

May 11, 2020

Joint Statement

A collaboration of Statewide, Community-Based baseball and Softball Organizations



As we navigate through this fluid situation, we would like to thank you for your patience and understanding as our organizations continue to work toward **safely** returning youth baseball and softball athletes to ball fields in 2020.

As many of you know, the Gopher State Baseball League, the Metro Baseball League, and Minnesota Softball have come together to create a unified voice for youth baseball and softball in Minnesota. One of our main priorities through this collaboration was to author the “Safe Play: Back to the Diamond” guidelines. These guidelines and supporting documents were constructed to inform policymakers how we can safely start playing baseball and softball in Minnesota by creating a template for our leagues and others across the state. The “Safe Play: Back to the Diamond” guidelines have been received and discussed by Governor Walz's task force.

As a result of our joint efforts, we were invited to assist Governor Walz and his cabinet in creating mechanisms for restarting youth sports. Following a virtual round table led by a State Commissioner, a community statewide youth sports commission was established to safely bring amateur athletes back to the playing field. The goal of this statewide commission is to formulate a catalog of sport return-to-play plans and create a universal playbook, or template, that all Minnesota youth sports would follow. This will be a way to get youth sports restarted in a safe and healthy manner, as soon as possible.

This community statewide youth sports commission will be formulating and finalizing these goals in an expedient manner, given our timeline. The initial plan is to finalize the guidelines/template by Friday, May 15 in hopes the Governor's office will, in the next few weeks, come back with a decision on returning to practice/play.

This is optimistic news for everyone, as we all yearn to safely return of youth baseball and softball as soon as possible. These developments, however, will likely change our tentative timetable that we announced on May 4. At this point in time, we will not be proposing any new timelines until more has transpired.

As always, thank you for your time and dedication to youth baseball and softball!

