



Portage Area School District Athletic Department Resocialization of Sports Recommendations

This guidance is preliminary; as more public health information is available, the administration may work with impacted entities to release further guidance which could impact fall, winter, or spring seasons.

Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families.

The PASD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA.

PASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

Before the start of summer activities with student-athletes:

- 1.) All Coaches must read and become familiar with the plan
- 2.) Head Coaches must be educated on the plan by PASD
- 3.) Head Coaches must educate any assistant (paid or volunteer) on their staff that don't attend the education sessions.
- 4.) All Head Coaches should educate their students and parents.
- 5.) All Waiver forms need to be turned in to the head coach before any activities are permitted.
- 6.) All waiver forms need to be turned in to the Athletic office.



Daily Recommendations:

1. If sick or not feeling well, then **STAY HOME!** Remind the student-athletes and staff before and after each activity to stay home and seek medical care if experiencing symptoms of illness.
2. Everyone must go through a physical and verbal screening prior to any activity. Coaches will use the checklist to ensure that the student-athlete is able to attend the activity and for possible contact tracing. The forms will be provided by the school and will be maintained by the coaches. If a student-athlete checks any boxes for symptoms or possible at risk exposure, he/she must be sent home and the AD and Trainer must be contacted.
3. All coaches must wear a face covering inside school facilities. Coaches must wear a face covering at outdoor facilities if within social distance requirements of others. Student-athletes are not required to wear a mask during physical activities. PPE for coaches (gloves, masks, eye protection, etc...) will be used as needed and situations warrant.
4. Coaches are to promote healthy hygiene habits. Please remind the student-athletes of ways to limit exposure to airborne illnesses, such as hand washing, coughing in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting or gum chewing. Also, provide access to hand sanitizer to the student-athletes indoors and outdoors.
5. Coaches are to follow social distancing guidelines set by the CDC. Coaches should plan for safe distance between student-athletes through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups.
6. Locker rooms are closed. If necessary, the official's restroom/shower is available. Student-athletes are to stay in the designated areas: gym, fitness center, or outside facilities. The remaining areas of the school building are closed.
7. Athletes will take **ALL** of their equipment home daily and have it cleaned before returning to the next activity.
8. Everyone must bring their own water bottles or hydration beverages. The water fountains will be turned off in the fitness.
9. Equipment used at activities must be disinfected after each session by the coaches. Fitness center equipment must be cleaned after the student-athlete is finished using it and/or before another student-athletes uses the equipment.
10. No student-athlete to student-athlete contact. Discourage handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging, etc.
11. Student-athletes are to remain with their assigned groups during each activity. The assigned groups are to be no larger than 10 student-athletes. Indoor rooms, such as gyms and the fitness center, are limited to no larger than 25 occupants.



12. Identify staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from airborne illness due to underlying medical conditions. Please communicate that information with the AD and Trainer.

13. Be careful on the physical demand put on the student-athlete. Most students have not been physically active for the last 3 months. Coaches should begin with less strenuous activities while observing and monitoring each student-athlete.

14. Remember that summer activities are **OPTIONAL**. Make sure the staff and student-athletes are comfortable being at these activities. Be lenient on attendance and don't make student-athletes feel they will jeopardize future playing time if they don't attend these activities. The official PIAA fall season begins on August 17th, August 10th for Varsity Football.

Classification of Sports:

High Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

Examples: football, wrestling, cheerleading (stunts), dance

Moderate Risk: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants. Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors. Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer

** High/Moderate Risk Sports may move to a Low risk category with non-contact modifications. Team Activities should be limited to individual skill development drills that maintain social distancing.

Levels of Participation in Summer Activities:

Level 1 (PA State Red)

Team Activities: No In-person gatherings allowed, Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.), Athletes may participate in individual home workouts including strength and conditioning.

- All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
- Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Level 2 (PA State Yellow or Green - once permitted by PIAA)



Team Activities may include: team meetings, open gym, kick around, weight training/conditioning, running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, and sideline cheer, etc.

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. The screenings could range from a verbal/written questionnaire to a temperature check.(See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form)
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional. A clearance may be required to return to play.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than (25 Yellow - 250 Green) individuals per group including coaches per practice area.
- Controlled non-contact practices only, modified game rules
- Social Distancing should be applied during practices and in locker rooms, and gathering areas.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after an individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity:

- Lower risk sports practices may begin
- Modified practices may begin for Moderate and High risk sports (practices must remain non-contact and include social distancing where applicable, activity should focus on individual skill development)
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary



- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water coolers, water fountains, water cows, water troughs, etc.) should not be utilized

Level 3 (PA State Green - once permitted by PIAA)

Team activities may include: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, ice hockey, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump, 7 on 7 football, etc.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider. A clearance may be required to return to play.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Low, Moderate, and High Risk practices and Low and Moderate Risk competitions may begin (As per State, Local, and PIAA Guidelines)
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.



- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but **MUST** be cleaned after every practice/event.

Level 4 (PA State Green - once permitted by PIAA)

Team Activities include: Low/Moderate Sports may resume. High Risk Sports (Football, Wrestling, and Cheerleading Stunting) may begin full person to person contact and competition.

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- Any person who has COVID-19 symptoms should not be allowed to participate in practice/games, and should contact their primary care physician or another appropriate health-care provider.
- COVID-19 Screenings (Questionnaire and Temperature Checks may continue as per State and Local government recommendations)
- Team attendance should be recorded

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after and individual's use
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- All sports may resume normal practice and competition
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice, including pinnies.



- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used but **MUST** be cleaned after every practice/event.

Other Recommendations:

Transportation:

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary. This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State and Local governments.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which will be allowed at an event:

1. Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
 2. Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
 3. Tier 3 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
 - Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by the local/state governments.

Overnight/Out of State Events/ Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- The PASD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.



Signs and symptoms of Covid-19:

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix). Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills (100.4 or High)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, **STAY AT HOME**. It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach)
- It will be determined if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and /or monitored for symptoms
- If a Positive case of COVID-19 is Diagnosed Contact Tracing will be implemented with the assistance of local health professionals and the CDC/PA DOH. See Information in Appendix.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event



- If student, parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up
- Ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction

Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?

- Student or staff should have medical clearance from their physician or appropriate healthcare professional, determined to be non-contagious,

Fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), no vomiting or diarrhea.

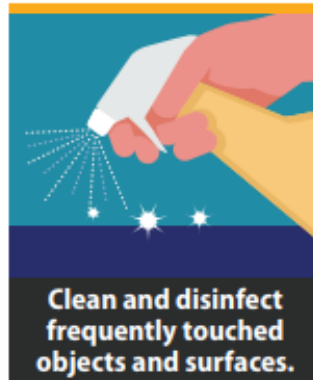
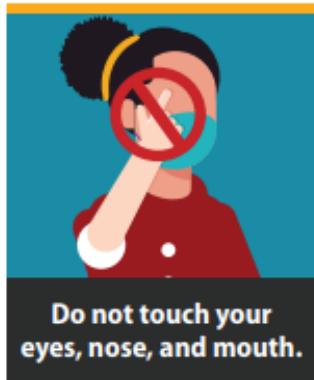
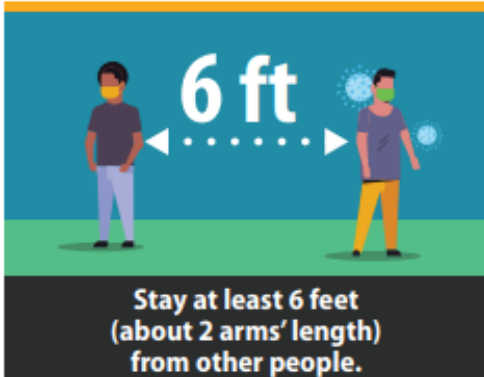
Education:

Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- students should come dressed for activity
- Limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted Facility showers cannot be used
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.
- No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer

Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.





WHAT IS CONTACT TRACING

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.



- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

RESOURCES:

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,

“Schools Decision Tree”

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“What is Contact Tracing”

“Phased Reopening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes and the Public

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/sports-guidance/>

Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

<https://www.governor.pa.gov/covid-19/restaurant-industry-guidance/>

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