

St. Louis Park Traveling Baseball Return to Play Protocol

The protocol outlined in this document aligns with the guidelines outlined by the CDC, the Minnesota Department of Health (MNDH), and Governor Walz's task force. It also aligns to the protocol developed by the Metro Baseball League in collaboration with the Gopher State Baseball League, the Minnesota Softball League, and David J. Jewison, MD CAQ, Sports Medicine Physician, University of Minnesota & M Health Fairview. St Louis Park Traveling Baseball may revise this protocol to adjust to evolving guidelines put forward by these bodies.

It is important to note that it will not be possible for us to mandate or ensure enforcement and 100% compliance of each of these elements. Participating in any team sport or activity presents risk. This includes the risk of potentially contracting illness (including, but not limited to, COVID-19 related illness). By participating, you are knowingly and voluntarily assuming these risks.

The St Louis Park Traveling Baseball Protocol focuses on three major components:

1. Limiting Large Groups and Maintaining Physical Distances
2. Universal Precautions and Personal Protective Equipment
3. Monitoring and Escalation management

Below are the protocols that all coaches, players, umpires, parents, and fans should follow.

Limiting Large Groups and Maintaining Physical Distances

- Where possible limit practice to one team per field and split the team into two pods of 6-8 people (players and coaches), keep the pods separated, use separate dugout areas, and maintain consistency in each pod to minimize multiple contacts. Based on the current guidelines there can be no more than three pods of 10 on the full sized field and two pods of 10 on the mid-sized fields.
- Design drills and activities to eliminate physical contact where possible, use small groups, and whenever possible enable participants to maintain the 6ft recommended distance.
- With the exception of tagging a runner out, avoid intentional physical contact between players, coaches, and or fans.
- Only allow players and coaches on the field of play and in the expanded dugout area.
- Expand dugouts behind home plate and along the foul lines if needed to enable recommended distances between players and coaches.
- Eliminate mound visits, on field player huddles, and team meetings.
- Use non-verbal signs or verbal direction while maintaining recommended distances.
- Keep coach and umpire meetings brief while maintaining recommended distances.
- Coaches should carry all team game equipment.
- Coaches should set up and break down the field before and after practices and games.
- Separate teams or pods should enter and exit the field through separate instances where possible. Wait until the previous team has fully vacated before congregating near the field.
- Enter and egress slowly to maintain recommended physical distances.
- Parents should remain in their car if they stay at practice
- When games resume follow the protocol for the number of fans allowed and all distancing rules.
- Parents and/or guardians should wait in their car or away from the field for their player to emerge.

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Universal Precautions and Personal Protective Equipment

- All players, coaches, umpires and fans in attendance will be encouraged but not required to wear a mask that covers their mouth and nose.
- Every player, coach, umpire, and fan should carry a bottle of hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.
- To the best of the association's ability, it will provide each field and/or team with soap and sanitizer to use on equipment and for players and coaches who are in need.
- All players, coaches, and umpires should wash (with soap) and or sanitize hands prior to practice or the game, throughout the game as needed, and post the practice or game.
- Only balls, team bats, and catcher's gear is shared. Sanitize catcher gear between player uses. The majority of players have their own bats and catchers gear if they play catcher consistently.
- Gum, sunflower seeds, peanuts, or chewing tobacco is not allowed on or near the field of play. This will prevent spitting and the need to clean up items that have been in someone's mouth.
- Food is not allowed in the dugout or on the field of play.
- No concessions or sales of food, drink or goods will occur at the fields.
- All players, coaches and fans should clean and remove all trash and items from their designated area.
- During games, coaches should refrain from touching balls in play. The defensive team will provide the balls while they are in the field reducing cross contact between teams.
- Umpires should refrain from touching baseballs.

Monitoring and escalation management

Parents, players, coaches, and umpires should closely monitor themselves and family members for symptoms or known direct (one to one) exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19. All parties involved should notify by phone the Head Coach and Erik Hokenson immediately of any COVID-19 diagnosis, major symptoms, or direct one to one exposure. The St Louis Park Traveling Baseball Board will then follow CDC and MNDH guidelines on how to handle potential exposures while maintaining the health privacy of all involved. Since these guidelines are fluid, we will not state them here. Below are several elements of the current guideline we do not expect to change.

- Any player, coach, umpire or fan diagnosed with COVID-19 is not allowed on or near the field of play until they are provided with a note from a medical professional indicating they no longer require isolation.
- Any player, coach, umpire or fan with a fever or clear respiratory symptoms is not allowed on or near the field of play.
- Any player, coach, umpire or fan ordered to isolate or quarantine due to potential exposure or symptoms is not allowed on the field of play until that recommended period has passed.

It is important to note that St Louis Park Traveling Baseball cannot require a person to be tested for COVID-19 or guarantee that, despite its best efforts to adhere to evolving guidelines from the CDC, MNDH and Governor of the State of Minnesota, there will no health risk associated with participation in a team sport. Accordingly, parents/guardians of all players wishing to participate in the 2020 season will be required, as a condition of participation, to provide a signed Waiver and Consent.