



2020-2021

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Mask/Face Covering Guidance and Information

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) requires that all persons in youth and adult sports wear a mask/face covering at all times, including practices, games or competitions. The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) has developed this guidance document for member schools, administrators, coaches and students to clarify information regarding the mask/face covering requirements. All other individuals who attend a practice or competition are required to follow [*Executive Order 20 – 81*](#) regarding the requirements for wearing of mask/face coverings.

Mask/Face Covering Mandate and Sport-Specific Exceptions

Per the requirements of the MDH's [COVID-19 Sports Practice Guidance for Youth and Adults](#) mask/face coverings must be **worn by all persons at all times within MSHSL athletics**, including practices and contests with only the following exceptions:

- **Outdoor Individual Sports-** Individual sports performed outside that allow people to maintain distance from others are lower risk for transmission of SARS-CoV-2. A cloth face covering is not necessary for athletes participating in outdoor individual sports if the athletes can stay at least 6 feet away from others.
- **Wrestling** - During wrestling contact with another individual, a mask or face covering may become a choking or visual hazard and it may be removed. However, student athletes must wear a mask/face covering at all other times.
- **Gymnastics and Cheerleading** - During activities such as tumbling, stunting, flying, or using a certain apparatus where a mask or face covering may become a choking or visual hazard, or could get caught on other participants or objects, the mask or face covering may be removed. However, student athletes must wear a mask/face covering at all other times.
- **Swimming and Diving** - During swimming and diving activities when the student athlete is in the pool or on the diving board the mask or face covering may be removed. However, student athletes must wear a mask/face covering at all other times.
- **Nordic and Alpine Skiing -**
 - Participants in Alpine and Nordic skiing must be masked at all times outdoors whenever 6 feet of social distancing cannot be observed.
 - In Alpine Skiing, participants should be masked at all times until they are in the starting gate. At this point, they are able to remove their mask/face covering if they so choose. Upon completion of the run, each participant should again be masked.
 - In Nordic Skiing, participants should be masked at all times until they arrive at the start line. At this time, they are able to remove their mask/face covering if they so choose. Upon crossing the finish line, participants should again be masked.
 - Recommended: Participants are encouraged to use neck gaiters or similar mask/face covering that can easily be moved from their face and then replaced after the completion of their competition.

Masks should be worn to the greatest extent possible for those sports with exceptions.

Appropriate Mask/Face Coverings

The MDH and MSHSL have approved the following mask/face coverings: paper or disposable mask/face coverings, cloth mask/face coverings, or neck gaiters.

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends using two layers of fabric when making a cloth mask/face covering. Mask/face coverings that are made of thinner single-layer fabric may not be as effective for blocking droplets that come out when speaking, coughing, or sneezing and should not be used unless there are no alternatives.
- A mask/face covering must cover the nose and mouth completely. The covering should not be overly tight or restrictive and should feel comfortable to wear.
- Any mask/face coverings that incorporate a valve that is designed to facilitate easy exhaling, mesh mask/face coverings, or mask/face coverings with openings, holes, visible gaps in the design or material, or vents are not sufficient face coverings because they allow droplets to be released from the mask.
- [Mask/Face Covering Requirements and Recommendations under Executive Order 20-81](#)

Mask Design and Logo Requirements

- Mask/face coverings may be any color and may be solid. Mask/face coverings for all team members do not need to match.
- The school name, school mascot or school logo may be present on the mask.
- A manufacturer's logo, if present can be no more than 2 ¼ inches square with no dimension more than 2 ¼ inches.

Unique Rules for Sports Requiring Helmets

Per the requirements of the MDH's [COVID-19 Sports Practice Guidance for Youth and Adults](#) if a sport requires a helmet that interferes with wearing a face mask/covering safely or effectively (which is more likely with younger children), athletes may consider alternatives to masks/face coverings that are specifically designed by helmet manufacturers to provide protection against the splashes, sprays, and aerosols that can lead to COVID-19 transmission (i.e., a full-face shield)

- A mask/face covering is still the most protective option and should be used to the extent possible, but a full-face shield may provide some protection.
- Any face shield used as a mask/face covering alternative must cover the entire face, extend to the ears and below the chin, and must not have exposed gaps or vents near the eyes, mouth, or nose.
- For more information, please see [Frequently Asked Questions About the Requirement to Wear Face Coverings](#)

Mask Exemptions

Per the requirements of the MDH's [COVID-19 Sports Practice Guidance for Youth and Adults](#), people who have medical or other health conditions, disabilities or mental health, developmental, or behavioral needs that make it difficult to tolerate wearing a mask/face covering may be exempt from wearing a mask/face covering.

Those individuals seeking a mask/face covering exemption must obtain a written, medical exemption from a licensed medical professional who is registered, licensed, certified, or otherwise statutorily (MN Statute Chapters 147 & 148) authorized by the state to provide medical treatment and is practicing within the person's medical training and scope of practice.

The written, medical exemption must be provided to the school's Activities Administrator or another school administrator. Activities administrators should keep mask exemption documentation on file at the school. Coaches should have a list of those student-athletes who have exemptions.

This guidance document will be updated as new information becomes available.