



## BEST PRACTICES

Return to Play for Fall 2020

*This document is subject to change by approval of the SCHSL Executive Committee as needed.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Purpose .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Education .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DHEC Effective Strategies .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Additional Mitigation Strategies .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Proposed Fall Sports Calendar and Notes .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Safety Guidelines for Athletes, Coaches and Staff .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Safety Guidelines for Contest and Spectators .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sports Administrative Rules Modifications .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Playoffs Modifications/Considerations .....</b>	<b>23</b>

## **Purpose**

- To offer SCHSL member\_schools best practices in order to commence the 2020-21 school year athletic Fall sports seasons as scheduled and have complete seasons through championship play;
- To educate our coaches and student-athletes how to safely live with the COVID-19 virus by following the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), and the South Carolina State Department of Education (SDE) guidelines while fostering an educational athletic environment;
- To develop our student-athletes as physically and safely as possible; and
- To provide best practices for students, coaches, officials, and fans while participating and attending athletic events.

*The following best practices are suggested for all SCHSL athletic Fall sports for the 2020-21 school year.*

## **Education**

- Before beginning any athletic activities, the local school (system) should review the most recent guidelines provided by the CDC, DHEC, SDE, and local county/city health agencies and decide how best to implement those guidelines.
- Local school administration should communicate to coaches, student-athletes, and parents CDC, DHEC, and SCHSL guidelines and best practices regarding COVID-19 and discuss all safety and cleanliness expectations.

### **Effective Strategies to Mitigate COVID-19 Spread**

- It is suggested that students avoid close contact with others and maintain a physical distance of six feet or greater.
- Close contact is considered being within 6 feet for 15 minutes. When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings should be worn.
- Encourage individual hygiene such as hand washing, coughing/sneezing etiquette, avoid touching face, etc.
- Athletes and coaches should be closely monitored for any symptoms. Those who have been exposed to COVID-19 (regardless of where the exposure occurred) should follow protocols set forth by the CDC, DHEC, and local health department.

### **Additional Mitigation Strategies**

Any student with a prior confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis should undergo an evaluation by their medical provider. Written medical clearance is recommended prior to participation. Once cleared and before returning to the sport, a gradual return to activity is advised, and any athlete showing abnormal health issues should be evaluated and cleared by a physician prior to a return to sport activities. As much as possible, practices, training, workouts, meetings, etc. should be held outdoors.

# Proposed Fall Sports Calendar

Sport	First Practice	First Scrimmage	First Contest	Playoffs/Qualifiers	Finals	Weeks in Regular Season
Girls Golf	Aug. 17	Aug. 24	Aug. 31	Oct. 19	Oct. 26 & 27	7 weeks
Swim	Aug. 17	Aug. 24	Aug. 31	N/A	Oct. 10 & 12	5 weeks
Girls Tennis	Aug. 17	Aug. 24	Aug. 31	Oct. 19	Oct. 31	7 weeks
Cross Country	Aug. 24	Aug. 31	Sept. 7th	Oct. 30-31	Nov. 6-7	7 weeks
Volleyball	Aug. 24	Aug. 31	Sept. 7th	Oct. 27	Nov. 4-7	7 weeks
Competitive Cheer	Sept. 8	Sept. 14	Oct. 13	Dec. 7 - 12	Dec. 15-19	8 weeks
Football	Sept. 8	Sept. 12	Sept. 25	Nov. 13	Dec. 4 & 5	7 weeks

## SCHSL Fall Sports Plan Proposal Notes

Fall Sports will be allowed two scrimmages for varsity and one for sub varsity teams. A Jamboree may be substituted for a scrimmage.

Sub Varsity and Middle School teams will follow the same dates as the high school calendar for Fall Sports.

There are no current changes to the Winter or Spring Sports Season. However, SCHSL Winter and Spring Calendars may be modified to accommodate moving a fall sport into the athletic calendar in the event the sport is unable to hold their season in the fall due to COVID-19 conditions.

**Closed Season for Fall Sports:** The three (3) days prior to the first day of practice.

**Closed Season for Winter and Spring Sports:** Begins on the first day of practice for fall sports (currently August 17, 2020).

**Open Season for Winter and Spring Sports:** Recommend that we postpone Open Season for Winter Sports until the Spring of 2021. Recommend Open Season for Spring Sports to remain the same time frame as currently scheduled. This should be re-evaluated again in October of 2020.

**Swimming Notes:**

Any delay to the start date will potentially have an impact for Swim with their season needing to be completed as close to October 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> as possible due to temperatures in outdoor pools and availability for venues in the finals.

**Football Notes:**

Schools will be allowed to start wearing helmets: August 17<sup>th</sup> in Phase 1.5

Helmets and Shoulder Pads: September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Full Pads: September 10<sup>th</sup>

First Scrimmage: September 12<sup>th</sup>

\*All football players must go through 2 days in helmets, two days in shoulder pads and 1 day in full gear prior to participation in a scrimmage, jamboree, or contest.

**Note:** Schools that do not make the playoffs will be allowed to schedule one additional game. This game must be completed no later than November 20<sup>th</sup>. (The 2<sup>nd</sup> playoff week) Schools will be permitted no more than 7 additional practices for this one additional game. You may not practice after you have played your additional game.

**Note:** At least 7 regular season weeks are needed for all regions to play a full region schedule.

**Championship Notes:**

Football, Volleyball and Tennis will be reduced to a maximum of four rounds of playoffs.

Cross Country and Cheer will have a reduction of teams competing at the state finals.

Swimming and Golf will have no reduction in teams at the state finals.

## Safety Guidelines for Athletes, Coaches, and Staff

**Note: Regardless of the school's first practice date, a minimum acclimation period is required before any full contact is allowed in the sport of football. Any time physical distancing cannot be maintained by students, coaches, spectators, etc. wearing a facial covering is suggested. This includes sidelines, benches, etc. for all contest participants.**

Only school personnel, certified coaches, athletic trainers, and student-athletes should be present during practices. Attendance of non-essential personnel is not recommended until further notice. Equipment should be cleaned and sanitized daily after each use. Equipment should not be shared without following cleaning protocols.

Individuals having or experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms should follow CDC and DHEC guidelines listed at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.dhec.sc.gov](http://www.dhec.sc.gov) before being allowed to participate or attend.

These guidelines are intended for application in non-health care related places of employment. The foundation guidelines for businesses and employers remain the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

All organizations must determine how best to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace as well as in their community. To reopen and successfully remain open for activities, everyone individually and collectively must actively participate in the core recommendations:

1. Self-isolation – if you are sick, stay home.
2. Practice social distancing of at least six feet distance to the greatest extent possible.
3. Wash hands frequently (20 seconds with soap and water or use of a sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol).
4. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects (e.g., keyboards, phones) and surfaces (e.g., handrails, workstations, sinks) or remove unnecessary frequently touched surfaces (e.g., trash can lid).
5. Avoid touching of eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
6. Strongly consider wearing a cloth face covering when in public (do not use on children under two years old, people with difficulty breathing or people who cannot remove the mask themselves).
7. Cover mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues away immediately after use.
8. Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment when possible, or disinfect them before and after use.

9. Minimize the use of soft surfaces like cloth-covered chairs or area rugs that are more difficult to clean or disinfect.

### **Guidelines Specifically for High School and Middle School Sports:**

In addition to the above referenced general guidelines, the requirements below are designed to further reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19 during athletic workouts, training, or competition. *Following these guidelines does not guarantee that transmission of the virus will not occur. Participating in organized sport comes with a risk of contracting COVID-19, other illnesses, or injuries.*

Students, coaches, or staff who either 1) have pre-existing medical conditions that place them at higher risk of infection, or 2) those who do not want to risk contracting COVID-19 should refrain from participating in high school sports. . The overarching goal of ALL phases is minimizing or eliminating the number of COVID-19 cases that can be attributed to time spent in organized sports activities. To be successful in moving forward, *IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS, COACHES AND STAFF CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES WHILE AWAY FROM SPORTING ACTIVITIES AS WELL.*

### **Guidelines include all of those listed above, PLUS:**

1. Always maintain minimum physical distancing of six feet between participants.
2. Daily health screening of athletes, coaches, and staff by a health care professional or designated fulltime district/school employee. If an individual answer YES to any of these questions, then they cannot participate on that day.
  - a. Fever at 100.4 or higher in the past 72 hours?
  - b. Cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat or new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea?
  - c. Contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 with the previous 14 days?
  - d. Compromised immune system or chronic diseases which could be affected by the virus?
3. Temperature screening will be done on each athlete, coach, and staff daily by a health care professional or designated fulltime district/school employee. If temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, then that individual should not be allowed to stay on site.
4. Face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone.
  - a. Athletes
    - i. Should wear a face covering when not actively participating in the sports activity.
    - ii. Face covering or masks should be worn in sports where the covering is not inhibitory.
    - iii. Face coverings should not be shared. Non-disposable face coverings should be cleaned and disinfected daily.

b. Coaches and Staff

i. Should always wear a face covering while on site.

5. Athletes, coaches, and staff should come dressed for participation.
6. Use of locker rooms should be coordinated to allow for physical distancing when using the lockers.
7. Bathroom access should be limited to every other stall, with no more people allowed inside than the number of stalls in use.
8. Alcohol based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol or adequate hand washing facilities should be provided for all participants.
9. Weight rooms, restrooms, meeting rooms and other multi-use facilities that include high touch surfaces should be sanitized frequently during each event. Shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected in between each user.
10. Individuals should bring a personal water bottle to each workout and not share this bottle with anyone. Disposable cups should be used for those that do not have access to their own water bottle. Use of communal water fountains is not recommended.
11. When possible, personal contact should always be avoided. This includes, but is not limited to high-fives, handshaking, fist-bumping, and chest-bumping.
12. Signs must be posted at all building entrances advising the public that they may wish to refrain from entering if they are 65 years of age or older or have underlying health conditions including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, asthma or weakened immunity.

### **Heat Stress & Acclimatization**

With the temperatures rising in South Carolina it is imperative that coaches ease into conditioning and workout activities to prevent incidents of exertional heat illness, sickle cell, heat syncope, and minimize acute musculoskeletal injuries. In addition to:

- Following the Wet Bulb Globe thermometer guidelines
- Having Emergency Action Plans in place for all activities.

### **Other Considerations:**

- Consider the use of a digital thermometer to check temperature athletes, coaches, and staff. If a touch thermometer is used, it must be disinfected between individuals.
- Consider COVID-19 testing for any athlete, coach, and/or staff that fails the screening process not to return until tested negative or a note from a health care provider other than an athletic trainer.
- Athletic Training Rooms should be arranged to accommodate social distancing and an appropriate PPE should be worn while in these facilities.
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
- Appropriate time be given between use of facilities to allow for thorough sanitation of the facility and equipment.

- Use of communal water devices is not recommended and any non-disposable water bottles or cups should be sanitized thoroughly prior to re-use. Best practice is for athletes to bring their own water.
- Priority of facilities should be given to fall sports athletes if possible.
- Consideration should be given to the number of athletes, coaches and staff allowed on campus each day to ensure that the facility can be cleaned thoroughly, and risk of transmission is reduced. Building occupancy should not exceed 20% of the number of people allowed by the fire marshal.
- Create and request athletes, coaches and/or staff to sign “Assumption of Risk” form prior to participation.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). Additionally, administrators with athletic responsibilities are also encouraged to complete the course. The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.

## **Safety Guidelines for Contest and Spectators**

### **Contracts**

Schools should amend or create contracts to include verbiage regarding outbreak situations including, but not limited to, state mandated closures, local school closures, vacated contests, etc. that prohibit a school from participation. Suggestions, whether two or one-year contracts, include, but are not limited to, adding forfeiture fees, reversing the home and home sites, playing on an alternate date, playing at a neutral site, splitting the gate 50/50, etc. Contractual amendments should be resolved between the two schools involved.

### **Communication**

- Host schools should communicate prior to an event these best practices and/or local restrictions regarding mitigation of COVID-19 to the visiting team, officials, media, fans, etc.
- Communication between member schools should also include, but is not limited to, information regarding parking, concessions, locker rooms, ticketing, payment methods, entrance/exit gates, bands, cheerleaders, etc.
- If a school is not able to participate in a contest, the local superintendent must notify the SCHSL Commissioner in writing.

### **Contingency Plans for Fall Sports Play**

- As part of the contingency plans, schools should schedule and complete region season contest and qualifying times or meets as soon as possible to allow for the maximum amount of time to complete all required contests prior to the playoffs. Required dates, as listed in the 2020-21 Updated Sports Calendar (available online at [www.schsl.org](http://www.schsl.org)), are the dates required contest MUST be completed.

### **Transportation**

- The local school system and school administration may determine the safest way to travel to and from contests in accordance with CDC, DHEC, and SDE guidelines.
- When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings are suggested.
- To avoid quarantining the whole team, assigned seating is suggested.

### **Locker/Dressing Rooms**

- Host schools should be responsible for providing a clean environment for all visiting teams to dress and have pre-game meetings. When possible, the area should be large enough to maintain social distancing.
- If locker/dressing rooms are not large enough to maintain physical distancing, visiting teams may consider traveling dressed, dressing in groups, and/or limiting travel team numbers.

- When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings are suggested.

## **Facilities**

- It is an expectation member schools will comply with CDC, DHEC and local health agencies related to best practices for facilities. When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings are suggested.
- Host schools should communicate all guidelines, including local restrictions, to visiting schools and officials prior to an event.
- Host schools should consider posting visible signage encouraging physical distancing, facial coverings, and hand washing, etc. and urging anyone with COVID-19 symptoms not to enter an athletic event. (Examples of signage may be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).)

## **Gameday & Event Management**

- At contests in localities where fan attendance is permitted, member schools are encouraged to limit fan attendance to a number that will allow adequate social distancing and should mark/designate bleachers or seats to promote social distancing among spectators. Member schools must facilitate compliance with any applicable state or local order limiting gathering sizes for participation in public events. In consultation with local health providers, member schools in areas experiencing high virus transmission should consider further limitations on attendance (e.g., family members only, or no spectators). Limit informal gathering in areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- If a public address system is in use for a contest, the host school should make public service announcements at various times during the contest to remind those in attendance to use masks and maintain physical distancing.
- Member schools should require that all fans wear facial coverings at all times while onsite (except children under age 2) and maintain social distancing (six feet, or the equivalent of two empty seats between themselves and other fans) from anyone other than those living in the same household. Home and Visiting spectators should have separate entrances and seating areas at all athletic facilities. Restroom facilities should be cleaned and sanitized before, during and after all athletic contests. The host school is responsible for providing staff to engage in frequent cleaning and sanitizing of restroom facilities during contests.
- Any auxiliary persons (ticket takers, concession stand workers, security, media, and volunteers) should be screened prior to working an athletic event.
- Any auxiliary participant who experiences any symptoms of COVID-19 should follow CDC and DHEC guidelines before being allowed to work an event.
- Student groups such as marching bands, cheerleaders, drill teams, and any other school groups may attend and perform at games or contests if local school/district approves. Schools should plan accordingly and consider limiting number of participants to those essential to performances.
- The temperature check and questionnaire requirements, as well as the physical distancing requirement should also apply to members of a school band or pep band, cheerleaders, or other similar student groups attending a contest in a supporting role. If the band is present, limit to a halftime performance or relocate the band from the stands to other available areas away from crowds and increase the amount of physical distance between band members. Increase the

amount of physical distance between cheerleaders as well as between the cheerleaders and other persons if projected voices are to be used.

- All game day personnel involved in the athletic event should be screened prior to working the event. Game day personnel include, but are not limited to, chain crew, officials, athletic trainers, timers, judges, scorers, ball boy/girl, etc.
- When possible, team bench areas should be arranged so access is for team personnel only. In addition, bench areas should accommodate proper physical distancing. When not feasible, other mitigation methods, such as facial coverings, may be implemented.
- Pregame interactions with opposing coaches and players should be limited and physical distancing guidelines should be maintained. Procedures for postgame gestures of sportsmanship should be discussed and agreed upon by both coaches during the pregame meeting.
- All decisions concerning spectators, student sections, stadium seating, etc., are under the guidance of home management and should be in accordance with CDC, DHEC, and local health guidelines. When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings are suggested.
- Concession stands tend to invite gatherings of people in close quarters. If a member school chooses to operate a concession stand at a contest, signage or other appropriate markings must be in place to encourage customers to maintain physical distancing while standing in line. Where possible, schools that choose to operate concession stands are encouraged to arrange for call-in orders and prepackaging of food and beverages to reduce the number of people gathering to stand in line and to limit the number of concession workers. All concession stand workers should wear facial coverings and gloves and must maintain as much physical distance as possible in the confines of the concession stand.

### **Best Practices Regarding Contest Officials**

- Host schools should communicate all local restrictions regarding COVID-19 prior to the event.
- Host schools should provide contest officials an area to enter and exit separate from fans when possible. Officials should be provided a dressing and meeting area that has been cleaned and disinfected prior to their arrival that provides for appropriate spacing between individuals.
- Dressing rooms should have hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.
- Officials should self-screen every day for COVID-19 symptoms for themselves and family members.
- Pregame meetings between teams and contest officials should be planned to allow appropriate distancing between individuals.
- Officials' table should be limited to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommended distance of 3 to 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. The number allowed at the officials' table is determined by the space available at the table. When physical distancing cannot be maintained, facial coverings are suggested.
- The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer.

- Officials may use an electronic whistle, wear face coverings and protective gloves.
- Officials should have their own labeled, beverage container, and these should be brought onto the field or court for their use during time outs or breaks.
- Suggest the elimination of handshakes during the coin toss and pregame festivities.

### **Ticketing**

If attendance restrictions are in place, **equal access for visiting fans must be provided.**  
GoFan offers a “CASHLESS” platform.

### **NFHS Network**

If restrictions prevent fan attendance, a live-streaming platform through the NFHS Network is available. Please contact Tammie Newman, at [newman@schsl.org](mailto:newman@schsl.org) for additional information.

## **Sports Administrative Rules Modifications/Considerations**

In addition to these regulations, SCHSL has developed the accompanying rules modifications and guidelines for returning to competition generally and for the specific fall sports. Those rules modifications and guidelines, like these regulations, do not guarantee the safety of participants and fans but are designed to encourage the member schools to engage in safe practices. The knowledge base related to COVID-19 is evolving. SCHSL may modify the regulations, rules modifications, and guidelines as more about COVID-19 is learned. All coaches and administrators are encouraged to check the SCHSL website regularly for any modifications to these regulations, rules modifications, or guidelines.

## **2020-21 Golf Modifications/Considerations**

### **TOURNAMENT/LOCAL COURSE RULES**

Send all rules sheets electronically and remove paper handouts. Starters or volunteers should stress social distancing and remind players of these recommendations.

### **PRACTICE FACILITIES**

Set up hitting stations at least 6 feet apart.

### **DURING THE ROUND**

Players may wear cloth mask or face coverings.

Bunkers – If tournaments are played without bunker rakes: Relief from an abnormal ground condition (i.e. a footprint) **for the lie of the ball only**, the player may lift the ball, smooth the area and place it within one club length, no closer to the hole. Players are also encouraged to smooth out all bunkers with their feet when exiting after play.

Flag stick – Players must not remove the flagstick at this time.

Holed – The definition of Holed is modified in this way: If any part of the ball is in the hole below the surface of the putting green, the ball is treated as holed even if the entire ball is not below the surface.

### **POST-ROUND**

Players are asked to refrain from the traditional handshake or hug prior to and after all rounds. A friendly nod, a tip of the cap, or wave is a recommended form of greeting or sportsmanship.

### **SCORING**

Scorecards are not official and should not be exchanged amongst players.

After the round, players will verify scores with the tournament director by verbally calling their scores. Scores are deemed returned and attested once players and markers verbally verify scores. Digital scorecards may be used.

### **SPECTATORS**

Social distancing guidelines should be enforced and encourage walking vs. carts.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.

## 2020-21 Swimming Modifications/Considerations

### 1. Swimming Rule Considerations

**Conduct (1-3-2)** - Require athletes to arrive at venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for swimmers a to change that allows for 6 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.

**Referee and Starter (4-2, 4-3)** - Various rules require interactions between officials, coaches and athletes. Alternative methods for of communications include utilization of the P.A. system, hand signals or written communication.

**Notification of Disqualification (4-2-2d, e)** - Notification shall occur from a distance via use of hand signals or the P.A. system.

**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 3-6 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. Timers should wear cloth facial coverings.

**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. Timers and relay takeoff judges should wear cloth facial coverings.

## 2. 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

**Teams Seating and Lane Placement** - Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool and require the home team to compete in lanes 1-3 and visitors to swim in lanes 4-6

**Preparing Athletes for Competition** - Athlete clerking areas should be eliminated.

**Coaches** – Should wear mask or face covering

**Officials/Volunteers (Lap Counters/Timers)**- Should wear mask or face covering

**When not competing** – All athletes should wear mask/ face covering and stay in team area

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.

## 2020-21 Tennis Modifications/Considerations

1. Each match will use at least 4 tennis balls. Two will be marked (with a sharpie) with H for home team and the other two marked with V, for visitor. This way, each player only touches their own tennis balls. If preferred, can go with six tennis balls, 3 for each Player. Or you could choose for home team to use even number tennis balls and visiting team to have odd numbers. All tennis balls will be returned to home team coach, or designated person at conclusion of match.
2. Scoring- score sticks, flip cards, or whatever form of keeping score each school has will only be touched by the home team player. This includes scoring during a set, as well as during a tiebreak.
3. During a match, each player will change sides at the opposite sides of each other.
4. Each player will provide their own water, towel, equipment, etc. All tennis balls will be returned to home team coach, or designated person.
5. Hand sanitizer will be provided by the home team and will be available at each court.
6. Athletes not playing will be wearing a mask and sitting at least six feet apart.
7. Players leaving the court for a bathroom break will wear a mask.
8. One gate will be used to enter and exit for all matches and the home team will oversee who opens and closes gate.
9. After each match, NO hand shaking, fist pumping, high fives, etc.

All spectators will also be wearing masks and will be practicing social distancing.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.

## 2020-21 Cross Country Modifications/Considerations

### General Considerations:

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
- Cross country meets should consider using staggered, wave or interval starts.
- Possible Rule Modifications:
  - 8-1-3a: Consider widening the course to at least 6 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.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and exercise equipment.
- ***Pre and Post Game Ceremony:*** Establish cross country specific social distancing meet protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” 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.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). Additionally, administrators with athletic responsibilities are also encouraged to complete the course. The link to access the course is here:

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

### 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.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Cloth face coverings are permitted.
- Bring your own water bottle.

**Considerations for Officials:**

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Do not 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 associations.
- Officials personnel should always wear cloth face coverings.

**Considerations for Parents:**

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

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.

## 2020-21 Volleyball Modifications/Considerations

### Pre-Match Conferences:

- Limit attendees to one coach from each team, first referee and second referee.
- Move the location of the pre-match conference to center court with one coach and one referee positioned on each side of the net. All four individuals maintain a social distance of 3 to 6 feet.
- Suspend the use of the coin toss to determine serve/receive. The visiting team will serve first in set 1 and alternate first serve for the remaining non-deciding sets.
- Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters are submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.

### Team Bench Area:

- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches between sets. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present.
- Limit bench personnel to observe social distancing of 3 to 6 feet.

### Officials Table:

- Limit to essential personnel which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer with a recommend distance of 3 to 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

### Deciding Set:

- Move the location of the deciding set coin toss to center court with team captains and the second referee maintaining the appropriate social distance of 3 to 6 feet. A coin toss, called by the home team, will decide serve/receive.
- Suspend the protocol of teams switching benches before a deciding set. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage, teams may switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols. Officials will determine if a disadvantage is present.

### Other Modifications:

- Elimination of handshakes before and after the match.
- Elimination of team huddles between points.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.

### Officials:

- Electronic whistles are permissible.
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Gloves are permissible.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible). The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.

## **2020-21 Competitive Cheer Modifications/Considerations**

### **Teams:**

- Cloth mask or face coverings will be worn when not in warm-ups or on competition mat.
- All coaches and team members should use hand sanitizer before and after their routine.
- Performance and warm-up mats are to be cleaned between each team’s usage.

### **Judges:**

- Judges should be appropriately spaced to ensure proper social distancing.
- Cloth mask or face coverings will be worn by judges, tabulators, timers, and spotters.

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## 2020-21 Football Modifications/Considerations

### Playing Rules Considerations:

- The Ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the manufacturer
- Ball boys should always maintain a distance of at least six feet.
- A single charged time-out maybe extended to a maximum of two minutes in length to allow for proper sanitation and social distancing to occur.
- The authorized conference for the charged time-out should take place between the 9-yard marks and not at the sideline for social-distancing purposes.(It would be permissible for more than one coach to be involved in this conference and for technology to be used.)
- The intermission may be extended to a maximum of two minutes between the first and second and the third and fourth periods and following a try, successful field goal or safety, and prior to the succeeding free kick
- Cloth face coverings are permissible.
- Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless integrated into the face mask and attached to the helmet and clear without the presence of any tint) shall not be allowed during the contest.
- Gloves are permissible but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification
- Tooth and Mouth Protectors should be attached to the helmet on all players.

### Other Considerations

- Each game official and player should have their own beverage container brought out to them on the field.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet while performing all pregame responsibilities with all officiating crew members, game administration staff, line-to-gain crew, clock operators, individuals handling the balls during the game and team personnel.
- Suspend pregame protocol of shaking hands during introductions
- Suspend postgame protocol of shaking hands.
- Before, during and after the contest, players, coaches, game officials, team personnel and game administration officials should wash and sanitize their hands as often as possible
- Always maintain social distancing of 6 feet while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible.
- Cloth face coverings may be worn by all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Gloves are permissible for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Try and limit the number of non-essential personnel who are on the field level throughout the contest.
- Dressing facilities for game officials and teams should be large enough for them to use social-distancing protocols and should be properly cleaned and sanitized prior to their arrival.

## Playoffs Modifications/Considerations

All bracketed sports will have a maximum of four (4) rounds

- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Football

Some qualifiers sports will have a reduction in participants

- Cross-country
- Competitive Cheer

Note: The sports of Swim and Golf will not have a reduction in participants

In sports where region play has traditionally determined qualifiers and seeding, each region will determine the qualifiers and seeding for teams in its region.

**All coaches and administrators are required to complete the free NFHS online course “COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators,”** before the first contest (preferably as soon as possible. The link to access the course is here: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/covid-19-for-coaches-and-administrators>.