



DYSA RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

The Return to Play Protocol is meant as a guide to return to the game responsibly. It is based on Governor Carneys “Restarting DE Economy” plan.

As your State Association, DYSA is charged with guiding our clubs and soccer families on how we can get back on the field in a manner that reduces risks of infection and supports the State of Delaware policies on insuring we do not suffer a resurgence of the pandemic.

This document is designed to be a starting point for our affiliate members to use as a guideline. The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical care, diagnosis, or treatment. All content is provided as general information only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and Delaware Youth Soccer Association makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the completeness of this information. The following are recommendations for returning to play in phases designed to keep all participants and our community safe.

Phases

The Guidelines that the Governor has set forth is a measured, gradual, science-based plan to return to normalcy. There are 3 phases and 14-day criteria that must be achieved before a State, Region or in this case, a state-wide sports organization can move from one phase to the next. Our state at home order is in effect until June 1st and could be extended if our cases do not decline.

DYSA will adhere to the Governor’s determination of phasing. We have translated those phases into our own Return to Play Protocol. Soccer falls into Phase 2 (Schools and Youth activities can reopen).

Phase 1

- Youth sports and other types of physical activity for children may resume provided that participants can social distance at all times during activities (i.e., no contact between participants and/or coaches) and no competitions held during Phase 1.
- Group classes are limited to 10 participants per group, and multiple groups may run per session so long as social distancing can be maintained.

- Participants should bring their own drinks. Use of shared water fountains is discouraged.
- Program coordinator should make hand sanitizer or handwashing stations readily available for all employees and participants.
- Coaches and staff must wear cloth face coverings in accordance with the State of Emergency Order.

Phase 1 calls for maximizing social distancing when in public and calls for avoiding groups of 10 or more in circumstances that do not readily allow for physical distancing.

All must follow the guidelines for Club, Coach, Player and Parent responsibilities.

Phase 2

If Delaware would continue with either negative or steady Covid-19 case counts for 14 days under those reigns, the White House's plan calls for more places to open in Phase 2. Those places include schools and youth activities, which could open under the more relaxed physical distancing protocols being used at the list including restaurants and gyms. Also, non-essential travel would be allowed to resume. Gatherings would be limited to 50 persons.

DYSA interprets Phase 2 as permitting limited activities if measures are taken.

Activities permitted in Phase 2:

1. Practices of single teams on each field and no more than 50 players and coaches present on adjoining fields

Activities not permitted in Phase 2:

1. No games, scrimmages, friendlies, tournaments, or jamborees

Limitations in Phase 2 activities

Club responsibilities

- Before a Club may begin to return to play, they must publish a notice to all players, parents and soccer families outlining the risks of returning and detailing how they intend to minimize or eradicate those risks.
- Contact insurers to ensure all coverages.
- Return to play should be voluntary.
- Train and educate all coaches, officers, paid staff, and any adult that may come in contact with a player on the protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations and other necessary information.
- Coaches, officers, paid staff, and any other adult that comes in contact with players must wear a face mask until Governor Carney lifts the ban.

- Clubs must provide hand sanitizer at each bench area.
- Clubs must organize a station for each player to keep his or her belongings. Stations must be 6 feet apart from each other.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of indoor facilities and cancel outdoor activities or camps to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders or youth are not infected.

Coach responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of the athletes

Each player must be asked:

- Have you been in contact with a person with Covid-19?
- Have you had a cough, fever, or loss of taste or smell?

If a player answers YES to either of these questions, the player may not participate

- Activities must be limited in size (e.g. 3 v 3 or 4 v 4) to avoid large groups competing in a small space.
- Session length should stay within 90-120 minutes. Players workload should be seriously considered as they regain fitness levels. Teams are encouraged to start with 60-minute sessions and as the players become more fit, extend the length of sessions, not to exceed 120 minutes.
- Only coaches are permitted to touch training discs or cones.
- Pinnies are discouraged. If pinnies must be used, they cannot be reused or shared among players and must be cleaned after every use.
- Physical contact outside of training must be avoided.
- Players must bring their own soccer ball to training. There are to be no throw-ins and no activity will include picking up the ball with your hands. Players are not to touch any soccer ball other than their own.

Player responsibilities

- Players must wear a mask to training and from training until the Governor lifts the ban.
- Players must observe social distancing when not in play.
- Players are required to sanitize and wash their hands prior to training and immediately after.
- Players must wash all training gear immediately after training.
- Players are **NOT** to share drinks, food, equipment, or clothing at any time.
- No high fives, hugs, etc. until further notice.

Parents responsibilities

- Parents must have hand sanitizer available for their children before and after training.
- Parents must remain in their cars during training session. They may not congregate at or around the field. If they leave their car for any reason, they must wear a face mask until Governor Carney lifts the ban.
- Should parents need to communicate with the coach it shall be done, through a phone call, text, or email.

Once again, 14 days would be counted in phase 2, and if things continue to hold steady or decline, Phase 3 opens public interactions, but still with the caution of minimizing social settings, where distancing may not be practical. At this point, visits to senior care facilities and hospitals would be allowed to resume.

Phase 3

Entering Phase 3 is not accomplished by flipping a switch. It must be done responsibly and the protocols in Phase 1 and 2 such as social distancing must not be abandoned.

- Activities permitted in Phase 3
 - Training sessions of single teams on each field
 - Games, friendlies, and scrimmages
 - Tryouts
- Activities NOT permitted in Phase 3
 - Tournaments or jamborees
 - Travel outside of Delaware for games, tournaments or jamborees will need to be approved by DYSA and will be handled on a case by case basis.

The countdown from Phase 1 to the end of Phase 3 would take 6 weeks, meaning if Delaware elects to follow the federal guidelines, it would take at least that long to get from the point that Covid-19 case rate begins to drop in Delaware to a more relaxed set of rules.

Once the Governor fully lifts all bans and gives the “OK” for youth activities to resume to our new normal, then and only then will clubs be permitted to host and attend tournaments.

Phase 4

Full return to play

- No training restrictions
- Physical contact should be minimized whenever possible
 - Physical contact should occur outside of what is necessary for training/games
 - Limiting close group discussions, no high fives, hugs, etc.
- Participants are to remain 6 feet apart off the field
 - Designated areas for players gear and clearly marked
- No sharing of water or equipment. Soccer balls excluded

- Soccer ball need to be sanitized before training, scrimmages, games
 - If possible, sanitize soccer balls at halftime
 - Only coach is to handle the training cones
- Spectators are permitted but must still socially distancing and no contact with other players of teams. At risk individuals should take precautions.