

# Neptune Little League

## Return to play guidelines during the Coronavirus Pandemic

The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for guidelines published by the New Jersey Department of Health and CDC but rather in addition to those guidelines. All content, including text, link and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around COVID-19 are changing constantly and, as such, Neptune Little League makes no representation and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about your return to practice and competition.

### Practice and Competition:

All players, coaches, staff, spectators and other attendees must adhere to specifically required guidelines from the New Jersey Department of Health ([NJ DOH Guidance for Sports Activities](#)). Furthermore, because Neptune Little League teams utilize fields operated by other organizations and townships, additional requirements may be in place based on guidelines set forth by the hosting township, county or private facility. Any additional guidelines should be provided to the visiting team by the hosting team prior to their arrival with adequate notice.

### Guidelines Prior to Practice or Competition:

- Screen athletes, coaches, staff and any other participants with a temperature check and health questionnaire prior to arrival at the field. Anybody showing symptoms of COVID-19 shall not be permitted to participate ([CDC symptom checklist](#)).
- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household are not feeling well or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
- Do not come to practice or competition if you are not comfortable with the guidelines set forth by the NJ DOH, CDC, Neptune Little League or the facility at which you are practicing/competing.
- Adults 65 years and older or people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions are strongly encouraged not to attend practice or competition at this time.

Additional information and guidance can be found at:

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

<https://www.littleleague.org/>

**Healthy Practices:**

- Players and coaches should take measures to prevent all but the essential contact necessary to play the game. This should include refraining from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc. Little League International suggests lining up outside the dugout and tipping caps to the opposing team as a sign of good sportsmanship after a game.
- Players and families should vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their game to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next game, ideally within 20 minutes.

**Drinks and Snacks:**

- Sunflower seeds, gum, etc., should not be allowed in dugouts or on the playing field.
- All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting at all times, including in dugout areas and on the playing field.
- Athletes, managers/coaches, and umpires should bring their own personal drinks to all team activities. Drinks should be labeled with the person's name.
- Individuals should take their own drink containers home each night for cleaning and sanitation or use single-use bottles.
- There should be no use of shared or team beverages.
- Teams should not share any snacks or food.
- Players should bring individual, pre-packaged food, if needed.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- All managers/coaches, volunteers, umpires, etc., should wear PPE whenever applicable and possible, such as cloth face coverings.
- Players should wear cloth face coverings when in close contact areas and in places where recommended social distancing is challenging or not feasible, such as in dugouts.
- Players, especially at younger divisions, are not required to wear a cloth face covering while on the field during game play.
- Players will be permitted to wear a cloth face covering on the field during game play, if physically able to do so, based on any directive of a medical provider or individual determination of the player/parent/guardian/caretaker.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

**Dugouts:**

- Managers/coaches and players should be assigned spots in the dugout or on the bleachers so that they are at least six feet apart where possible and must be placed behind a fence.
- Players are to stay at their assigned spots when on the bench or while waiting their turn to bat.
- Players and managers/coaches should wear a cloth face covering while in the dugout.

**Player Equipment:**

- No personal player bat bags/equipment bags should be allowed in the dugout.
- Player equipment should be spaced accordingly outside the dugout to prevent direct contact.
- Players should have their own individual batter's helmet, glove, bat, and catcher's equipment.
- Measures should be enacted to avoid, or minimize, equipment sharing when feasible.
- When it is necessary to share critical or limited equipment, all surfaces of each piece of shared equipment must be cleaned first and then disinfected with an EPA approved disinfectant against COVID-19 and allowed sufficient time to dry before used by a new player. Increased attention should be paid to detailed cleaning of all equipment directly contacting the head and face (catcher's mask, helmets).
- Player's equipment (e.g. bags, helmets, bats, gloves, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected after each use by a parent/guardian/caretaker, where applicable.
- Players should not share towels, clothing, or other items that they may use to wipe their face or hands

**Baseballs and Softballs:**

- Each team should use their own balls when in the field during warmups and competition, to limit individual contact.
- Umpires should limit their contact with the ball, and catchers should retrieve passed balls where possible.
- Balls used in infield/outfield warm-up should be isolated from a shared ball container.
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players, coaches, and umpires. No spectators should retrieve the ball.

**Pre-Game Plate Meetings:**

- If possible, plate meetings should be eliminated.
- Social distancing of six feet between individuals should be implemented during all pre-game plate meetings between teams and umpires.
- Plate meetings should only consist of one manager or coach from each team, and game umpires.
- All participants should wear a cloth face covering.
- No players should ever be a part of plate meetings.

**Limit League/Game Volunteers:**

- For each game, there should only be the required team managers/coaches, and umpires in attendance.
- Practices should be limited to the managers/coaches and players.
- Scorekeeping should be done by team coaches or team parent/guardian. Proper social distancing should be practiced.

**Field Preparation and Maintenance:**

- Fields should be raked, and lined prior to teams and spectators arriving at the complex and after they depart. Volunteers already participating in the game (managers/coaches, umpires, and league administrator) perform these tasks to limit individuals at the site.
- Shared field preparation equipment will be sprayed or wiped with cleaner and disinfectant before and after each use.

**Umpire Placement:**

- Umpires are permitted to be placed behind the pitcher's mound/circle to call balls and strikes. Umpires are encouraged to keep a safe distance from players as much as possible.

**Concession / Restrooms:**

- Concession Stand will remain closed for the remainder of 2020.
- Access to public restrooms will be limited to players and coaches with a "one-in-one-out" policy, where only one individual is permitted within the restroom at one time, should be implemented to ensure adequate distancing in the confined restroom space.
- Prior to and after any league activity, restrooms should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Restrooms should be disinfected on a regular basis.