



# **Southern Lehigh School District**

## **Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan**

**Updated, August 2020**

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## **Introduction**

The goal of the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan is to provide recommendations for the resocialization of sport with regard to practice and competition, keeping in mind the health and safety of our secondary school athletes, coaches, district staff, parents/guardians, and overall Southern Lehigh School District community.

## **Benefits of Sport**

Participation in 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 the Southern Lehigh School District student-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 Sport**

Participation in sports involves unavoidable exposure to an inherent risk of physical 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.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has presented local and national athletic programs with a myriad of distinct challenges. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages and has been proven to be a highly contagious infection that primarily affects the upper respiratory system. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests that there are steps that institutions can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and the community.

The Southern Lehigh School District will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from federal, state, and local health and safety authorities including [the Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), the [Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\)](#), as well as the [National Federation of State High School Associations \(NFHS\)](#) and the [Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association \(PIAA\)](#). As more public health information becomes available, the SLSD will work with local health and safety agencies and the PIAA to release further guidance which could impact the fall, winter, and/or spring seasons. These recommendations will be adjusted as new information becomes available in order to ensure for a decreased risk of exposure for our staff, students, and the community. In addition to the guidance and recommendations present in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan, the SLSD Athletic Department will follow the information outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan. The recommendations discussed throughout this plan are meant as general guidelines that reflect current federal, state, and local health and safety guidelines and recommendations. Additionally, the Southern Lehigh School District may place stricter criteria than what is listed in this document pending health and safety guidance

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## General Information

- All Southern Lehigh School District students and staff will be required to complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) as a critical component of the SLSD Health and Safety Plan. SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening process prior to the starting of practice or a competition. This additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics. Fundamental health screening criteria are as follows:
  - If a SLSD student-athlete or staff member has a temperature of 100.0 or higher or an individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 they will immediately be isolated and will be sent home. All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** stay home and not attend athletic practice if they have a temperature of 100.0 or higher or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
  - All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
  - Additional health and safety guidelines are outlined within this plan if student-athletes or staff begin to demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19.
- The SLSD encourages all student-athletes to regularly and thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - The SLSD Athletic Department will emphasize to all participants the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after competitions.
- The SLSD will follow the School Board approved cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection plan established in the District Health and Safety Plan to ensure that the athletic facilities have been properly sanitized, that hand sanitizer is available, and reserve disposable face coverings are available for practices and competitions should they be needed.
- The SLSD will ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls will occur in a manner that follows health and safety recommendations.
- The SLSD will follow appropriate social distancing guidelines of at least 6 feet at all times, including during the National Anthem and while student-athletes and coaches are on the sidelines. Student athletes should refrain from hugging, high fiving, shaking hands, or fist bumping for support/encouragement.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will extend sideline areas for outdoor sports to ensure appropriate social distancing of at least 6 ft. is achievable. All indoor sports may need to use additional locations within facilities including bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure appropriate social distancing of at least 6 ft..
- Per the [Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Universal Face Covering Order](#) July 1, 2020), all Southern Lehigh School District student-athletes are required to wear a face covering (face shields or masks).
  - Everyone must wear a face covering (face shields or masks). Coaches, athletes and spectators (if permitted) must wear face coverings (face shields or masks) at all times in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the [Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Universal Face Covering Order](#) unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet.
  - SLSD student-athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in

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workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but student-athletes **MUST** wear face coverings when on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. and anytime 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.

- There are no color restrictions on face coverings; however face coverings must adhere to Southern Lehigh School District Code of Conduct requirements and Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.
- The SLSD Athletic Department has an established hydration plan within the Return to Competition Athletic Health and Safety Plan. Within that plan is an ability to provide water to student-athletes and coaches in a safe manner in the event of an emergency. The SLSD Athletic Department will coordinate with visiting teams to ensure that they have safe access to water for their participants during competition.
- If a positive COVID-19 case is determined, the SLSD Athletic Department will follow the Board Approved Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan, the Pennsylvania Department of Health Guidelines, CDC, and local health guidance in determining the plan of action.

## STUDENT-ATHLETES

- SLSD Athletic Teams should create a plan that meets the equipment needs for each sport that each student-athlete is responsible for their own athletic supplies and equipment, when feasible.
- Student-athletes should wear their own sport appropriate workout clothing and all student-athletes are NOT permitted to share clothing. Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned following every workout, practice, or competition.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that hand sanitizer is available at all practices and contests.
- All SLSD student-athletes will communicate with their coaches immediately when they are not feeling well or are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19. SLSD Coaches will **IMMEDIATELY** contact the Athletic Director or the Athletic Trainer to notify him of any situation where a student-athlete or staff member is demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19.
- Student-athletes should keep their mouth guards in their mouth for the duration of all workouts, practices, and competitions. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected. (Football **MUST** have their mouth guards attached to their helmets)
- The PIAA encourages that all student-athletes are encouraged to develop healthy habits including, but not limited to, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and proper hydration.
  - Healthy eating and attention to hydration is especially important for student-athletes to enhance training capacity and reduce the risk of illness and injury.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** bring their own water or sports drink to all team activities (practice, workout, competition); Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that all student-athletes drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
  - SLSD athletic teams will have access to bottled water for those who run out of water or do not have access to water. Each student-athlete will be **REQUIRED** to bring at least 64 oz (half

gallon) of water to all practices and games. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will provide **EMERGENCY** refill stations at each practice and game facility. The refill station can **ONLY** be accessed by a coach or athletic trainer.

- Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource: [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff should refrain from congregations in groups.
  - Southern Lehigh School District HS and MS football (contact sports) will be permitted to use locker room facilities to change in/out of equipment while adhering to restrictions on indoor capacities (no more than 25 people), socially distanced at 6 ft. apart, wearing appropriate face coverings.
- No student-athletes are permitted in training areas without the presence of an Athletic Trainer.
- No whirlpool or hot/cold tubs should be used for the duration of the pandemic.
  - The St. Luke's Athletic Training Staff would make an exception for use in accordance with the SLSD Emergency Action Plan related to heat illness. Student-athletes are encouraged to shower as quickly as possible at the conclusion of a workout, practice, and competition.
- The Southern Lehigh School District **WILL NOT** provide shower facilities for the duration of the pandemic.
- Student-athletes who cannot follow these guidelines will be prevented from participating.

## COACHES

- All SLSD coaches must complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to attending athletic practice, workouts, or competition on a daily basis. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- All SLSD coaching staff must follow the guidelines present in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan. Coaches must communicate these guidelines in a clear manner to student-athletes during practices, workouts, and competition.
- When feasible, all SLSD staff should consider conducting workouts and or practices in cohorts where the same group of student-athletes is always training and rotating together during the practice. The use of practice cohorts will ensure a more limited likelihood of potential exposure if a student-athlete or staff member develops symptoms COVID-19.
- SLSD coaching staff must develop a system to ensure accurate records of student-athletes and staff who attend each practice, workout, or competition in the event that contact tracing is needed following a COVID-19 exposure.
- When feasible, all SLSD coaching staff should limit the size of competition teams in order to ensure greater compliance with established social distancing guidelines while engaged in competition.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** bring their own water or sports drink to all team activities (practice, workout, competition); Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that all student-athletes drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
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- Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource: [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)

## PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- SLSD parents/Guardians must complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to any SLSD student-athletes attending school on a daily basis. All SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening prior to the start of practice or a competition. This additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics.
- SLSD student-athletes who are sick or showing symptoms of COVID-19 **MUST** stay home.
- If a parents/guardians has a concern that their student-athlete is immunocompromised or has any concern regarding their risk in terms of participation in sports and activities, they should consult their health care provider to independently assess the levels of risk of student-athletes who may be at a higher risk for severe illness as a result of individual participation on an athletic team.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** ensure that all personal items including water bottles are labeled.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** disinfect your student's personal equipment after each practice, workout, or competition. Additional information, [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#).
- Parents/guardians **MUST** ensure that all their student-athlete(s) are prepared with appropriate face coverings and reinforce that they must be properly worn at appropriate times.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** inform the head coach, the SLSD Athletic Department, the Athletic Trainer, or the school nurse if your student-athlete has been exposed to someone who is known to have COVID-19.

## WHEN TRAVELING TO A COMPETITION

- The SLSD Athletic Department will communicate with the host school prior to any competitions in an effort to discuss health and safety plans, local practices, and to ensure compliance.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that all teams follow all health and safety policies and guidelines that a host school has communicated and set in place for their facilities.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that all SLSD athletic teams bring their own medical supplies and emergency action plans.
- Modifications for transportation related to athletic events may be necessary and may include:
  - Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van to a maximum of two individuals per seat while leaving the front two rows empty per PA DOH Public Safety Guidelines.
  - Use of hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van.
  - Social distancing on a bus to the greatest extent feasible.
- Additional potential transportation modifications will be determined by the Southern Lehigh School District, the transportation company, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and state and local governments once transportation for events is permitted.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will follow the guidelines outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District

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Health and Safety Plan if a student-athlete or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while traveling to a competition.

### WHEN HOSTING A COMPETITION

- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that coaching staff members have an administrative contact (cell number) to complete necessary communications specific to all events. Communications should occur in a timely manner and not wait until the subsequent school day.
- PIAA Officials must complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to any SLSD athletic contest.
- Communicate ahead of time with the incoming interscholastic athletic team and officials about procedures, policies and guidelines. Examples to be covered include but not limited to:
  - Parking
  - Where to enter facility
  - What equipment should the visiting team bring
  - Water availability
  - Bench area seating (how many athletes can be accommodated while maintain 6 ft. social distancing)
  - Locker room availability and resources
  - Emergency action plans
  - How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange is preferred)
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that athletic facilities have been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will have hand sanitizer and reserve disposable face coverings available for competitions should they be needed.
- When feasible, sharing of athletic equipment should be minimized. Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) are to be cleaned after each individual's use during practice and competitions. See manufacturer guidelines for appropriate cleaning and sanitizing procedures.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will follow the guidelines outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan if a student-athlete or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while hosting a competition on the Southern Lehigh campuses.

### GATHERING LIMITATIONS

- At this time, **ONLY** student athletes, coaches, officials, and SLSD staff are permitted to attend athletic workouts, practices, and contests.
- In the [Preliminary School Sports Guidance](#) document which was released by Governor Wolf's Office on June 10th and updated on July 15th, any sports-related activities occurring in counties that are currently under the Pennsylvania Yellow or Green Phased Reopening Criteria must adhere to the gathering limitations set forth by the Governor's Plan for Phased Reopening.
  - Indoors - 25 (\*\*No interior space can exceed 50% occupancy levels if that number is less than 25 individuals.)
  - Outdoors - 250
  - At this time, the [Preliminary School Sports Guidance](#) specific to interscholastic athletics at the

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PK-12 level is limited to being attended by student athletes, coaches, officials, and staff only. No spectators are permitted to attend.

## SPECTATORS

- At this time, **ONLY** student athletes, coaches, officials, and SLSD staff are permitted to attend athletic workouts, practices, and contests. Spectators for K-12 interscholastic athletic events are **NOT** permitted at any SLSD events.
- The [Preliminary School Sports Guidance](#) document which was released by the Governor Wolf's Office states that, "The addition of visitors and spectators will be contingent upon future health conditions within the state and local communities." The PIAA and the Southern Lehigh School District anticipate that more information will be forthcoming from the Governor Wolf's Office, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Should spectators be permitted to attend contests, the PIAA and the Southern Lehigh School District anticipate that any attendance by spectators will be subject to the specific limitations that were also included in the [Preliminary School Sports Guidance](#):
  - All spectators **MUST** complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) prior to attending the athletic contest. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
  - Seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household. To assist with proper social distancing, areas should be clearly marked. Spectators must wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the [Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Universal Face Covering Order](#).
  - Spectators should not enter the field of play or bench areas.
  - As per the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan, all nonessential visitors and volunteers will be limited, when possible, including activities with external groups or organizations.

## MEDIA

- At this time, **ONLY** student athletes, coaches, officials, and SLSD staff are permitted to attend athletic workouts, practices, and contests. Media representatives for K-12 interscholastic athletic events are **NOT** permitted at any SLSD events.
- Should media members be permitted to attend a contest, they **MUST** complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) prior to covering the athletic contest.
- If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- The media must make contact with the SLSD Athletic Department prior to attending any athletic event to ensure that they are able to make appropriate arrangements for attendance.
  - Media availability or attendance is likely to be limited especially in the event that there are limits on capacity.
  - Media should be restricted to areas outside of the team areas and should not have access to

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student-athletes.

- Interview requests may be limited and should be accommodated either virtually or in person if social distancing protocols of 6 ft can be followed and all parties are wearing an appropriate face covering.
- Media are required to wear face covering in accordance with the Secretary of Health's order of July 1st 2020.
- Locker room access will be prohibited for the duration of the pandemic.
- Access to student-athletes will be limited on a case by case basis and, if it occurs, media must wear face coverings while in a building and maintain social distancing at 6ft in all locations.
- Press box availability may be limited for the duration of the pandemic.

## **GAME DAY WORKERS**

- The SLSD Athletic Department will coordinate with all individuals completing game day work responsibilities specific to the requirements outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan.
- All game day workers **MUST** complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to attending athletic practice, workouts, or competition on a daily basis. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- All Game Day Workers are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's order of July 1st, 2020](#).

## **Prior to Resuming Physical Activity**

- When feasible, the SLSD Athletic Department will make special considerations for student-athletes and staff at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- SLSD student-athletes and staff who should consider delaying their participation in sports and coaching 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 to independently assess the levels of risk of student-athletes who may be at a higher risk for severe illness as a result of individual participation on an athletic team.
- **Pre-Participation Physical Examination Considerations**
  - The associated requirement for individual student-athletes to complete a pre-participation physical examination is dependent on the requirements set forth by the PIAA.

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- The SLSD Athletic Department will notify district families if there is a deviation from the standard annual frequency requirement established by the PIAA prior to COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Requirement of Sick Athletes and Staff to Stay Home**

- The Southern Lehigh School District will utilize communication tools including Blackboard Connect, the SLSD Website, social media, and other communication methods to inform student-athletes, staff, and parents about COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures, and appropriate hygiene practices.
- The SLSD will provide information about local COVID-19 resources including testing sites.
- The SLSD will establish procedures to ensure athletes and staff that become sick onsite or arrive onsite sick are sent home as soon as possible.
  - The SLSD Athletic Department will require an individual who becomes sick during athletics or demonstrates a history of exposure (defined as close contact to a confirmed case of COVID) to wear a face covering.
  - Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure) to report immediately to the designated isolation area.
    - The Boys and Girls locker rooms at SLHS and SLMS will be used as an isolation room for student-athletes and staff who do not pass the athletics daily screening process or become ill during a practice or competition. In the event of a student-athlete, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.
  - Students or staff with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions on returning to school or athletics.
  - When feasible, close off the area used by a person testing positive for COVID-19 for at least 24 hours and do not use it before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Notify staff and families confirmed cases while maintaining confidentiality.

### **Health Screening Procedure**

- All Southern Lehigh School District students and staff will be required to complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) as a critical component of the SLSD Health and Safety Plan. SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening process prior to the starting of practice or a competition. This additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics. Fundamental health screening criteria are as follows:
  - If a SLSD student-athlete or staff member has a temperature of 100.0 or higher or an individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 they will immediately be isolated and will be sent home. All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** stay home and not attend athletic practice if they have a temperature of 100.0 or higher or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
  - All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
  - Additional health and safety guidelines are outlined within this plan if student-athletes or staff begin to demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19.
- Educate all stakeholders (students, staff, parents/guardians) on how to screen for signs and symptoms

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of COVID-19 at home before sending children to school and/or reporting to work.

- A mask must be worn by the person conducting the screening. Gloves shall be utilized by the health care provider if any direct contact with a person screened is required.
- Athletes are to wear a mask or face covering until activity begins. Staff is recommended to wear a mask or face covering at all times. Athletic staff, such as but not limited to an administrator, athletic trainer, coach, and/or nurse should conduct the screening.
  - Temperature check with a thermometer is required
  - Temperature threshold is greater than or equal to 100°F
  - If temperature is above 100°F threshold, two additional measures should be taken to verify initial measure
  - Forehead thermometer/non-contact thermometer is preferable.
  - Temperature check should take place in a temperature controlled environment whenever possible.
  - Person screened should be well rested, i.e. no recent physical activity
  - All health screenings will be performed by athletic staff and athletic trainers
- The Symptoms of COVID-19 may include (but are not limited to):
  - Fever or chills (100.0 or higher)
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Muscle aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Diarrhea
- If a student/staff is sick or thinks that he/she is sick with the COVID-19 virus, the student/staff **MUST** stay home and contact their physician or an appropriate healthcare professional for further directions.
- All members of the SLSD Athletic Staff will perform a [Daily Symptom Screener](#) on himself or herself prior to leaving for work, and will stay home if ill.
- Signage will be posted throughout the school district to ensure that students and staff are consistently made aware of the signs and symptoms of Covid-19.
- Student athletes and athletic staff will go to the athletic trainers immediately if feeling ill.
- PA DOH will notify the school entity immediately upon learning that a person with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 was present at the school or a school event while infectious.
- PA DOH staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation, and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

### **Isolating or Quarantining a Student-Athlete or Staff if They Become Sick or Demonstrate a History of Exposure**

- The Athletic Trainers will evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms of COVID-19 during practice, workouts, or competitions.
- Require an individual who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure (defined as close contact to a confirmed case of COVID) to wear a face covering.

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- Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure) to report immediately to the designated isolation area.
  - The Boys and Girls locker rooms at SLHS and SLMS will be used as an isolation room for student-athletes and staff who do not pass the athletics daily screening process or become ill during a practice or competition. In the event of a student-athlete, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.
- Parents/guardians should have a plan in place for picking up a student-athlete when directed by the Athletic Trainer(s).
- If a parent or caregiver is not present, a predetermined staff member should escort them to a designated isolation room (HS and MS Boys and Girls Locker Rooms) 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 individuals 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.
- Positively screened student-athletes or staff should seek medical attention for further evaluation by a primary care professional while following the guidelines outlined in the [Exclusion From and Returning to School](#).
- When feasible, close off the area used by a person testing positive for COVID-19 for at least 24 hours and do not use it before cleaning and disinfecting.
- SLSD Athletic Staff will notify staff and families of confirmed cases while maintaining confidentiality.

### Returning isolated or quarantined staff, students, or school visitors to school

- A student-athlete who was diagnosed with COVID-19 may return when **ALL FOUR** of the following criteria are met:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
  - At least 48 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever reducing medications
  - Symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath ...) have significantly improved.
  - Written documentation of clearance from a health care provider (MD, DO, NP, PA)
    - Written documentation is required for **ALL** student-athletes who are returning to play from an injury or sickness that requires medical care.
- Further information about the conditions outlined in the [Southern Lehigh School District Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements](#) can be found using that link.
- A student-athlete or staff member who is quarantined following close contact with a case may not return to school until cleared to do so by the PA DOH or the appropriate County or Municipal Health Department. A negative test obtained prior to the end of quarantine does **not** clear an individual for return. The entire quarantine period must be completed.

### Notifying staff, families, and the public of school closures and within-school-year changes in safety protocols

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- Post the approved Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan and the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan on the SLSD website.
- Provide regular multi-modal updates on the SLSD website, social media accounts, and through the Blackboard Connect System.
- The District will be prepared to refer symptomatic individuals or those who have a known exposure to a confirmed case to an appropriate health care provider or testing site.
- The District will coordinate with local health officials on the strategies for COVID-19 cases as the district would do with similar conditions, such as measles, pertussis, and other infectious diseases.
- Local DOH staff or CMHD (County Municipal Health Department) will notify the school district and PDE immediately upon learning of a positive case of COVID who was present at the school or school event while infectious. Public health staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

### **Other monitoring and screening practices**

- A “close contact” is defined as either being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for 15 or more minutes (close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or share a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case), or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (i.e. being coughed on).
- The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications from the PA DOH or CMHD to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the PA DOH and CMHD staff.
- The District will contact local PA DOH staff before acting in response to a known or suspected communicable disease. A representative is on-call 24 hours a day.
- The local PA DOH staff will provide guidance to schools regarding disease information, appropriate letters and communications, identification of high risk individuals, appropriate action and treatment, and ongoing support and assistance.
- If the person is present on school property when PA DOH staff notify the school of the positive case information, the person should immediately, but discreetly, be taken to the COVID-19 related isolation space for pick up (if a student) or asked to return home (if staff).
- SLSD will contact the PA DOH for further guidance if a parent/guardian notifies the school of potential exposure by a student, staff member, or essential visitor.
- As per the PA DOH, the entire school building does not have to be evacuated.
- The PA DOH staff will assist the K-12 school entity with contact tracing and may request information regarding potential close contacts from school district staff.
- Decisions to track additional health information will be made at the local school district level.

### **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)

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- Hand hygiene is essential. Schools 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.
- Regular use of hand sanitizer will be encouraged prior to, during, and after sessions.
- 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. Encourage the minimization of offensive and defensive huddles and encourage the coaching staff to utilize other methods of communication with players (such as signals, cards, signs) to minimize grouping.

### **When Physical Activity Resumes**

- Pre-K to 12 (PK-12) school sports under the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association (PISAA) are permitted to resume in counties designated in the Yellow and Green phases, in alignment with the PDE Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools and the CDC for Youth Sports.
- The decision to resume sports-related activities, including conditioning, practices, and games, is the discretion of a school's entity's governing body. Each school entity must develop and adopt an Athletics Health and Safety Plan aligning to the PDE Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools and Pennsylvania's Guidance for Sports prior to conducting sports-related activities with students. The plan must include the provisions of this guidance, be approved by the local governing body of the school entity, and be posted on the school entity's publicly available website. The plan does not need to be submitted to the DOH or PDE for approval.
- 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 PK-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.

### **Physical Activity and Usage of Athletic Equipment**

- No sharing of athletic towels, clothing or shoes
- Athletic equipment should not be shared between student-athletes in an effort to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets through contact. Items that may need to be shared in congregate settings ( such as bats, batting helmets, & catcher's gear ) should be disinfected in accordance with CDC, PA DOH, and manufacturing guidelines after each use.
  - Other equipment such as football helmets, lacrosse pads, ear guards & eyewear should only be used by one individual and not shared
- Limit maximum lifts and use power cages for squats/bench presses.

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- Spotters for weight lifts are to be stationed at each end of the bar when use of the weight room is permitted.
- Regular use of hand sanitizer will be encouraged prior to, during, and after sessions.

### Individualized Hydration

- All SLSD student-athletes and staff must bring their own water or drinks to all team activities; Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - SLSD athletic teams will have access to bottled water for those who run out of water or do not have access to water. Each student-athlete will be **REQUIRED** to bring at least 64 oz (half gallon) of water to all practices and games. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will provide **EMERGENCY** refill stations at each practice and game facility. The refill station can **ONLY** be accessed by a coach or athletic trainer.
- Ice towels may be used for single use only and **MUST** be either discarded or washed properly following use.
- Team water coolers and disposable cups **WILL NOT** be permitted.
- Hydration stations and or fixed water fountains **WILL NOT** be permitted.
- All personal water bottles should be properly identified with an individual's name.

### Sanitizing Facilities

- The Southern Lehigh School District will complete cleaning, disinfecting, and ventilation practices outlined in the [Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan](#).
- SLSD Support Services will implement adequate cleaning and disinfecting schedules for all athletic facilities. Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting will be performed in accordance with current CDC and PA DOH guidelines to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases.
- Use EPA approved (List N) products for use against SARS-CoV-2 in accordance with labeling requirements, be for commercial use in schools without harmful components of fragrances, and applicable staff will be trained on how to appropriately use these products.
- Equipment and tables with holes that expose foam should be covered.
- Ensure that all hard surfaces, high-touch, and high traffic areas are included in frequent cleaning and disinfecting schedules.
- SLSD custodial staff will continue everyday responsibilities and tasks specific to athletic cleaning and disinfecting.
- Any visibly dirty surfaces will be washed with soap/water or an approved cleaner before disinfecting.
- Disinfecting fogger or misting spray applicator will be used in all areas at least once a week.
- Southern Lehigh School District weight room facilities will be marked with tape to position anyone using the facilities present in that room to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- Signage will be placed in the weight room and athletic hallways promoting wellness and hygiene
- SLSD weight room equipment should be disinfected before and after each individual's use.

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- Signage will be placed in the weight room and athletic hallways promoting wellness and appropriate hygiene
- Containers of “Gym Wipes” are located in the weight room for student-athletes, coaches, and staff to use.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room when use is permitted to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces. Equipment should be wiped down after each individual’s use.

### **Stakeholder Education**

- The Southern Lehigh School District will provide education through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, and phone calls specific to COVID-19 to Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes.
- COVID-19 signs and symptoms
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- Avoid any unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, or hugs.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- Students are to come dressed for activity
- No indoor sessions permitted without prior and direct permission from the Athletic Director. Once permitted, limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted. Facility showers may not be used.
- Student-athletes must remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.

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## Important Reads and Source Documents:

- Pennsylvania's Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes, and the Public Published June 10, 2020.
- Pennsylvania Department of Education, Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools. Published June 3, 2020, version 1. PDE Preliminary Guidance for Pre-K to 12 Schools
- CDC - Youth Sports Considerations Last reviewed June 8, 2020.
- CDC - Schools Considerations Last reviewed June 1, 2020.
- Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities, National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), accessed May 15, 2020
- PIAA Press Release Published June 10, 2020.
- Sports Event Planning Considerations Post-COVID-19, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee April 28, 2020 – v0.11
- CDC Cleaning and Disinfection Tool. CDC.gov. CDC - Cleaning and Disinfection Decision Tool. Last reviewed May 7, 2020.
- CDC Handwashing Guidelines. CDC.gov. CDC - Handwashing Last reviewed April 2, 2020.
- Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 (Interim Guidance). CDC.gov. CDC - Return to Work Criteria. Last reviewed April 30, 2020.
- State of Missouri Novel Coronavirus Analytics. Health.mo.gov. State of Missouri - Coronavirus Analytics. Published May 5, 2020.
- The resurgence of sport in the wake of COVID-19: cardiac considerations in competitive athletes. BMJ.com. BMJ Blog - Cardiac Considerations in the Wake of COVID-19 Published April 24, 2020.
- A Game Plan for the Resumption of Sport and Exercise After Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection. JAMA Cardiol. JAMA Cardiology - Game Plan for Resumption of Sports Published online May 13, 2020. doi:10.1001/jamacardio.2020.2136
- Korey Stringer Institute's Return to Sports and Exercise during the Covid-19 Pandemic: Guidance for Collegiate and High School Athletics Programs. Published June 6, 2020. KSI Return to Sport and Exercise Guidance
- COVID-19: NSCA Guidance on Safe Return to Training For Athletes, National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) COVID-19 Return to Training Taskforce. Published May 2020.
- CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods: Safe Return to Training Following Inactivity; Caterisano, A, Decker, D, Snyder, B, Feigenbaum, M, Glass, R, House, P, Sharp, C, Waller, M, and Witherspoon, Z. 2019. CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods. Strength and Conditioning Journal, 41(3), 1-23.
- National Athletic Trainers Association: Covid-19 Return-to-Sport Considerations for Secondary School Athletic Trainers. Published May 2020.

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## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Cross Country



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Cross Country

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

The NFHS has determined that cross country is a lower risk sport (sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors).

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### **CROSS COUNTRY RULE 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.
- Cross country meets should consider using staggered, wave or interval starts.
- Possible Rule Modifications:
  - 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.
  - If no FAT timing system is available, consider alternative means of finish place and time to reduce congestion at finish line. If sticks are used for determining place, disposable sticks are recommended by race.
  - Consider using image-based equipment at finish line to assist with picking place and reducing congestion.

### **PRE AND POST RACE CEREMONY:**

- Pre and Post Race Ceremony: Establish cross country specific social distancing meet protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the race.
- 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.

### **CONSIDERATION FOR CROSS COUNTRY OFFICIALS:**

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Follow social distancing guidelines:
  - Pre and Post Meet conferences.
  - Clerking at the start line.
  - Tabulations and posting of results.
- Consider using electronic whistle.

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Field Hockey



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Field Hockey **STAFF LIAISON:** Melissa Mertz

The NFHS has determined that field hockey is a moderate risk sport (sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants).

\*Field Hockey could potentially be considered "Lower Risk" with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants.

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### **FIELD HOCKEY RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **PREGAME CONFERENCE:**
  - 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 6 feet during the conference.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- **TEAM BENCHES:**
  - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing.
  - Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- **BALL INDIVIDUALS:**
  - Encourage social distancing of 6 feet. When possible, additional game balls may be placed around the outside of the field to limit contact with the ball. Ball holders are encouraged to use their feet or wear gloves to return balls to designated areas or field players.
- **SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:**
  - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.
- **OFFICIALS' TABLE:**
  - Limited to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.
  - 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.

- **OTHER:**
  - Players choosing to use a penalty corner mask should not share their mask with other individuals.

**PREGAME, QUARTER, HALF-TIME AND POST GAME CEREMONY:**

- No pregame introduction line. Send players to their field positions for introductions.
- Water bottles should not be allowed on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface.
- Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, quarter, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post game shaking hands.

**FIELD HOCKEY RULES INTERPRETATIONS:**

- ***EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:***
  - Face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.
  - Players' goggles are optional equipment.
  
- ***LEGAL UNIFORM:***
  - Long sleeves are permitted.
  - Long pants are permitted.
  - Undergarments are permitted but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team.
  
- ***OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:***
  - Long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permitted.
  - Electronic whistles are permitted.
  - Face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.

**CONSIDERATION FOR FIELD HOCKEY OFFICIALS:**

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes (ex. penalties or carding).

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Football



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Football

**STAFF LIAISON:** Bob Lombardi

The NFHS has determined that football is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

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### **FOOTBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **TEAM BOX:**
  - The team box may be extended on both sides of the field to the 10-yard lines (for players only) in order for more social-distancing space for the teams.
  - Teams should reduce game rosters to allow for more social distancing on sidelines.
  - Where feasible, extend the 2-yard sideline belt to 5 yards.
  - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while in the team box.
  - Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.
- **BALL:**
  - The ball should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the contest as recommended by the ball manufacturer.
  - The ball holders should maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times during the contest.
  - Clean the ball on a ball rotation to the sidelines. Have ball individuals wear gloves and be supervised and directed by an adult staff member or member of coaching staff.
- **FACE MASKS:**
  - Cloth face coverings are permitted.
  - 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) are not allowed during the contest.
  - Face shields – It is recommended that teams promote their use by players. Face shields may be worn for play as well as on the sidelines. Helmet manufacturer Shutt has developed a face shield and another is manufacturer by Oakley that is being used by the NFL. It will fit the Riddell helmet.
- **TOOTH AND MOUTH PROTECTORS:**
  - Student-Athletes are recommended to keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of

the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before doing so.

- **GLOVES:**
  - Gloves are permitted but still must comply with Rule 1-5-2b by meeting either the NOCSAE Standard or the SFIA Specification.
  
- **CHARGED TIME-OUTS AND AUTHORIZED CONFERENCES:**
  - A single charged time-out may be extended to a maximum of two minutes in length specifically to allow more time for re-hydration.
  - For social-distancing purposes the authorized conference for the charged time-out should take place between the 9-yard marks and not at the sideline. (It would be permissible for more than one coach to be involved in this conference and for technology to be used.)
  - Each game official and player should have their own beverage container.
  - Encourage the minimization of offensive and defensive huddles and encourage coaching staffs to utilize other methods of communication with players (such as signals, cards, signs) to minimize grouping.
  
- **INTERMISSION BETWEEN PERIODS AND AFTER SCORING:**
  - 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.

#### **FOOTBALL GAME OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **GAME OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:**
  - Electronic whistles are permitted (supplies are limited).
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
  - Cloth face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.
  - Do not share uniforms, towels and other apparel and equipment.
  
- **PREGAME CONFERENCE, COIN TOSS AND OVERTIME PROCEDURES:**
  - For the coin toss, limit attendees to the referee, and one designated representative from each team.
  - Coin toss should take place in the center of the field with designated individuals maintaining social distancing of 6 feet.
  - No handshakes prior to and following the coin toss.
  - 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, and individuals handling the balls during the game and team personnel.
    - Line-to-gain crew must wear face coverings.
  - For the overtime procedure, please use the same procedure as used at the start of the contest for the coin toss.

**PREGAME, QUARTER, HALF-TIME AND POST GAME CEREMONY:**

- Water bottles are discouraged on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface.
- Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, quarter, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post game of shaking hands.

**FINAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FOOTBALL:**

- 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.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times while on the sidelines and on the field of play when possible.
- Everyone should have their own beverage container that is not shared.
- Cloth face coverings are permitted for all coaches and team staff and for all game administration officials.
- Gloves are permitted 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.
- If available, 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.

**CONSIDERATION FOR FOOTBALL OFFICIALS:**

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes.
- The football should be changed or sterilized by sidelined personnel frequently.
- Officials will have to limit the handling of other officials' equipment (ex. assist in picking up flags or bean bags).

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Golf



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)  
USGA COVID-19 Reasource Center

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**SPORT:** Golf

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

The NFHS has determined that golf is a lower risk sport (sports that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors).

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### COMPETITION CONSIDERATIONS:

- Schools may adhere to local course competition rules in relation to COVID-19 accommodations.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times. No hugging, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
- Normal golf groups are permitted.
- Limit use of golf shop and retail operations to maintain social distancing guidelines. If social distancing cannot be maintained, golf shop access should be prohibited prior to the competition.
- To limit congestion, limiting field size and starting from one tee only is recommended. Also, consider the expanded spacing of starting times (12 minutes apart for groups of 3 and 15 minutes apart for groups of 4)
- Tees, pencils and ball-markers and sharpies will not be available. Players must bring their own equipment and food/beverage as needed.
- Electronic scoring is permitted for Regular Season competition. The exchange of scorecards by players is discouraged and verbal confirmation of scores may be accepted.
- To limit congestion, it is recommended that a window of time be established for players to access practice facilities before their round based on their starting times.
- It is recommended that practice facilities not be used after the round and that all players be encouraged to depart immediately when finished.



## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Soccer



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Soccer

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

The NFHS has determined that soccer is a moderate risk sport (sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants).

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### **SOCCKER RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- ***PREGAME CONFERENCE:***
  - Limit attendees to head referee or center referee, 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 6 feet.
  - No handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***BALL INDIVIDUALS:***
  - Encourage social distancing of 6 feet. When possible, additional game balls may be placed around the outside of the field to limit contact with the ball. Ball holders are encouraged to use their feet or wear gloves to return balls to designated areas or field players.
- ***TEAM BENCHES:***
  - Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
  - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing.
- ***SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:***
  - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the substitute, officials and/or teammate(s) by encouraging substitutions to occur closer to the center line.
- ***OFFICIALS TABLE:***
  - Limit to essential personnel who includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

### **PREGAME, HALF-TIME AND POST MATCH CEREMONY:**

- No pregame world cup introduction line pre-half team huddles on the field. Send players to their field positions with bench personnel lined up on the touch line (6 feet apart) for introductions.

- Water bottles are discouraged on the field of play and should be used off the playing surface. Goalkeepers are encouraged keep a water bottle behind the net for the purpose of wetting their gloves rather than spitting.
- Coaches are encouraged to hold pre-game, half-time and post-game meetings socially distant and off the playing surface, where possible.
- No post game shaking hands.

**SOCCER RULES INTERPRETATIONS:**

- ***EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:***
  - Cloth face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.
- ***LEGAL UNIFORM:***
  - Long sleeves are permitted.
  - Long pants are permitted.
  - Under garments are permitted but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color for team.
- ***OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:***
  - Long-sleeved shirt/jackets are permitted.
  - Electronic whistles are permitted.
  - Face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.

**CONSIDERATION FOR SOCCER OFFICIALS:**

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials may use electronic whistles during contests but must be aware of increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
- Social distancing guidelines should be employed during the contest for officials when interacting with coaches and student-athletes (ex. penalties or carding).

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Tennis



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)  
USTA COVID 19: Playing Tennis Safely

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**SPORT:** Tennis

**STAFF LIAISON:** Jen Grassel

*The NFHS has determined that Tennis is moderate risk (sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants.)*

*\*Tennis could potentially be considered "Lower Risk" with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants.*

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### **TENNIS MATCH CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **PRE-MATCH CONFERENCE:**
  - Limit attendees to any pre-match conference between athletes and coaches. Make sure to maintain social distancing of 6 ft.
- **TEAM AREAS:**
  - Make sure team personnel observe social distancing of 6 ft.
- **DURING MATCHES:**
  - Between points, use your racquet or foot to advance the tennis balls back to your opponent. *Also, avoid using your hands when returning balls to another court.*
  - Maintain physical distancing if changing ends of the court.
  - Avoid touching your face after handling a ball, racquet or other equipment.
    - *Wash your hands promptly if you have touched your eyes, nose or mouth.*
  - When playing doubles, coordinate with your partner to maintain physical distancing, where possible.
  - Wash your hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer before, during (between sets), and after play.
  - Clean and wipe down your equipment, including racquets and water bottles. *Use new balls and a new grip, if possible.*
  - Use only your own towels and water bottles. Avoid sharing food and touching common surfaces such as court gates, fences, benches, etc.

○ **TENNIS BALLS:**

*Although unlikely, it's possible that a tennis ball can transmit the COVID-19 virus, as virtually any hard surface can transmit the disease. Here is an extra precaution you can take to keep safe when playing tennis, if feasible:*

- Use four or six tennis balls.
- Open two cans of tennis balls that do not share the same number on the ball.
- Take one set of numbered balls, and have your playing partner take a set of balls from the other can. (Have one player mark their balls for easier identification.)
- Proceed with play, making sure to pick up your set of numbered balls only. Should a ball with the other number wind up on your side of the court, do not touch the ball with your hands. Use your racquet head or feet to advance the ball to the other side of the court.

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Volleyball



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

**SPORT:** Volleyball

**STAFF LIAISON:** Jen Grassel

*The NFHS has determined that volleyball is a moderate risk sport (sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants).*

*\*Volleyball could potentially be considered "Lower Risk" with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants.)*

### **VOLLEYBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **PRE-MATCH CONFERENCE:**
  - Limit attendees to the first referee, head coach, and one captain from each team.
  - 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 should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
  - Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters should be submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.
- **TEAM BENCHES**
  - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches between sets.
    - Home team will select their bench prior to the match and remain on the same side for the duration of the match.
  - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing outside of playable areas.
- **DECIDING SET PROCEDURES:**
  - 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 6 feet. A coin toss, called by the home team, will decide serve/receive.
  - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches before a deciding set.
- **SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:**
  - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.
- **OFFICIALS' TABLE:**
  - Limit to essential personnel (which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer), with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team

personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

**VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **PRE AND POST MATCH CEREMONY**
  - Establish volleyball specific social distancing match protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.

**VOLLEYBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS:**

- **EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:**
  - Cloth face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.
- **LEGAL UNIFORM**
  - Long sleeves are permitted.
  - Long pants are permitted.
  - Under garments are permitted, but must be unadorned and of a single, solid color similar in color to the predominant color of the uniform top or bottom.
- **OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:**
  - By state association adoption, long-sleeved, all-white collared polo shirt/sweater is permitted. (Electronic whistles are permitted.)
  - Face coverings are permitted.
  - Gloves are permitted.

**CONSIDERATION FOR VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS:**

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Officials are permitted to use electronic whistles but must be aware of signaling difficulties when using both hands and the increased chance of inadvertent whistles.
- Use of a three ball rotation system should be considered for matches. This would allow for periodic sanitation of the balls.