



## NYSA COVID-19 Gameday Protocols and Safety Plan

### Association Responsibilities:

- By registering to the association, the coaches, players, and parents agree to follow all protocols, policies, and responsibilities.
- Create and distribute field maps on their website that have entrance and exits clearly marked, and home and away sidelines. Provide to opponents.
- Provide opponents with any rules that are specific to your fields to be shared with visiting teams.
- The association will create diagrams of field set up identifying location of spectators and players. As field and locations vary, each field setup needs to follow social distancing guidelines.
- All clubs are responsible for providing their coaching staff with hand sanitizer.
- The association is responsible for field setup and sanitization of all equipment at the beginning of the day, and in between games.
- All clubs are responsible for keeping attendance for which players are at every game.
- Have an effective communication plan in place, identify strategies for working with public health to notify adult leaders, youth, and their families if the organization learns a participant or adult leader has developed COVID-19 and may have been infectious to others while at a youth activity, while maintaining confidentiality as per law.
- Have an action plan in place, in case of a positive test.
- Train and educate all staff/coaches regarding COVID-19 protocols and requirements, including state and local regulations, CDC recommendations, and other necessary information.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of outdoor activities to allow for contact tracing procedures and quarantine as needed.
- Provide adequate field space for social distancing.
- The Association will publish all relevant materials, including this League Protocol, on their website.
- The Association will forward by email to coaches, players, and parents all league protocols, policies, and expectations around game day.
- The Association will email their referee group about all league protocols, policies, and expectations around game day.
- The Association will communicate any cancelations or shutdowns as quickly as possible to all team administrators and club leadership.
- The Association will designate a COVID-19 contact person for any positive cases to communicate with opposing teams and referee assignor should a case arise around a game weekend.
- The Association should communicate with coaches, players, and parents that COVID-19 protocols will follow local public health and CDC guidelines.



### Coach Responsibilities:

- **No coach that is sick or has signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 should attend.**
- Always wear a face mask, maintain physical distance requirements from players (>6 feet) based on state and local health requirements.
- Use hand sanitizer before and after interacting with your team.
- Make sure that your team has left the field within 5 minutes of the game ending.
- Make sure the home team provides 3 balls per half that have been sanitized. Game balls from 1st half can be sanitized by the home team at half time.
- Clustering of players should be avoided. There should be no gathering and socializing before or after the game by players. Coaches should not assemble their teams closely together for instruction; players should be spaced at least 6 feet apart for team meetings or instruction.
- No handshakes or fist bumps during or after the game.
- Read out player names and numbers off the gameday/roster for game check-in to the referee.
- Leave game day paperwork for referee pickup, no hand off allowed.

### Player Responsibilities:

- Players must wear a mask before, during and after all games.
- No player that is sick or has signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 should attend.
- Cannot enter the field area until previous teams have left the field. Entry and exit points will be marked.
- Masks should be worn by players to and from the field.
- Soccer bags should be placed at least 6 feet apart from one another.
- Use hand sanitizer before and after the game.
- Clustering of players should be avoided. There should be no gathering and socializing before or after the game by players. Coaches should not assemble their teams closely together for instruction; players should be spaced at least 6 feet apart for team meetings or instruction.
- **No handshakes or fist bumps during or after the game.**

### Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- There will be 1 parent/guardian/caregiver per player allowed to attend the game on the sidelines. League could change if rules are not followed.
- **Spectators must wear masks at all times.**
- Drop player off no earlier than 30 minutes prior to kickoff.
- Do not loiter around field. Avoid gathering of players, coaches and families.
- No parent/guardian/caregiver or player that is sick or has signs or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 should attend.
- Spectators should not touch any game day equipment, including balls, cones, goals, etc.

### Scheduling:

- Schedule games with time buffers in between to allow minimal contact between games.
  - 3 or more fields – Stagger game times every 20 minutes to ensure minimal contact is made for locations with multiple fields.
  - 2 fields – Stagger game times every 30 minutes.



### Player Injury Procedures:

- In case of an emergency, call 911.
- A First Aid Kit / Medical Bag should be kept on the sideline at all times.
- Coaches must wear a mask if tending to an injured player.
- Other players should not approach the injured player to avoid a crowd and keep distance.
- For minor injuries, coach approaches player and asks from a distance if they are able to walk off the field unassisted.
- If a head injury has occurred and is emergent, call 911. If non-emergent head injury and player can walk off the field, allow them to do so. Follow all concussion protocols.
- If an injury takes place that prevents a player from walking off the field under their own power, coach should put gloves on from the medical bag, provide the player with a mask, and assist the player off the field. Parent should then be called and allowed to tend to the player.

### Field Setup:

- Teams will follow field setup in order to prevent any additional contact. Home team will dictate which side of the field teams take.
- Club will create diagram of field set up with regard to location of spectators and team, as field and location vary, each field setup needs to follow social distancing guidelines.
- No closed tents. If benches are used on the sideline, players should be separated by at least two empty seats. Alternatively, individual chairs can be used for substitutes, but each team is responsible for providing their own. Players should wear masks when not playing.
- **If spectators are allowed under WA Dept of Health guidelines, they must remain a minimum of 10 feet from the field and remain socially distanced to allow 6 feet between individuals. All spectators must wear a mask.**
- Coaches and players must follow the rules of the field they are playing on.

### Case of Infection:

*When an athlete/coach is diagnosed with COVID-19:*

- Have the player stay home.
- If the infected player was in contact with their team or an opposing team within 48 hours of when symptoms first started or within 48 hours of when the diagnostic test was performed (whichever was earlier), have the team quarantine – contact each of the parents/guardians that “someone” on the team has tested positive for the virus (do not reveal name of infected individual) or that someone on an opposing team was possibly infectious when they played in the game. It is recommended each of these players should also be tested for COVID-19.
- If the infected player played in a game with their team within 48 hours of diagnosis or start of symptoms, Club COVID Contact must notify the opposing team immediately – have opposing team quarantine (COVID test recommended).
- Infected player cannot return to practice or games until they have written medical clearance from their physician.
- Disinfectant all equipment.

*In addition to the above, when a coach has come in contact with or is infected with COVID-19:*

- Get tested and stay home.
- Contact your club immediately.



- Inform the team – if you have maintained social distance from all your players, players do not necessarily need to get tested but may choose to.
- Infected coach cannot return to practice or games until they have written medical clearance from their physician.
- Disinfect all equipment.

### Referee Responsibilities: Prior to the Game:

- Before leaving for the field, Referees should ask themselves the following questions:
  - Have you knowingly come into contact with anyone who has, is being tested for, or is exhibiting signs of coronavirus? (Yes or No)
  - Are you exhibiting any of the following symptoms which are not caused by any other condition? (Yes or No)
    - Fever or chills
    - Shortness of breath
    - Difficulty breathing
    - Fatigue
    - Muscle or body aches
    - Headache
    - Recent loss of taste or smell
    - Sore throat
    - Congestion or runny nose
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Diarrhea
  - If the referee answers yes to any of these questions, they should notify their assignor and refrain from officiating the game.

### Pre-Game:

- Personal Stations for referees
  - The referee crew should set up their belongings in an area away from all others while maintaining 6-ft/2-yd space from each other.
  - Referees should not bring any unnecessary belongings to the field.
  - Referees are expected to arrive to the field fully dressed.
    - Gold referee jersey is the recommended color to avoid clashing.
    - If case of a conflict with the teams, alternate color jerseys should be on hand.
  - Assistant referees are expected to bring their own flags to the field. The flags don't need to match each other.
  - Referee equipment should not be shared, but if shared, it should be sanitized before and after the match.
  - Masks must be worn before, during half-time and after the match.
  - Referees should carry hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes for their own personal use.
  - Referees may use a regular whistle or an electronic whistle.
- During the referee crew pregame discussion, continue to maintain 6-ft/2-yd space and insure all COVID-19 protocols are discussed.



- **Field and Equipment Inspection:**
  - Field should still be walked. Visual inspection only of the goals, nets and flags.
    - If an item needs to be fixed or removed from the field, notify the home team as soon as possible. -
  - Game balls –
    - The referee should inspect all game balls, but without handling them. For better efficiency, it is recommended there be more than one game ball.
- **Player Check-In:**
  - Rosters
    - If possible, try to receive the roster or match report electronically ahead of time.
    - If not, have the coach place the roster at the end of the bench to minimize close contact.
    - Leagues that require player passes, are pictures printed on the rosters? Then no need for player passes. If not, have the coach read the player passes.
    - Uniform/Jewelry checks – should be visual check only maintaining proper physical distance between referee and players.
- **Coin Toss:**
  - No coin toss.
    - While maintaining 6-ft space, the Home team picks direction to attack. Away team gets kick-off.
- No player walkouts or handshakes prior to the game.

#### **During the Game:**

- Technical Area (bench) and all others, COVID-19 protocol expects all players, team officials, and spectators to maintain at least a 6 - 10 ft. distance from the touchline, dependent on the facility.
  - This is NOT the referee crew's responsibility to maintain.
  - Communicate with the coaches if anyone is not maintaining the proper distance from the touchline.
  - If the problem persists, have a conversation with the full crew and both coaches to try to resolve the issue.
  - If at any time the referee crew does not feel safe during a match because proper distancing by spectators from the crew is not being followed, you can end the match due to safety concerns.
- Try to maintain recommended distancing during the match.
- Drop Ball – no referee handling, ensure all except one player maintain a 4.5 yd. distance from the ball and restart with a whistle.
- Penalty kicks – do not handle the ball. Place the ball on the mark, the player can then adjust.
- Medical Situations –
  - Remain 6 ft. away from the injured player while determining if medical attention is needed.
  - If so, the team trainer or a coach from the player's team should attend to the injured player.



### Halftime:

- Masks should be worn during halftime.
  - Referees should maintain proper distancing during the halftime conversation.
- It is recommended referees use hand sanitizer and sanitize all referee equipment again during halftime.

### After the Game:

- No handshakes, fist bumps, or high fives after the game. This can be replaced with a wave.
- If a coach's signature is required on the match report, lay the report on the bench and back up, allowing for the coach to sign.
  - If you are required to leave a match report for the team(s), leave at the end of the team bench.
- When debriefing with the referee crew, find a space where everyone can be seen and heard, while allowing for proper distancing.
- If working multiple games, wipe down and sanitize your equipment between your matches.
- Once the game is over and the crew has debriefed, leave the field. Do not congregate around the field.
- Should you encounter any difficulty implementing these protocols, please complete a supplemental report and notify your assignor.
  - Assignors, please notify the proper club administrators if a referee crew should encounter any problems implementing the protocols.
- For contact tracing purposes, if a referee is to test positive for COVID after a match, they need to notify the assignor immediately. The assignor will be responsible for notifying the appropriate club official.