

Pocono Mountain School District Athletic Health & Safety Plan

This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The PMSD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. The PMSD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for **ALL** Senior High Athletics

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID-19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check. Temperatures at 100.4 or higher will be sent home.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible. (Face coverings are recommended to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.) Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols
6. Anyone who is sick must stay home
7. Plan in place if a student or employee gets sick
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures
9. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal screening to a temperature check.(See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. A clearance may be required to return to play.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (25 Yellow - 250 Green) or 50% max capacity of individuals per group including coaches per practice area.
- Controlled non-contact practices only, modified game rules
- Social Distancing should be applied during practices and in locker rooms, and gathering areas.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after an individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity:

- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar
- **All coaches & athletes shall remain together in their assigned conditioning group / pod.**

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared. **ALL WATER BOTTLES SHOULD BE LABELED WITH ATHLETES NAME.**
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) should not be utilized.

Universal Face Coverings: (updated JULY 7, 2020)

- Coaches, athletes and spectators 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.

POSITIVE CASES AND COACHES, STAFF, OR ATHLETES SHOWING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix). Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills (100.4 or High)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, **STAY AT HOME**. It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach)
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and /or monitored for symptoms
- If a Positive case of COVID-19 is Diagnosed Contact Tracing will be implemented with the assistance of local health professionals and the CDC/PA DOH. See Information in Appendix.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event
- If student, parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
- Ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction

Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?

- Student or staff should have medical clearance from their physician or appropriate healthcare professional, determined to be non-contagious, Fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), no vomiting or diarrhea.

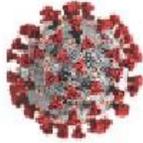
EDUCATION

Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):

- 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.)
- No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- students should come dressed for activity
- Limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted
Facility showers cannot be used
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
- No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer
- All Coaches shall complete PMSD required Safe Schools training on Covid-19

APPENDIX

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

- You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person.
- You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.
- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

RESOURCES:

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,
“Schools Decision Tree”

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“What is Contact Tracing”

“Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

**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**

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>