

## YOUTH SPORTS GUIDELINES

**These guidelines, effective August 7, 2020, supersede and replace the July 20, 2020, Youth Sports Guidelines. In accordance with the St. Louis County Department of Public Health's ("DPH") Third Amended Order for Business and Individual Guidelines for Social Distancing and Re-Opening, dated July 29, 2020, effective July 31, 2020, (the "Order") and as may be further amended, these guidelines may be replaced or modified by DPH based on new scientific information and local information including the trajectory of influenza-like illnesses, cases of COVID-19, and any other information deemed relevant to protect public health in St. Louis County.**

### Guiding principles

Children playing sports with or against other individuals during this time holds an inherent risk that someone they are playing with is infected, that they may then become infected and, in turn, spread the virus to others in their household or community. Please consider this risk when allowing your child to participate in organized sports.

The information regarding SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing the COVID-19 illness, is changing rapidly. As a result, guidance given nationally and in St. Louis County is subject to change. The guidelines provided in this document will be reviewed and updated based on new scientific information and local circumstances, and, therefore, may change periodically.

Recognizing that the spread of the virus in the community continues to be high, while at the same time risk of transmission during youth sports practices that follow restrictions can be lessened, these guidelines allow certain team practices. No competitions or spectators are allowed because the evidence continues to show that congregation of groups of people where there is lot of person-to-person interaction spreads the virus.

St. Louis County continues to balance the importance of activity for children with the reality of increased community spread of COVID-19 in St. Louis County, particularly with respect to children at a time when schools will be reopening soon.

The risks associated with playing sports with or against other individuals depends on the type of play, the number of individuals participating, and the number of spectators present. For further information, consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [guidance on youth sports. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html)

### Types of Activities

The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in youth sports settings as follows:

- **Lowest risk:** Performing skill-building drills or conditioning at home, alone or with family members
- **Increasing risk:** Team-based practice
- **More risk:** Within-team competition
- **Even more risk:** Full competition between teams from the same local geographic area
- **Highest risk:** Full competition between teams from different geographic areas.

## Types of Sports

Sports are classified based on the level of contact between players, as either low-frequency of contact or high-frequency of contact.

**High-frequency of contact sports** include: Baseball, Basketball, Boxing, Cheerleading, Crew/Rowing, Dance Team, Fencing, Floor Hockey, Field Hockey, Tackle/Flag/Touch Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Martial Arts, Racquetball, Rugby, Soccer, Softball, Team Handball, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Water Polo, and Wrestling.

**Low-frequency of contact sports** include: Diving, Extreme Sports, Gymnastics, Rodeo, Water skiing, Adventure Racing, Bicycling, Canoeing/Kayaking, Field Events (High Jump, Pole Vault, Javelin, Shot-Put), Golf, Handball, Horseback Riding, Skating (Ice, In-line, Roller), Skateboarding, Weight Lifting, Windsurfing, Badminton, Bodybuilding, Bowling, Golf, Orienteering, Fishing, Riflery, Rope Jumping, Running, Sailing, Scuba Diving, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, and Track.

For sports or activities not included in the above categories that are similar in nature to such other sports or activities, please apply the category most closely associated with the sport or activity. If there is any question regarding the applicable category of High-frequency or Low-frequency of contact, please contact the Department of Public Health to determine which category the activity will be considered.

## Application

The restrictions and requirements of these Youth Sports Guidelines apply to all individuals age 18 or younger.

The restrictions and requirements of these Youth Sports Guidelines apply to school sponsored and affiliated sports teams and leagues as well as non-school sponsored and affiliated sports teams.

## Restrictions and Requirements

These restrictions and requirements apply to school sponsored and affiliated sports teams and leagues as well as non-school sponsored and affiliated sports teams.

Effective August 7, 2020, the following restrictions and requirements apply to all **High-frequency of contact** sports:

- Team workouts and practices are allowed with restrictions.
- Team contact drills are allowed but only in groups of 20 athletes or fewer.
- Two coaches are permitted in addition to the group of 20 or fewer athletes.
- Each group of athletes, not to exceed 20 per group, must remain in a separate single space from another group of athletes at any one time. Any single space must have a minimum of a 20-foot barrier from any other single space. No person is allowed within that 20-foot barrier. The 20-foot barrier should be clearly marked, and such demarcation shall be indicated by a wall, tape or cones.
- **NO** games or scrimmages are permitted.
- **NO** tournaments, performances, competitions, or showcases are permitted.
- Social distancing should be maintained as much as possible during practice.
- The practice groups must remain the same every day to reduce the amount of exposure for each child.
- Masks/face coverings **MUST** be worn anytime an individual is not doing vigorous physical activity.
- Coaches **MUST** remain in mask/face coverings at all times.

For general questions or concerns call **877-435-8411**. Get text message alerts by texting **STLOUISCOALERT** to **67283**. To keep up with the local response and testing sites visit **stlcorona.com** or call **314-615-2660**.

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- Players and coaches should sanitize hands and equipment regularly.
- Wearing masks before activities and immediately following activities is **required**, especially prior to screening.
- Every individual, including coaches, must be screened every day.
- No spectators are allowed.
- No two teams should be in the same location at one time. If the same field, gym, or enclosed room will be used in the same day by more than one team, teams must allow sufficient time between sessions to clean the area. No team shall use a field, gym, or similar enclosed room on the same day another team has used any of those locations unless proper cleaning has occurred after the previous team's use. This cleaning requirement shall also apply to groups of up to 20 athletes using the same single space as another group of up to 20 athletes even if those groups comprise one team.
- All equipment (such as bats, sticks, helmets, sleds, etc.) must be disinfected between individual uses.

Effective August 7, 2020, the following restrictions and requirements apply to all **Low-frequency of contact sports**:

- Full team practices and intra-squad scrimmages are permitted with restrictions.
- Masks/face coverings **MUST** be worn anytime an individual is not doing vigorous physical activity.
- Coaches **MUST** wear face coverings at all times.
- All equipment (such as bats, sticks, helmets, sleds, etc.) must be disinfected between individual uses.
- No spectators are allowed.

**The permitted activities must be conducted with the following safety measures:**

- Athletes and coaches shall undergo a health screening and temperature check prior to starting any sports activity allowed by these guidelines.
- Spectators will be not be allowed.
- Players must wear a face covering, including during practices and while training, when not actively involved in vigorous physical activity, including practice or training.
- Coaches must wear a face covering at all times.
- Screening times and practice start times must be spaced out to limit the number of athletes and others in the area.
- The number of players sitting in confined areas (e.g., dugouts) must be limited to allow for social distancing.
- Hand hygiene is essential. Organizations and facilities shall promote frequent and effective hand hygiene by supplying ample hand sanitizer dispensers and hand-washing stations.
- The use of locker rooms is not recommended. If they must be used, social distancing and mask requirements apply within the locker room. Cleaning is required and equipment must be stored in a designated area.
- To the extent people are present their identity and contact information should be known for contact tracing purposes.

- No congregating shall be allowed by parents, guardians, and any other individuals who would otherwise be spectators or are responsible for the transportation of the athletes, other than the athletes and coaches, at the fields or outside of their individual modes of transportation.
- A drop-off and pick-up line for practices is recommended to avoid unnecessary exposure.
- Water bottles must not be shared. An individual athlete may use their own water bottle, which should be clearly marked with their name. Cups used for water should be single-use and disposable.
- Coolers must be properly sanitized after each use, and each team or group shall have its own cooler.
- CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting coolers must be followed.
- Whirlpools or cold/hot tubs should be avoided. If they are required in an emergency, follow best practices. Have a cold-water immersion tub on-site or within 5 minutes of the field.
- If ice towels are available, CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting should be followed. Ice towels shall be used only once, then discarded or washed properly.
- Team huddles, handshakes, fist bumps, and other unnecessary physical contact are not allowed.
- Any shared equipment must be disinfected with EPA certified products. Equipment should be disinfected, if possible, after each use, or after each inning or play period.
- Any jerseys used during these workouts must be washed daily and not shared among players.

## Screening

Every coach and athlete must be screened when they enter the campus or facility where the sporting activity will occur. They must wear a face mask for the duration of the health screening unless masking is not possible due to a medical condition.

A consistent person should be designated to provide healthcare screenings. This person must wear a face mask and gloves when screening others.

The **screening process** is as follows:

- Ask each individual if they have experienced any of the following new or worsening symptoms within the past 24 hours:
  - Fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit)
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
  - Sore throat, different than your seasonal allergies
  - Loss of smell and/or taste
  - Diarrhea or vomiting
- Ask if they have a close contact who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks.

Positive Screening – If an athlete, coach, or official answers “yes” to any of the screening questions, they should be sent home immediately and told to advise their medical provider. If the athlete’s parents, guardians, or other transportation provider are not present, escort the athlete to a designated isolation room or an area away from others. They must wear a mask or face covering.

Individuals who have had a significant exposure (defined as direct contact or prolonged exposure within 6 feet) to a positive COVID-19 individual must quarantine for a minimum of 14 days from the last date of

exposure to the positive COVID-19 individual. **If the exposed individual has a negative SARS-Cov 2 test, they still must quarantine for 14 days.** If the exposed individual develops symptoms during these 14 days, testing for SARS Cov-2 should occur.

The school, coach, or other official, as applicable, is required to contact the St. Louis County Department of Public Health to notify the Department employees of the positive screening. The notifying individual must provide information regarding all known contacts of the positive-screened individual. To aid in this contact tracing, all schools, coaches, and other officials conducting the practice or competition must keep a detailed account of all the participants at each practice or competition.

If the individual has health-related questions, the individual must consult with the individual's own health care provider.

Individuals returning to sports after a COVID-19 diagnosis must consult with both their own health care provider and the Department of Public Health. Only the St. Louis County Department of Public Health can release a St. Louis County resident from quarantine or isolation.

## Special considerations for those with health conditions

Certain individual athletes on a team may be at higher risk for severe illness than other athletes, such as athletes who have asthma, diabetes, or other health problems. Those individuals with underlying conditions may be more likely to have severe COVID-19 illness. Parents, guardians, and coaches should give special consideration to protecting these athletes.

Athletes, coaches, parents, and guardians should consider delaying the athlete's participation in sports and athletic activities if the athlete has any of the following conditions:

- Chronic lung disease, including moderate or severe asthma,
- Type 2 diabetes,
- Chronic kidney disease,
- Sickle Cell disease,
- Heart conditions; or
- Immunocompromised (*e.g.*, any transplant recipient needing immunosuppressant medications – steroids, biologics, etc., and patients receiving chemotherapy) – if you think your child is immunocompromised, please check with your child's healthcare provider.

Parents or guardians who have children with these risk factors should consider consulting with their healthcare provider about participation in sports since limited data exist and, in many cases (well-controlled diabetic or asthmatic) an increased risk is likely not present. Coaches should also exercise caution in attending youth sport activities if they have any of the above-identified conditions.

## Enforcement

Organizations, teams, and coaches must understand the importance of enforcing these restrictions and requirements to enable children to continue to participate in sporting activities. Under DPH Orders, St. Louis County can require an organization or team to cease otherwise permitted activities if the restrictions and requirements are not being followed. In addition to the expectation that organizations, teams, and coaches will enforce the requirements set forth in these guidelines, all other enforcement actions, including Department of Public Health ordered closure, civil action, and criminal action, remain available to enforce these guidelines.

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It is imperative that parents and guardians, as well as those who are organizing and coaching the children/athletes, emphasize the need to follow these guidelines in order to reduce community transmission of the virus and allow additional permitted activities in the future, including competitive play. This means that ancillary gatherings and meetings of parents and athletes should not be sanctioned or sponsored.

Organizations, teams, coaches, and parents must, in accordance with DPH Orders, cooperate and assist in contact tracing, including maintaining list of players attending practices.

## References

- St. Louis County Department of Public Health COVID-19 related Orders.
- [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html> Last reviewed June 17, 2020.
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfection Tool](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html> Last reviewed May 7, 2020.
- [CDC Handwashing Guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html). <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html> Last reviewed April 2, 2020.
- [Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 \(Interim Guidance\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html> Last reviewed April 30, 2020.
- [Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidelines-for-Opening-Up-America-Again.pdf). <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidelines-for-Opening-Up-America-Again.pdf> Published April 16, 2020.
- [State of Missouri Novel Coronavirus Analytics](https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/analytics-update050520.pdf). <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/analytics-update050520.pdf> Published May 5, 2020.
- [The resurgence of sport in the wake of COVID-19: cardiac considerations in competitive athletes](https://blogs.bmj.com/bjbm/2020/04/24/the-resurgence-of-sport-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-cardiac-considerations).
- <https://blogs.bmj.com/bjbm/2020/04/24/the-resurgence-of-sport-in-the-wake-of-covid-19-cardiac-considerations>
- Resocialization of Sports in the St. Louis Region. Updated 8/4/20.

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