



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association

## **Return to Competition: Individual Sport Considerations**

*Referencing Orders and Guidelines from the Following Resources:*

**National Federation of State High School Associations**

**Pennsylvania Department of Education**

**Pennsylvania Department of Health**

**Sports Medicine Advisory Committee**



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## Return to Competition: General Considerations for All Sports



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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The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), drawing on the expertise of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and PIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), offers this document as guidance on how PIAA member schools may consider approaching the “Return to Competition” for high school athletics in Pennsylvania. While we all remained concerned about the dangers of COVID-19, PIAA believes it is essential to the physical and mental well-being of high school students across the Commonwealth that efforts be made to return to physical activity and athletic competition where that can occur in a reasonably safe environment.

With that goal in mind, PIAA offers these considerations for the 2020-2021 school year on “Return to Competition” (at this time the PIAA individual sport considerations are just for fall sports). The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure of COVID-19 to a degree that competition can occur. As we continue to gain more information about the virus and receive continued feedback from the Governor’s Office, Department of Health, and Department of Education, these documents may be adjusted or even suspended to adapt to an ever-changing environment.

PIAA is committed to maximizing the athletic opportunities for student-athletes across the entire Commonwealth and will remain flexible in considering that certain sports may be impacted differently and post-season play may need to be modified.

Based on currently known information, the PIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee believes that STRICT ADHERENCE by schools and teams to their school-adopted plans and the Governor’s School Sports Guidance should provide a reasonably safe environment for student-athletes to participate in interscholastic athletics as currently scheduled. Participation in High School sports is voluntary for both the individuals and the schools.

## Protect Yourself, Protect Others, Protect the Season

### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS (APPLY TO ALL SPORTS):**

- Individuals (student-athletes, coaches, officials, and other athletic personnel) should complete a personal health assessment daily.
  - If your temperature is 100.4 or higher, individual is showing symptoms or is sick, stay home.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
  - Adhere to school adopted plans if you begin to show symptoms.
- Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - Make sure to emphasize to all participants the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after competitions.
- Schools are recommended to ensure that your facilities have been properly sanitized and have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available for practices and contests.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls. (Please use recommendations by the ball manufacturer )
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times, where feasible. No hugging, high fives, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
  - Social distancing should be maintained during the National Anthem and on sidelines.
  - Outdoor sports may need to extend bench areas to permit social distancing. Indoor sports may need to use bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure social distancing.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health's order on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, unless they meet the exceptions under Section 3 of this order.
  - Everyone must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Order. Coaches, athletes and spectators (if permitted) must wear face coverings, unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet.
  - Athletes are not required to wear face coverings while actively engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but 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 the Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.
- **Have a hydration plan and ability to provide water to student-athletes and coaches in a safe manner. Coordinate with visiting Teams to ensure that they have safe access to water for their participants.**
- If a positive COVID-19 case is determined, follow their school safety plans, Department of Health, CDC, and local health guidelines in determining the plan of action.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES:**

- Teams should consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing. Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.

- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Student-Athletes should 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.
- 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.
- Bring and use your own water bottle.
  - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that you drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
  - Student-athletes should follow established guidelines for hydration.
  - Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource:
    - [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- Student-athletes are encouraged to shower as quickly as possible after practice and games.

#### **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.
- Coaches should limit game day squad sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches are reminded to wear proper coaching attire per weather conditions.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

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

- Parents/Guardians should monitor their children of any symptoms prior to any sporting activities. Children who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home. (If there is doubt stay home).
- Parents/Guardians and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student’s personal equipment after each game or practice.
- Be prepared with face coverings for members of your family if permitted to attend events.
- Inform coaches if your student-athlete has been exposed to someone who is known to have COVID-19.

#### **CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TRAVELING TO A COMPETITION:**

- Make sure to communicate with the host school prior to the competition to discuss plans.
- Follow all policies and guidelines the host school has communicated.

- Make sure your team is bringing its own medical supplies and emergency action plans.
- Have a plan in place if someone begins to show symptoms.

### **CONSIDERATIONS WHEN HOSTING A COMPETITION:**

- Make sure to have an administrative contact (cell number and email address) for all events.
- Communicate ahead of time with the incoming schools and officials about procedures, policies and guidelines.
  - Examples to be covered include but not limited to, the following:
    - Parking;
    - Where to enter facility;
    - What equipment should the visiting team bring;
    - Water availability;
    - Bench area seating (how many players can be accommodated to maintain social distancing);
    - Locker room availability and resources;
    - Emergency action plans;
    - How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange of information is preferred).
- Make sure facilities have been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived.
  - Have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls.
- Have a plan in place if someone begins to show symptoms.
- If your school will require anyone to execute a liability waiver before entering the premises, that requirement and document should be provided to all persons in advance so that it may be reviewed.

### **GATHERING LIMITATIONS:**

- In the [All Sports Guidance](#) document which was released by the Governor’s Office on June 10<sup>th</sup> and most recently updated on September 6<sup>th</sup>. All sports-related gatherings must conform with the [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the Department of Health](#) on October 6, 2020 (effective 10/9/2020). Under the new amendment, venues hosting events or gatherings must determine their established occupancy limit as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend the event or gathering.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPECTATORS:**

- Spectators are permitted.
- All sports-related gatherings must conform with the [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the Department of Health](#) on October 6, 2020 (effective 10/9/2020). Under the new amendment, venues hosting events or gatherings must determine their established occupancy limit as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend the event or gathering. Please see the [All Sports Guidance](#) from the Governor’s Office.

- 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.
- Everyone age 2 or older must wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times, unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet, or fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Secretary of Health’s Order on Universal Face Coverings.
- Caregivers or spectators should not enter the field of play or bench areas.
- Non-essential visitors, spectators, and volunteers should be limited when possible, including activities with external groups or organizations. Parents should refrain from attending practices, or volunteering to assist with coaching.
- Caregivers and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Caregivers should monitor their children for symptoms prior to any sporting event. Children and athletes who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home.

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR MEDIA:**

- Media are permitted but are counted toward the 25 and 250 gathering limitations.
- The media must make contact with the school prior to attending to make appropriate arrangement for attendance.
- Media members should complete a personal health assessment daily.
  - If temperature is 100.4 or higher, individual is showing symptoms or is sick, stay home.
- Media are required to wear face covering in accordance with the Secretary of Health’s order of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, unless they meet exceptions under Section 3 of that order.
- Media availability may be limited especially if there are limits on capacity.
- Media should be restricted to areas outside of the team areas.
- Interview request may be limited and should be accommodated only if social distancing protocols can be followed.
- Locker room access and access to student-athletes should be monitored or limited on a case by case basis and, if it occurs, media must wear face coverings while in a building and maintain social distancing in all locations.
- Press box availability may be limited.

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR GAME DAY WORKERS:**

- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health’s order of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, unless they meet the exceptions under Section 3 of this order.

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Officials



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
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Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)  
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Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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### OFFICIALS

**STAFF LIAISON:** Pat Gebhart

*These considerations are meant to cover officials in all sports while keeping in mind that protocols may be different in each sport and adjustments may need to be made.*

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### **OFFICIALS' GUIDELINES WHEN RETURNING TO OFFICIATE:**

**Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring obligation remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.**

### **CONTACT THE HOST SCHOOL:**

- Contact should be made with school athletic administration leading up to the contest about (1) school expectations, (2) to determine where you should enter the host school's property and (3) to obtain other information that you or the school may want to communicate to each other prior to your arrival.
  - Officiating crews should designate one crew member to contact the host school and provide information to other members of the crew.
- Request separate and secured parking areas away from other participants.
- Request hand sanitizer be available at scorer's table, if applicable, and use it between periods and during time outs. (Officials are encouraged to bring their own in the event none is available.)
- Conversations should occur with the host school administration regarding the size of changing areas or locker rooms to ensure social distancing can occur.
- When possible officials should come to contests fully dressed in uniform.

### **GENERAL OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:**

- Be prepared to have your temperature taken and a health screening conducted upon arrival at school campus.
- You may also be asked to sign a liability waiver by the school. While not a PIAA requirement, it may be a host site requirement. You should inquire the host school before arriving whether that requirement exists and, if so, request an opportunity to review the document in advance. If you are unwilling to sign it, you should decline the engagement. You should not wait until arriving on site to ask to see the waiver or to inform the school that you will not sign it.
- Upon conclusion of the contest, leave the contest area and do not interact with others.
- Officials must pay special attention to playing rules that require distances between players during play.



- Reminders should be issued for situations that involve hygiene (spitting, etc.).
- Maintain distance from players if an altercation occurs and minimize the times you are within 6 feet of others.
- Be aware of the location of medical personnel while you are on school property.
- Limit the exchanging of documents between yourself and others.
- Once the contest begins, avoid conversations within 6 feet with coaches.
- Wash your hands frequently. When in doubt about wearing a mask – put it on.
- Officials’ Uniforms and Equipment.
  - Electronic whistles are permissible.
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
    - Be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
  - Face coverings by participants are permitted.
  - Gloves may be worn by contestants.
  - Bring your own towels and hygiene materials. Do not share them with others.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s order on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, unless they meet the exceptions under Section 3 of this order.
  - Officials are not required to wear face coverings while officiating a contest, but they are permitted. You should seriously consider wearing a face covering when officiating. Coverings must be worn when entering the host site and while inspecting the field/court prior to the contest unless social distancing can be maintained while doing so.
  - There are no color restrictions on face coverings; however face coverings must adhere to the Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.

**GAME DAY:**

- Complete a personal health assessment on the day of your contest. If you feel sick – STAY HOME. Notify the contracted schools, your partner(s) and the assignor to let them know.
- Notify site administrator immediately if your temperature is 100.4 or above.
- “Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as people 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions. Officials fitting this description may wish to seek medical advice prior to returning to officiating.
- Communicate with school athletic administrator frequently during the days leading up to your contest about school expectations.
- Upon arrival at the host site and throughout the contest, wash and sanitize your hands frequently.
- When traveling to contests, considerations should be given to limiting carpooling or traveling with other individuals.
- Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel and equipment.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times, including while in the locker room and/or on the court/field.
- Bring your own water bottle or rehydration beverages.
- Use a mask when communicating verbally within 6 feet of others.

- In an effort to maintain social distancing, officiating positions may need to be changed in a manner that are not necessarily in conformance with standard officiating mechanics.
- If an official is sent home or unable to officiate for any reason, follow the PIAA policy on “Absence or Withdrawal of Official at Contest”, in the Policies and Procedures section of the PIAA Handbook.

#### **PREGAME CONFERENCE:**

- Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team, while maintaining social distance.
- Pre-contest official crew meetings should be held outside when possible and where social distancing is more easily accomplished.
- Coin Toss – should involve only the Head Referee (wearing a face covering) and 1 captain and head coach from each team.
- Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the court/field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- No handshakes are permitted.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities.
- Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Encourage social distancing of 6 feet between substitutes and teammate(s).

#### **OFFICIALS’ TABLE:**

- Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer, with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials’ table.

#### **PREGAME AND POSTGAME CEREMONY:**

- No shaking hands during introductions.
- Traditional pre-game introductions should be altered to ensure social distancing occurs.
- No postgame shaking hands.

#### **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Training
  - Review current and past year rule and case books.
  - Attend online and in-person meetings to review the rules for the coming year.
  - Start physical training using online video or complete skills alone. If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you should be cleared by your medical provider prior to initiating an exercise program.
- Positive COVID-19 Test
  - You should notify the school(s) administration where you officiated and partners of those contests.

**UNIFORM OF CONTESTANTS:**

- Long sleeves are permissible.
- Long pants are permissible.
- Undergarments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color.

## 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



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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)

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**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.)*

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### **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.



## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Water Polo



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:** Water Polo

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

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### **WATER POLO RULE CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Team Benches (2-2-1, 2-2-2)** - Teams should be seated on opposite sides of the pool and away from the officials table. To promote social distancing, substitute players may be in the water behind the goal line outside the re-entry area, at least 2 meters from the goal, provided this is possible on both ends of the field of play. Head coaches shall sit or stand behind the goal line in the team area when the team is on defense and shall maintain 6 feet of distance from players and officials.
- **Pre-Game Captains Meeting (2-5-2)** - Decrease number of participants or hold one conference with officials and coaches and one meeting with officials and captains. The referee can use P.A. system or starting-system microphone to allow participants to hear but keep them properly separated.
- **Game Officials (3-1-1, 3-1-2, 3-14, 3-17, 3-18, 3-20, 3-21)** - The officials include two referees, a scorekeeper, exclusion secretary, game timer and shot clock timer. The use of goal judges is optional. The score table of the home team must accommodate a minimum of one observer from the visiting team and up to two additional observers as space permits. Require a distance of 6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table. Officials should wear cloth facial coverings.
  - The re-entry areas should be set up on the opposite side from the score table with the goal judges situated on the same side as the score table, each on the goal line at the end of the field of play. If facility constraints make this difficult, configure the deck set-up in a way that promotes 6 feet of social distancing.
  - The game timer can also act as shot clock timer, consolidating working positions at the table.
  - The duties of the exclusion secretary can be combined with the scorekeeper to consolidate working positions at the table.
- **Referees Control Over Conduct (3-6-2)** - After the pre-game captains meeting, the head coach and captain(s) are the only individuals authorized to address the referees. This may occur during time-outs, during the interval between periods, with the permission of the referee or, in the case of the head coach, when filing a protest. Alternative methods of communications should be established to encourage 6 feet of social distancing.

- **Referees – Checking and Signing Scoresheet (3-10)**  
The referees must verify the score and sign the scoresheet and inform coaches of reportable fouls after the conclusion of the game. Alternative methods of communications should be established to encourage 6 feet of social distancing.
- **Submission of Entries to Referee (3-20-2a)** - Alternative forms of roster submission can be designed to reduce face-to-face interaction when submitting a proper roster, where/how/to whom entries are submitted, and a reduction or elimination of certain penalties currently attached to improper entries. For example, teams may provide a pre-printed roster for all levels prior to the game so that only the game secretary is handling the game book and writing utensils.
- **Start of the Game – Coin Toss (4-15-1)** - If there are not pre-assigned starting ends of the pool for a game, the referee, in the presence of the captains, shall perform the coin toss at least 10 minutes before the start of the game, with the winner to have the choice of ends. Require a distance of 6 feet between individuals.
- **General Considerations**
  - **Locker Rooms** - Require athletes to arrive at the venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for participants to change that allows for 6 feet of social distancing.
  - **Score Table** - Recommend hand sanitizer at the desk.