

Governor Carney's Guidance on Youth Sports & Adult Amateur Sports

1. APPLICATION AND ENFORCEMENT

i. Application

All youth and amateur adult sports facilities, organizations, and leagues must review this document and follow all mandated terms for operation below. Every athletic facility and sport organization is responsible for enforcing these requirements.

ii. Schedules Incorporated

In addition to the requirements found herein, attached to this modification are general guidance, risk-based specific considerations, and rule modifications approved by the Division of Public Health (DPH). These documents will be updated periodically by DPH based on the latest science. Any mandatory requirements in those schedules have the full force and effect of law.

iii. Enforcement

Fines or closure may be imposed upon facilities and organizations that do not abide by these requirements. Failure to comply with plans submitted to, and approved by, DPH will result in rescission of plan approval and further enforcement.

iv. Out-of-State Travel

Any individual who participates in an out-of-state tournament or competition (e.g., ice hockey, basketball, football, competitive cheer or dance) is strongly encouraged to immediately self-quarantine in accordance with DPH guidance from the time of entry into Delaware or for the duration of the individual's presence in Delaware, whichever period is shorter.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this [Twenty-Seventh Modification](#) to the COVID-19 State of Emergency declaration, the following terms shall have the meaning described herein:

i. **“HIGH-RISK”** means activities that involve sustained or repeated close contact of athletes with one another. Examples include ice hockey, basketball, tackle football, boys'/men's lacrosse, wrestling, boxing, rugby, competitive cheer, martial arts, ultimate frisbee, and pairs figure skating.

ii. **“MEDIUM-RISK”** means activities that involve participants in close proximity, and typically involve intermittent personal contact. Examples include baseball, softball, field hockey, girls'/women's lacrosse, soccer, flag or 7-on-7 football, team running, running clubs, and track and field, team swimming, rowing (other than with household members), sailing, volleyball, dance class, fencing, and gymnastics.

iii. “**LOW-RISK**” means activities that are either individual or able to be completed with adequate social distancing and no direct physical contact. Examples include singles tennis, golf, individual running and swimming, pickleball, disc golf, individual biking, surfing, horseback riding, individual sailing, fishing, hunting, motor sports, and singles rowing.

3. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF PLANS

i. Tournaments are not permitted until plans for the tournaments are approved by DPH. Tournament facilities shall submit plans to HSPcontact@delaware.gov for review. Plans must include a method to collect contact information for all players, staff, coaches, officials, and spectators, as well as team rosters and game schedules, to assist with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 infection.

ii. Facilities, leagues, or organizers that will host indoor sports, including tournaments, must have a plan approved by DPH. i. Plans must address face coverings, social distancing, ventilation, and other applicable requirements. Plans must also include a method to collect contact information for all players, staff, coaches, officials, and spectators, as well as team rosters and game schedules, to assist with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 infection. Plans shall be submitted by facilities to HSPcontact@delaware.gov.

iii. Facilities, organizers, or leagues that wish to modify the requirements for any high-risk category activity may request to modify rules in order to prevent athletes from being in close proximity or direct contact with one another (e.g., USA Lacrosse Rule Modifications would allow boys’ lacrosse to be in the medium-risk category). Such facilities, organizers, or leagues may also request face covering modifications. Rule or face covering modifications must be approved by DPH. Requests shall be submitted to HSPcontact@delaware.gov.

4. FACE COVERINGS

i. Athletes participating in high-risk sports and activities must wear a face covering, as required by the Governor’s Declaration of a State of Emergency, at all times, unless rule changes or face covering modifications approved by DPH are in place to prevent athletes from being in close proximity or direct contact with one another, as discussed in Paragraph C.3., above.

ii. All athletes playing indoors must wear face coverings at all times, unless rule changes or face covering modifications approved by DPH are in place.

iii. Coaches and all staff must wear a face covering at all times. This includes when addressing players or officials on or off the field; when coaching during the game; and during practices, trainings, and team meetings.

iv. Referees and officials must wear a face covering at all times. Traditional whistles must be replaced with a device that can be used for attention without removing the face covering.

vii. Spectators and others must wear a face covering at all times while indoors. Spectators and others must also wear a face covering at all times while outdoors, irrespective of physical distance from members outside their household.

viii. Coaches, staff, and referees who have a medical condition that makes it hard to breathe or a disability that prevents the individual from wearing a face covering can request a reasonable accommodation from their employer or the individual responsible for the athletic event.

5. SOCIAL DISTANCING

i. Players must be at least six (6) feet apart from one another at all times, except during on-field play in game-time situations.

ii. Dugouts, benches, and other limited or enclosed gathering spaces must not be used unless six (6) feet of distancing can be maintained.

iii. Players and coaches must be at least six (6) feet apart from one another at all times, unless they are from the same household.

iv. Players must be provided adequate space for belongings, water bottles, and equipment to ensure six (6) feet of distancing when accessing gear.

6. HANDWASHING, SANITIZING, CLEANING, and DISINFECTING

i. Players, staff, coaches, officials, and all participants in sports must wash or sanitize hands, per CDC and DPH guidelines, before and after practice and games. Washing or sanitizing during games and practices with shared equipment or facilities is strongly encouraged, especially when balls or equipment are touched by more than one person.

ii. Hand sanitizer or handwashing stations must be readily available for all players, staff, coaches, officials, spectators, and participants throughout the business location, including at each entry and exit. Hand sanitizer must be composed of at least sixty percent (60%) ethanol or seventy percent (70%) isopropanol.

iii. Facilities must be cleaned at least once per day (or between uses if not used daily). High-contact surfaces, including but not limited to doorknobs, light switches, and railings, must be cleaned every fifteen (15) minutes to two (2) hours. EPA List 6-approved disinfectant must be used for frequently touched surfaces.

7. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

i. All facilities, organizers, and leagues must identify a safety and hygiene manager who is responsible for coordinating and enforcing COVID-19 protocols. All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them. Any plans submitted to DPH must identify this individual.

ii. Coaches, staff, officials, parents, and players must be informed and routinely reminded of team infection control measures and COVID-19 protocols — especially around face coverings and social distancing.

iii. Coaches, staff, officials, parents, and players must be informed about the expectation to stay home when sick, to contact the team safety and hygiene manager if they test positive for COVID-19, and to inform DPH about possible exposures.

iv. A health self-assessment must be completed by each athlete, coach and staff prior to engaging in any athletic activity in a facility, organization or league.

v. Each athlete shall have only one person accompany them to practices; more than one person may attend games. All persons attending practices and games shall wear a face covering as required in Paragraph D., above, and be at least six (6) feet apart from others, unless waiting in their car.

vi. Teams and leagues must have written arrival and departure procedures that, at a minimum, address:

1. Staggered arrival/departure to reduce mixing of groups;v
2. A procedure for health assessment for all athletes, coaches, and staff; and
3. A protocol to address a person who develops symptoms during activity.

vii. Sports organizations and facilities must post extensive signage instructing staff, participants, and spectators to wear face coverings and maintain six (6) feet of distance from others. Printable signs that will help you comply with signage requirements are available at de.gov/playsafelysign.

viii. For sports gatherings conducted in compliance with these requirements, the gathering limit of fifty (50) people applies to spectators. Athletes, coaches, and staff are exclusive of the fifty (50) person limit.

8. RISK-BASED REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the requirements above, specific activities or sports will be classified according to risk, and organizers must conduct activities in accordance with the risk-based classification. For sports where the risk category has not been identified below, sports organizers must confirm the risk category with DPH at HSPcontact@delaware.gov prior to initiation of practices or competitions.

i. For low-risk activities, if social distancing and other general guidance can be followed, no modifications are needed.

ii. For medium-risk activities, the following are required at all times:

1. Staggered starts must be used for sports like running that typically involve group starts.
2. Activities must be conducted outside unless approved by DPH.
3. Shared equipment must be disinfected between users

iii. For medium-risk activities, shorter practice times or smaller groups shall be used to reduce contact time between participants.

iv. For medium-risk activities, the following rule and play modifications are required if face coverings are not worn at all times:

1. Deliberate, direct physical contact, including body checking, tackling, blocking, and pack running/riding, must be eliminated.
2. Rule changes must be in place to prevent close proximity or contact by replacing face-offs, restarts, etc., with alternatives that allow for social distancing

v. For high-risk activities, athletes must comply with the face covering requirements in Paragraph D.1., above, unless a rule or face covering modification is approved by DPH. High-risk activities may combine requests for rule modifications and face covering modifications with a cohort model. If a cohort model is used:

1. Each cohort must be limited to no more than fifteen (15) athletes, and the cohort should be maintained as a stable group, with no mixing with other cohorts.
2. Equipment should not be shared between cohorts. If sharing is unavoidable (e.g., mats), the equipment must be cleaned and disinfected between cohorts.

3. Shorter practice times or smaller groups should be used to reduce contact time between participants.

9. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 12, 2021

Notwithstanding the provisions of this Modification and the Phase 2 Reopen Plan, effective Friday, February 12, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. E.D.T., the following additional restrictions shall apply until further notice:

- i. The maximum occupancy for any indoor practice is fifty percent (50%) of stated fire occupancy requirements, **including** athletes, coaches, and other employees or staff, but excluding the one person permitted to accompany an athlete to any practice as provided in Paragraph 7.v. of this section.
- ii. All games, matches, and competitions may resume, provided that the maximum occupancy for any game, match, tournament or competition is fifty percent (50%) of stated fire occupancy requirements, **including** athletes, coaches, and other employees or staff, but excluding two individuals permitted to accompany each athlete to any game, match, tournament or competition. Additional spectators are not permitted to attend any game, match, tournament or competition.
- iii. In addition to the quarantine requirements and recommendations applying to all cases of COVID spread and consistent with the authority provided by Delaware law and this State of Emergency, the Division of Public Health is authorized to issue cease and desist orders to any team with high or increasing levels of COVID-19 cases or for a failure to comply with any provision of the Declaration of a State of Emergency, including up to a ban on all future practices, games, matches, competitions or similar activities.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

- i. To the extent permitted by Delaware and local law, local governments may impose greater restrictions or prohibitions on the activities of people and businesses than those imposed under this Twenty-Seventh Modification to the State of Emergency. Most of the restrictions in this Twenty-Seventh Modification are minimum requirements. Because the impact of COVID-19 has been and will likely continue to be different in different parts of Delaware, counties and cities may deem it necessary to adopt ordinances and issue state of emergency declarations that impose such additional restrictions or prohibitions.
- ii. This Order has the force and effect of law. Any failure to comply with the provisions contained in a Declaration of a State of Emergency or any modification to a Declaration of the State of Emergency may constitute a criminal offense. 20 Del. C. §§ 3115 (b); 3116 (9); 3122; 3125. State and local law enforcement agencies are authorized to enforce the provisions of any Declaration of a State of Emergency.

SCHEDULE A: GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Athletes, coaches, staff, and spectators considered high risk for COVID-19 complications should continue to stay at home and are encouraged to obtain medical clearance for participation.
- For low- and medium-risk activities, team groups should be limited to fifteen (15) players, plus staff. Team groups should be stable from day to day, and mixing with other groups should be limited.
- Locker rooms should be avoided if at all possible. If one is used, time should be limited to ten (10) minutes, using a staggered schedule, face coverings, and social distancing.
- Water fountain use is discouraged, but if one is used, the water fountain must be cleaned and disinfected every fifteen (15) minutes to two (2) hours.
- Discourage the shared use of materials. If sharing is unavoidable, materials must be cleaned between users or as often as possible (e.g., quarterly for basketball).