



Northern Lehigh Youth Athletic Association COVID-19 Re-Socialization of Sports

The recommendations discussed below are meant as general guidelines as shared by St Luke's University Health Network and Northern Lehigh School District in the context of federal, state, and local county recommendations. These guidelines are focused on recommendations to be utilized in Pennsylvania's green phase. Further information will need to be obtained from federal, state, and local government entities to make recommendations past Pennsylvania's green phase. All federal, state, and local health department orders/recommendations as related to sports must be followed. These guidelines have been adopted and implemented by NLYAA.

Introduction

The goal of this document is to provide recommendations for the re-socialization of sports with regard to practice and competition, keeping in mind the health and safety of our youth athletes, coaches/personnel, parents/caregivers and spectators.

- **Benefits of Sports:** The participation in a sport has known health benefits, including promoting physical fitness and mental wellness. Sports provide a social construct and interaction which is necessary in a time of uncertainty for our athletes. It is widely recognized that physical activity, performed for the right amount of time and intensity can provide benefits to the immune system. In addition, sports can provide a template for young athletes to learn concepts of teamwork, leadership, work ethic and integrity.
- **Inherent Risk of Sports:** Participation in athletics involves unavoidable exposure to an inherent risk of injury. It is important to recognize that rule books, safety guidelines and equipment standards, while helpful means of promoting safe athletics participation, are themselves insufficient to accomplish this goal. To effectively minimize the risks of injury from athletics participation, everyone involved in athletics must understand and respect the intent and objectives of applicable rules, guidelines, and standards.
- This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the state of Pennsylvania may work with relevant entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, and/or spring seasons. These considerations are meant to supplement – not replace any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which youth sports must comply.

- The information re: SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing the COVID-19 illness, is changing rapidly nationally and within our communities. This document is created based on information available to date. Be sure to request the most up to date version of this document if you believe your version is outdated.

Preparing for Re-Entry

- **Building Preparations**
 - Create protocols to limit entrance and exit traffic, designating specific entry to and exits from facilities.
 - If a building has remained dormant for an extended period, we recommend you review CDC guidance on maintaining water system safety when buildings are dormant (CDC - Building Water System) and apply this guidance as appropriate. Consideration should be given to water lines in regard to ice machines, water sources, and hand washing.
 - Review and implement CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfection (CDC - Cleaning and Disinfecting)
 - Ensure custodial and environmental services are regular and/or increased to meet CDC guidelines.
- **Volunteer Training**
 - Volunteers will need to be trained specifically on the protocols outlined in this document and the practices adopted by NLYAA. Virtual trainings should be considered. Social distancing is recommended until CDC, state and local authorities declare otherwise.
 - Reinforcement of safety protocols and requirements associated with, but not limited to, CPR/AED training and Emergency Action Plans.
- **Require Sick Athletes and Volunteers to Stay Home**
 - Provide education to advise individuals on what to do if they are sick (CDC - What to do if you are sick)
 - Establish procedures to ensure athletes and volunteers that become sick onsite or arrive onsite sick are sent home as soon as possible.
 - Create a plan to isolate those who are sick until they can leave. Plan to have areas where a sick person can be isolated from well athletes and volunteers until they can leave the practice or game location.
 - Share resources with the school and community to help families understand when to keep children home. This guidance, not specific to COVID-19, from the American Academy of Pediatrics When to Keep Your Child Home can be helpful for families.
- **Positive COVID-19 Case**
 - Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, have coaches, volunteers, umpires/officials, and families of athletes (as feasible) self-report to the sport

director if they have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with health information sharing regulations for COVID-19, and other applicable laws and regulations.

- All those who had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 (within 48 hours prior to symptom onset) should be advised to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms and be advised to follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. Individuals with close contacts should be excluded from practice for 14 days. Close contact is defined as having close (within 6ft) and prolonged (≥ 30 minutes) contact with the COVID-19 patient.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use these areas until after cleaning and disinfecting them (for outdoor areas, this includes surfaces or shared objects in the area, if applicable).
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfecting products, including storing them securely away from children.
- Develop a notification system (e.g., letter) organizations can use to notify health officials and close contacts of cases of COVID-19.
- Be prepared for possibility of temporary closures and team isolations in the event of recurrent outbreaks and its implications.
- Create a system to notifying volunteers, officials, families, and the public of facility closures and restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure (e.g., limited hours of operation).
- NLYAA is not responsible for testing for COVID-19 but, will screen for symptoms of COVID-19.

Prior to Resuming Physical Activity

- Special Considerations for Athletes and Volunteers at Higher Risk for Severe Illness from COVID-19
 - Athletes and volunteers who should consider delaying their participation in sports and activities are those with any of the following:
 - Diabetes
 - Chronic Lung Disease including Asthma
 - Severe obesity (Body Mass Index >40)
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - Heart conditions
 - Immunocompromised (e.g. any transplant recipient, needing immunosuppressant medications (e.g. steroids, biologics, etc.), patients receiving chemotherapy, etc.)

- Age 65 or older
 - If there is a concern that someone is immunocompromised or has any concern regarding their risk in terms of participation in sports and activities, they should consult their health care provider prior to returning to sports.
- Returning to sports following COVID-19 diagnosis
 - An individual who was diagnosed with COVID-19 may return when all four of the following criteria are met:
 - At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
 - Individual has improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
 - At least ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared
 - Written documentation of clearance from a health care provider (MD, DO, NP, PA)
- Promote Wellness and Hygiene
 - The potential for pre-symptomatic transmission is why the use of face coverings and social distancing, including the avoidance of congregate settings, is imperative to reduce COVID-19 spread.
 - Staying Home when Appropriate
 - Education and Promotion on Self Screening for Signs and Symptoms (CDC - If You Are Sick)
 - Hand hygiene is essential. Organizations need to promote frequent and effective, hand hygiene with ample hand sanitizer (>60% ethanol or >70% isopropanol) dispensers and areas with soap and water in many different locations. Hand washing or use of hand sanitizer should take place pre- and post-activity. Hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer should be made available during activity.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
 - Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed; including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
 - Avoid any unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, or hugs.
 - No team huddles should take place.
 - Face Coverings
 - All adult volunteers (coaches, athletic trainers, etc.) must wear masks or face coverings at all times unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
 - Athletes must wear masks or face coverings when they arrive onsite for health screening and when not actively participating in activity and social distancing is challenging (sidelines, dugouts, athletic training room, etc.).

- Athletes must wear masks or face coverings during activity if contact is closer than 6 ft. for a period of time longer than 15 minutes. If athletes are separated by more than 6ft, then no mask is required.
- Allow athletes to wear PPE items at all times if they choose, as long as the items do not compromise the safety of the athlete or others participating in activity.
- Social distancing is still required until CDC, state and local authorities declare otherwise.
- It is important to be aware of the potential negative impact that a crisis can have on our mental and physical health. Athletes and volunteers should be provided resources associated with seeking support. See additional resources for coping and resiliency support on last page.
- Provide signage, resources and handouts regarding infectious disease prevention education.

Health Screening Procedure

1. Athletes and volunteers are required to be screened when they arrive onsite where the sporting activity will occur. Athletes are to wear a mask or face covering until activity begins. Volunteers are recommended to wear a mask or face covering at all times.
2. Athletic volunteers, such as, but not limited to an administrator, athletic trainer, coach, and/or nurse should conduct the screening.
 - a. A mask must be worn by person conducting the screening. Gloves shall be utilized by health care provider if any direct contact with person screened is required.
3. The screening should include the following questions:
 - a. Today or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following symptoms:
 - i. Fever (temperature greater than or equal to 100.4°F/38°C)
 - ii. New or worsening cough
 - iii. Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
 - iv. Sore throat, different than your seasonal allergies
 - v. New loss of smell and/or taste
 - vi. Nausea, diarrhea or vomiting
 - vii. Do you have a household member or close contact, who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks?
 - viii. Have you been diagnosed or tested positive for COVID-19? If Yes, have you provided required written clearance from your health care provider to return to physical activity or work?
 - b. Temperature check with a thermometer is required.
 - i. Temperature threshold is greater than or equal to 100.4°F/38°C.

- ii. If temperature is equal to or above 100.4°F/38°C threshold, two additional measures should be taken to verify initial measure
 - iii. Forehead thermometer/non-contact thermometer is preferable
 - iv. Temperature check should take place in a temperature controlled environment whenever possible
 - v. Person screened should be well rested, i.e. no recent physical activity
4. If an athlete or volunteer has positive finding on their COVID-19 screening they should be sent home immediately.
 - a. If parent or caregiver is not present, a predetermined volunteer should escort them to a designated isolation room or area away from others and have them wear a mask or face covering. They should then be directed to contact their health care provider for evaluation and potential COVID-19 testing. Those without a health care provider can be directed to a local COVID hotline such as St. Luke's University Health Network 1-866-785-8537 Option 7 or Lehigh Valley Health Network 1-888-402-5846. Positively screened individual should not return until they have documentation demonstrating the SARS-CoV-2 test was negative, or a note from their healthcare provider indicating they do not need to be tested and their symptoms are not due to COVID-19.
 - b. CDC does not recommend isolation of contacts of a person being evaluated for COVID-19 until the diagnosis is confirmed.
5. Documentation of individuals screened must be maintained. Dependent on environment, a system may want to be developed with indicator to ensure clarity that all individuals have been screened (sticker, stamp, wristband, attendance log, etc.).
6. Create a notification procedure to communicate to appropriate administrators when there is a positive screen.

When Physical Activity Resumes

- Pre-K to 12 (PK-12) youth sports are permitted to resume in counties designated in the Yellow and Green phases, in alignment with CDC for Youth Sports.
- The decision to resume sports-related activities, including conditioning, practices, and games, is the discretion of NLYAA.
- Any sports-related activities in Yellow or Green phased counties must adhere to the gathering limitations set forth by the Governor's Plan for Phased Reopening (25 people in yellow, 250 people in green) and the facility as a whole may not exceed 50% of total occupancy permitted by law.
- During the Yellow and Green phases of reopening, sports-related activities at the Pre K to 12 level are limited to student athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.

- Key Points and Recommendations
 - Sports-related activities must be modified to comply with social distancing requirements during all phases.
 - Please consider the Infection Risk by Sport table when creating your Athletics Health and Safety Plan.

Infection Risk by Sport

Low Risk	Low Risk Involve: -Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually -Equipment is not shared and is able to be cleaned between use by competitors	- Sideline cheering
Moderate Risk	Involve: - Close, sustained contact - Protective equipment in place that reduces transmission of respiratory droplets OR -Intermittent close contacts OR -Sports that use equipment that cannot be cleaned between participants	-Basketball -Soccer -Field hockey -7 v 7 football
High Risk	Involve: -Close, sustained contact between participants	-Wrestling -Football -Competitive cheerleading

	<p>-Lack of significant protective barriers</p> <p>-High probability of respiratory droplet transmission</p>	
--	--	--

Non-Essential Persons

- All federal, state, and local county guidelines in accordance with mass gatherings must be followed.
- During the Yellow and Green phases of reopening, sports-related activities at the Pre-K to 12 level are limited to student athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities.
- No person beyond those essential should be present until federal, state, and local county departments lift restrictions on mass gathering. Examples of non-essential person may include managers, extra coaches, non-participating athletes, media, etc.
- Spectators are not essential to any workouts or practices and not recommended to attend. Parents/caregivers can remain in their cars during this time. No congregating should be allowed in the parking lot or fields. A drop-off line for practices is recommended to avoid unnecessary exposure. For younger children, one parent/caregiver can accompany the child to the health screening. The parent/caregiver should be wearing a mask/face covering.
- If competitions take place while federal, state and local county guidelines recommend social distancing, spectators should practice such as permissible and spectators should wear masks/face covering. Although there is no specified limit on the number of spectators, schools may want to put in limits based on other factors (i.e. gym size) to promote social distancing.
- For parents/caregivers that rely on public transportation or walk, an area away from practice should be set aside that allows for social distancing.

Athletic Training Considerations only for sports where it applies

- NLYAA must be prepared to provide athletic training staff with adequate supplies such as non-contact thermometers, hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, disinfectants, etc. if necessary
- Athletic trainers must be practicing good hygiene and washing hands or using hand sanitizer.

- Athletic trainers must wear gloves during patient care that requires physical examination or direct contact.
- Gloves must be changed between patients.
- Athletic trainers must wear mask at all times until guidance from CDC is adjusted.
- Athletic Trainer should clean and disinfect according to CDC Reopening Guidance inclusive, but not limited to, treatment/taping tables after each patient, rehabilitation equipment, modality equipment, etc. A cleaning and disinfecting schedule should be created and maintained.
- Emergency action plan adjustments may need to be considered during this time, i.e. lightning policy sheltering procedures.
- Start by limiting games, scrimmages, and matches to teams in your region first. Expand beyond regional play if cases continue to stay low.

General Rules

In the event of any emergency situation, all guidelines are subject to change

Masking:

All volunteers must wear a mask at all times, unless properly social distancing (6 ft. from other people).

All Athletes must wear a mask, until told otherwise. Situations where a student MUST wear a mask include, but are not limited to:

- Getting health screen
- Being evaluated by an athletic trainer (unless an emergency)
- Entering all facilities (field house, restroom, etc.)
- When not participating in activity
- Any time that social distancing is not an option (inside due to a lightning storm, etc.)

Situations where a student is not required to wear a mask include (can be changed by NLYAA):

- Practicing any sport, as long as you are 6 ft apart from other people
- Any other time that you are 6 ft apart from other people

Pre-workout Screening

- Anyone with a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not participate & should contact their health care provider
- Records will be kept of all people present
- Continue health screening of all athletes and volunteers

- Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing and minimize exposure in social settings where distancing may not be practical

NLYAA Temperature Screening Process

- If an athlete has a high temperature, with no symptoms, the student will be asked to sit in the shade for 5 minutes, and the temperature will be taken again.
- If the 2nd temperature is normal, then the athlete may go to practice
- If the 2nd temperature is still high, then the student will be sent home with an instruction sheet (see sheet below)
- If the athlete has symptoms related to allergies, but NO fever, the student can go to practice (this is at the discretion of NLYAA)
- If an athlete has symptoms, doesn't feel well, or looks visibly sick, the athlete may be sent home whether they have a fever or not (this is at the discretion of NLYAA)
- If an athlete is sent home for symptoms (not related to allergies) and/or has a high temperature, the athlete cannot return until cleared by a doctor and we receive a doctor's clearance.
- Sport Director and NLYAA Executive Board, will be notified if a positive screen is found

Limitation on Number of Students Participating Together

- Up to 250 people at a time or 50% of facility occupancy, whichever is less - INDOORS & OUTDOORS
- Continue to keep 6 ft. apart between people

Physical Activity and Usage of Athletic Equipment

- Equipment such as football helmets, lacrosse pads, ear guards & eyewear should only be used by one individual and not shared
- Hand sanitizer should be available during all activity

Individualized Hydration

- All coaches and athletes must bring their own water or drinks to team activities; these cannot be shared
- Personal water bottles should be properly identified with person's name
- Hydration stations or fixed water fountains should not be used
- Team water coolers can be used for emergencies
 - ONLY staff or a designated person can touch the water cooler
 - All bottles will be filled by the designated person only

- The designated person must wear a new set of gloves each time (in between water breaks, not in between bottles)
- The coolers must be cleaned after each practice
- Ice towels may be used for single use only and discarded or washed properly

Post-Workout Procedures

- Hand washing or hand sanitizer should be utilized after workout
- All athletes should leave facilities immediately post workout and return home to shower
- Clothing should be changed and washed after each workout session
- No congregating in groups should occur

Important Information to Remember

- Bring a mask EVERYDAY
- Bring your own water bottle and enough water to last you the entire practice
- Wash all clothes and workout equipment EVERYDAY
- If you need help with anything, or have a question, talk to your coach or sport director
- Listen to your coaches, athletic trainers, and other volunteers!
- Be smart, stay safe, and HAVE FUN!

Other Print Resources

- Mental Health resources
 - World Health Organization: Healthy at Home-Mental Health WHO -Healthy At Home - Mental Health
 - CDC managing stress around COVID-19 CDC - Coping and Managing Stress and Anxiety
 - Mental Health in PA PA DHS - Mental Health Services
 - Mental Health Fact Sheet PA DHS - Mental Health Fact Sheet

Mental Health Help During COVID-19		
Crisis Text Line  Text 'PA' to 741741	National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  1-800-273-8255	Preventing suicide in PA  preventsuicidepa.org/
Disaster Distress Helpline  800-985-5990	Get Help Now for substance use disorder  1-800-662-4357	Veterans in crisis  veteranscrisisline.net
PA's support helpline  855-284-2494	Coping with COVID-19 stress  bit.ly/covid-coping	COVID-19 resources  mhanational.org/covid19

In the event that you have had a Positive Health Screen (meaning you have a temperature greater than or equal to 100.4°F or positive for symptoms), we ask that you go home immediately and follow the recommended steps below:

- DO NOT immediately go to the emergency room or an urgent care facility
- Contact ONE of the following for further instruction:
 - CDC Guidelines www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov
 - Contact your primary care physician
 - Contact St. Luke's University Health Network COVID-19 Hotline
 - 1-866-785-8537 Option 7
 - Contact Lehigh Valley Health Network
 - 1-888-402-5846

Thank you for working with us to keep everyone safe.