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FLORIDA RECREATION
& PARK ASSOCIATION

GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING FLORIDA'S YOUTH AND ADULT SPORTS

Disclaimer: Facts and circumstances around COVID-19 are constantly changing. Users of these suggested guidelines must continually update themselves on the newest information available through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other sports organizations as you return to practice and eventually play. Careful evaluation of your capacity to maintain the safest environment for those participating in sports programs must be made and your decisions should be based on those circumstances.

The below information represents suggested minimum guidelines to follow. Parents of participants in youth sports programs and adults participating in adult sports should be made aware of what guidelines are being implemented so that they can make an informed decision, understanding the risk and potential of exposure, about their child's or their own participation.

GENERAL STATEMENT

As the public moves through the COVID 19 era, and as information is rapidly changing, individuals managing sports facilities and those utilizing sports facilities must be encouraged to take personal responsibility for assuring they are protecting themselves as well as complying with regulations and practices that have been known to curtail the spread of COVID 19. Local regulations should also be closely followed as they are made after consideration is given to local capacity and local spread statistics.

We have provided these guidelines to provoke thought around considerations you should make for your specific city/county environment. You are encouraged to take these suggested guidelines and tailor them to your specific situation and sports facilities.

Leagues and Officials will need to consider rules/regulations/recommendations provided by their sanctioning bodies that may be stricter than those below, and include those in their plans for practice/play and competition.

PRE-EVENT PLANNING

- ✓ All athletes, coaches, spectators, vendors, and officials must adhere to the guidelines from the CDC, federal, state, and/or local authorities.
- ✓ Sport organizers and the city/county should work together to provide updates and guidance to those attending the event, prior to and during events.
- ✓ The elderly and anyone with serious underlying medical conditions which place them in the vulnerable groups for COVID-19 should not attend any sports activities.
- ✓ Participants and parents of participants should continuously monitor their own health while participating and/or attending events.
- ✓ Any participant or household member of a participant, who is not feeling well, has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 within 14 days of practice/play, or has traveled to/from any foreign country/domestic area identified by CDC or local health officials as a hot spot within the past 14 days, should not attend any sporting event.
- ✓ Any participant who has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 within 14 days of practice/play should immediately inform the sports coach who will provide instruction for attendance at any event.
- ✓ Athletes, coaches, spectators, and officials are highly recommended to bring personal hand sanitizer, masks, chairs, and antibacterial wipes for personal use.
- ✓ Consideration should be given to requiring leagues or sanctioning bodies to submit plans for play as part of their reservation/permitting process.
- ✓ Event organizers may need to make modifications to rules, regulations, policies, and procedures to ensure a safe and successful event.
- ✓ Spectators for events may be limited and even excluded if an event organizer deems it necessary.
- ✓ Changes should be made to allow for cashless systems, online platforms, and limited touchpoints.
- ✓ Consideration may also be given to having participants sign waivers of participation during this time, or add language regarding COVID-19 to existing waivers.

COMMUNICATIONS

- ✓ Until COVID-19 is no longer identified as a public health issue, at the beginning of each season, each participant or parent of a participant should be provided the following questions and be required to notify the coach if they have an affirmative response to any question, or if their response changes at any time during the season. If the response to any of these questions is yes, the player should not be allowed to play until they have received affirmation from a doctor or public health official that it is safe to do so.
 - Have you/your child taken any fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Advil for fever in the last 12 hours? NOTE: Exception from above condition – if player returns and can respond NO to this question, they can return to play.
 - Have you/your child tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the last 14 days?
 - Have you/your child experienced a loss of taste or smell sensation within the last 14 days?
 - Have you/your child experienced persistent pain or pressure in your chest over the last 14 days?
 - Have you/your child been sick with a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or respiratory infection in the past 14 days?
 - Have you/your child had close contact with someone who has OR is under investigation for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- ✓ It is suggested that communication be made available (printed, on-line, and verbal) as widely as possible.
- ✓ Signage should be placed around the facility in any area where it is important for the public to understand requirements. Because protocols are changing so quickly, printed signage that can be easily changed out as protocols change should be utilized.

FACILITIES

- ✓ Facilities should be evaluated to determine which can provide a healthy environment for participants and spectators.
- ✓ Pre-Event Consideration should be given to the following:
 - Entry points – is there the ability to control entry points into the areas of play as well as spectator seating? These are areas where you may want to consider checking temperatures as well as handing out regulations/policies to spectators. Individuals conducting temperature checks should minimally be wearing a procedure mask.
 - Do entry points allow for staggering of arrival/departures to prevent overloading facility areas with people and thus not allowing for 6 feet physical distancing guidelines to be met? During tournament play, spectators watching other teams may need to be limited if the appropriate area for physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - Is it possible for players to follow 6 feet physical distancing guidelines at all times – during play and while in team seating areas. This may require alternative team seating areas where players can congregate while maintaining physical distancing.
 - Are there areas remaining for spectators that allow for 6 feet physical distancing? The use of bleachers is not recommended at this time, until adequate information is provided by CDC or local health officials that indicate it is safe to relax the physical distancing requirements.
 - Is there the availability of adequate handwashing, alcohol-based sanitizer around the complex at all times? If the facility cannot provide this, teams should be required to provide this.
 - Is there adequate staffing at the facility to increase the level of cleaning of common touchpoints throughout the event?
 - Does the facility provide concession areas where cashless systems can be required? Any workers in concession areas should have face masks on at all times.
- ✓ Clear and obvious markings of 6 feet physical distancing should be made at the facility – this includes lines for concession areas, restrooms, spectator areas, etc.
- ✓ Signage should be placed everywhere possible to inform players/officials/spectators of rules/regulations for pre-game, play time, and post-game, as well as capacity numbers and reminders of physical distancing.

CONCESSIONS

- ✓ Concession areas will mandate the number of people able to man while maintaining 6 feet physical distancing.
- ✓ Staff/volunteers working in the concession area should be temperature checked upon arrival. Individuals conducting temperature checks should minimally be wearing a procedure mask.
- ✓ Masks/facial coverings must be worn at all times.
- ✓ Hand sanitizer should be available on counter areas for the use of public while in concession area.
- ✓ Additional concessions staff should be on hand to continually sanitize and clean.
- ✓ No self-serve options should be made available.
- ✓ No items that require spitting of seeds/discarding of shells should be sold.
- ✓ If handwashing equipment is not readily available in the concession area, consider pre-packaged items only.
- ✓ Pre-packaged condiments only.
- ✓ Cashless payment methods should be considered if not required.

- ✓ If cashless payments cannot be eliminated, gloves should be worn by those handling cash, and those individuals should not handle any service of food/beverage
- ✓ Ground markings should be made so patrons adhere to the 6 feet physical distancing requirements while waiting in lines.
- ✓ Eating at counters or around direct area of the concessions should not be allowed.

TEAM SNACKS

- ✓ If snacks are provided by the team for participants, snacks should be pre-packaged from the manufacturer and not homemade.
- ✓ Snacks should not be shared.

RESTROOMS

- ✓ If restrooms are open during play, they should be continually cleaned as prescribed in CDC guidelines.
- ✓ All touchpoint areas should be cleaned and sanitized on a schedule recommended by CDC or local health guidelines.

FOUNTAINS

- ✓ At this time, it is not recommended that shared water sources be available. It is recommended that players/spectators/officials maintain their own individually labeled hydration sources.

SPECTATORS

- ✓ Facility managers should set the maximum attendance by spectators as each facility mandates. It is not recommended at this point that mass gatherings of spectators be allowed. It may be necessary to limit the number of spectators per player for the time being, until larger gatherings are okayed by the CDC or local health officials.
- ✓ If space does not exist for 6 feet physical distancing of groups of 10 or less from different households, then spectators should not be allowed at the area of play.
- ✓ It is not recommended that bleachers be accessible to spectators at this time.
- ✓ Family seating areas may be considered to allow parents of young children to not be separated from each other while watching the game.
- ✓ In lieu of bleacher seating, spectators should be required to bring their own seating for games, and that should be placed only in areas marked by facility managers for spectators.
- ✓ Spectators are required to wear masks/facial coverings when they are unable to maintain 6 feet physical distancing from members not from their own household. This may include seating areas as well as when using restrooms, or visiting concession areas.
- ✓ If stadiums/arenas have fixed seating, seats should be marked to maintain 6 feet physical distancing.

SCHEDULING

- ✓ Games and practices should be scheduled with a minimum 30-minute buffer (or more depending on facility) between to prevent overlap of participants/spectators.

- ✓ Start time should be staggered where no more than half the complex/facility is changing over at any given time.
- ✓ Games may end in draw if time for play has expired, and it is necessary to vacate the facility to facilitate arrival for additional teams.

PLAYER ARRIVAL AND CHECK-IN

- ✓ It is suggested that each player/coach/official be checked for temperature as they arrive and before any physical exertion/activity occurs. Individuals conducting temperature checks should minimally be wearing a procedure mask.
- ✓ It is suggested that each team keep a record for each individual player and coach to record temperature checks/dates. Follow CDC guidelines for monitoring of temperatures.
- ✓ Teams should arrive as close to game time as possible, and spectators should arrive at game time to avoid large gatherings where physical distancing may not be available.

DURING PLAY

- ✓ Athletes/Officials/Coaches should be required to wear masks/facial coverings at all times when 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- ✓ Officials/Coaches may need to adjust their placement throughout play times to provide for appropriate physical distancing.
- ✓ It is not necessary for players to wear masks/facial coverings during play when 6 feet physical distancing can be maintained. Upon entry into team seating areas, masks/facial coverings should be worn. Huddles, and close conversations between coaches/players/officials, should be kept to a minimum. When they are necessary, upon approach to team huddles, conversations between coach/player, etc., masks/facial coverings should be worn.
- ✓ Team seating areas – if 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained within established team seating areas, alternative/expanded team seating areas should be provided. Consider use of bleachers not being used for spectators, or tented areas as an extension of existing team seating areas, or use of folding chairs along the fence line as long as fencing is high enough to prevent balls from crossing.
- ✓ It is recommended that each player have their personal equipment to prevent cross-touching between players. If this cannot be accomplished, an adult should be required to sanitize equipment between player uses. While sanitizing, said adult should have appropriate masks/facial coverings and gloves to prevent prolonged exposure to sanitizing products and cross contamination of equipment once sanitized.
- ✓ No spitting or chewing of anything that requires individuals to spit out seeds, etc.
- ✓ Shared equipment used during play should be sanitized between plays (this could be as simple as wiping with an acceptable wipe or solution). An adult should be required to sanitize equipment between player uses. While sanitizing, said adult should have appropriate masks/facial coverings and gloves to prevent prolonged exposure to sanitizing products and cross contamination of equipment once sanitized.
- ✓ Between innings, intermissions or time out periods, teams may wish to consider a more thorough sanitizing of equipment.
- ✓ During time outs, balls can be sanitized by an adult with appropriate masking and gloves.
- ✓ Players/Coaches/Officials should have their personal, individually labeled hydration as the use of drinking fountains may be prohibited or unavailable.

- ✓ Players should be instructed on proper ways to wash hands with soap and water; use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water is not available; covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; and avoiding touching mouth/nose/eye areas.
- ✓ There should be no high fiving, fist pumps, chest bumps, etc.
- ✓ Ample time between games must be provided to allow for cleaning of areas. Benches and bleachers will be disinfected between each game and practices, or whenever the participant group changes.
- ✓ If stadium seating is utilized and cannot be sanitized between games, attendees should be asked to bring their own wipes to utilize.
- ✓ Team seating areas should be thoroughly cleaned between each game and when each participant group changes.

POST GAME

- ✓ Teams should be required to clean all trash from designated team areas prior to leaving the facility. If a team location has not been cleaned, facility contacts should be notified immediately before entry is made into those areas.
- ✓ Teams should leave the facility when their game is complete and they have cleaned their areas to avoid large gatherings, and allow the next teams to occupy team areas.
- ✓ Any post game meetings should adhere to the 6 feet physical distancing recommendation.
- ✓ Because of the potential of large groups gathering, it is recommended that no trophy/award ceremonies occur at the conclusion of an event/game. Any awards should be distributed by the coach to his/her teams.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.playpanamacitybeach.com/coronavirus-update/> - great example of tournament host communication from City of Panama City Beach who was one of the first to offer competitive play on their fields.

http://www.sportsuac.com/uploads/1/1/1/7/111717823/social_distancing_ballfield_guidelines_050320.pdf - diagrams for fields to allow for physical distancing, entry points, etc.

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/> - documents for restarting league play

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html> - CDC Considerations for Youth Sports

SPECIAL THANKS

These guidelines were developed by a workgroup with representatives from the following agencies:

- City of Clearwater Parks and Recreation
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- Miami Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
- Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation