Summer 2020, we encourage course instructors to provide opportunities for coaches to work with P-12 students, mentors, and supervisors in-person or virtually using distance education instructional methods and technologies, wherever possible. If this type of interaction is not possible for the entire experience, course instructors may supplement the internship experience with alternative methods of instruction. However, the internship must include some virtual and/or in-person interaction with P-12 students.

Alternative methods of instruction must ensure that the coaches develop the knowledge and skills expected during internship experience. Examples of alternative methods of instruction include, but are not limited to, simulations, video case studies, and other coaching exercises.

For questions about coaching courses, including internship experiences, please contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at [emscurric@nysed.gov](mailto:emscurric@nysed.gov) or (518) 474-5922.



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

June 23, 2020

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Public School Administrators  
Charter School Administrators

FROM: Marybeth Casey, Office of Curriculum & Instruction *Marybeth Casey*  
Laura Glass, Office of Teaching Initiatives *Laura Glass*

SUBJECT: First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) Certification Flexibility for Coaches of Extracurricular Sports in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak

All coaches of extracurricular sports must hold valid first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)/automatic external defibrillator (AED) certification by completing courses from a New York State Education Department (NYSED)-approved provider, or NYSED-approved courses offered by a national provider (e.g., American Red Cross). Currently, certification courses cannot be completed entirely online because coaching candidates must demonstrate particular skills for first aid and CPR/AED certification.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, current and prospective coaches may not be able to maintain or gain first aid and CPR/AED certification, respectively, with certification courses not being held in-person. Given the lack of in-person certification courses, the Department is providing the following flexibility regarding the first aid and CPR/AED certification requirements for coaches.

- **Extension.** Current coaches who previously earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through a course from a NYSED-approved provider, and whose certification expires between March 1, 2020 and November 30, 2020, will have the certification expiration date extended to November 30, 2020. If opportunities for in-person certification courses are not available by November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Department will revisit the extension and provide a new expiration date. Coaches who earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through NYSED-approved courses offered by a national provider would not have the certification expiration date extended by NYSED, and must update their first aid and/or CPR/AED certification per certifying

agency requirements. For coaches who earned first aid and/or CPR/AED certification through American Red Cross course(s), possible certificate extensions are described on the [American Red Cross COVID-19 Guidance webpage](#).

- **Online Content.** For first aid and/or CPR/AED certification courses from a NYSED-approved provider, the content can continue to be taught either online and/or in-person. However, candidates must demonstrate their (psychomotor) skills to earn first aid and/or CPR/AED certification. Candidates who complete NYSED-approved first aid and/or CPR/AED certification courses offered by a national provider must complete their first aid and/or CPR/AED certification per certifying agency requirements.

Information about coaching courses is available on the [Athletics and Coaching webpage](#), [Valid First Aid Course for Coaching License webpage](#), and [Valid CPR Course for Coaching License webpage](#). For questions about coaching, including approved certification courses and course providers, please contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at [emscurric@nysed.gov](mailto:emscurric@nysed.gov) or (518) 474-5922.



Office of Instructional Support  
Deputy Commissioner

September 1, 2020

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Public School Administrators  
Nonpublic School Administrators  
Charter School Administrators

From: Marybeth Casey, Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Curriculum Instruction and Early Learning

Re: Eligibility for Interscholastic Athletics, Inclusive Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Per the [school reopening guidance](#) that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) issued earlier this month, districts have been afforded flexible scheduling options as they plan to begin the 2020-21 school year. Some districts are planning to open with all or some of their students in person, some have chosen fully remote instruction, and some are offering their students a choice of in person classes or remote instruction.

This guidance is meant to clarify that regardless of the type of schedule chosen by either the district, or in some cases the student, districts must make any planned school sponsored activities available to all students who are enrolled in the district and otherwise qualified to participate. Districts may not exclude students from participating in any school sponsored activity solely on the basis of their instructional program. For purposes of this memo, “enrolled in the district” means those students who are reported in SIRS with a district of resident code and those included in the Average Daily Membership calculation in SAMS for state aid purposes.

If districts are conducting extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, arts or others, all students enrolled in the district must be given fair and equal access to such activities for which they are otherwise qualified to participate, regardless of the choice of schedule whether made by the student or by the school or district. Schools and districts have the option whether or not to participate in interscholastic sports or provide extracurricular activities as they deem appropriate. However, students may not be restricted or excluded from participating in any activities offered and for which they qualify, simply on the basis of the educational program selected (in person, remote or hybrid). These activities include interscholastic athletics available per the [Governor’s Guidance](#) issued August 24, 2020.



Specific to interscholastic and inclusive athletic activities, and subject to all other usual eligibility requirements, the New York State Education Department regulations (135.4 Physical Education) states the following:

*A pupil shall be eligible for interschool competition or inclusive athletic activities in a sport during a semester, provided that he is a bona fide student, enrolled during the first 15 school days of such semester, is registered in the equivalent of three regular courses, is meeting the physical education requirement, and has been in regular attendance 80 percent of the school time, bona fide absence caused by personal illness excepted.”*

Students who are enrolled in a school or district, are included in the state aid calculations, and meet the bona fide student regulation noted above must not be restricted from participating in interscholastic athletics or other extracurricular activities simply on the basis of their instructional program format, be it in person, hybrid or fully remote. However, the district is not required to provide transportation to and from the school for such activities to students who are enrolled in a hybrid or fully remote program. Transportation may be provided to students in the in person program as part of their academic day, but districts are not required to provide additional transportation to the student specifically for interscholastic athletics.

All such extracurricular activities shall be conducted per the [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) issued by the New York State Department of Health. Any questions related to this guidance may be directed to [emscurric@nysed.gov](mailto:emscurric@nysed.gov).