

Gwynedd Mercy Academy HS – Athletic Return to Play

Continued Voluntary Out of Season Sessions – 8/17 to 9/18/20

Crew erg workouts at school will begin on Monday, 9/14/20

Fall Sport Tryouts begins on Monday, 9/21/20

Golf league only competitive play begins on Wednesday, 9/24/20

Tennis league only competitive play begins on Monday, 9/28/20

Cross Country, Field Hockey, Soccer & Volleyball league only competition begins on Monday, 10/12/20

Introduction

This document is intended to guide Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School (GMAHS) on requirements for the reopening of athletic programs during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The intention of this document is to keep our student athletes, coaches, staff and community safe and informed.

General Considerations

- While there is still an inherent risk of infection for those participating, everyone in attendance should be actively working towards decreasing the risk of transmission to others
- Everyone must wear face coverings (effective mandate 7/1/20, order signed by Health secretary Levin) unless they fall under an **exception listed in Section 3**: *“Coaches, athletes and athletic personnel must wear face coverings unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of a least 6’. **Athletes are NOT required to wear face coverings while ACTIVELY engaged in workouts and competition that prevent the wearing of face coverings, but MUST wear face coverings when on sidelines, dugout and anytime 6’ not possible.**”*
- Everyone should arrive and leave at the scheduled time to avoid overlap in groups
- All student-athletes should clean individual equipment and clothing after every use
- Coaches should clean all team/shared equipment after every use
- Student-athletes MUST have their own water bottle to participate in workouts
- Prior to initial participation, Parent/Guardian must complete on Family ID the following
 - 2020-2021 Seasonal Registration Form (Fall 2020; Winter 2020-21; Spring 2021)
 - 2020-2021 Daily COVID 19 Health Screening Report

Requirements for Coaches

- Design practice sessions that focus on increasing risk mitigation strategies (social distancing, hand hygiene, etc.)
- Design practice sessions to resume in a gradual fashion to avoid overuse injuries and exertional/heat-related illnesses
- Consider that student-athletes may not be returning at the same fitness level and activities may need to be adjusted accordingly

- Additionally, if athletes miss sessions, they may need to start at a previous level
- Coaches should work with the Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer for guidance on adhering to each stage's recommendations
- Break time may need to be increased and/or staggered to accommodate social distancing, hand washing, and avoiding shared hydration sources
- Coaches must stay until all members of their team have left the campus
- Monitor receipt of DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT provided through Family ID
 - Completed by parent/guardian daily and uploaded to student-athletes Family ID Account

Requirements for Student Athletes

- Gradually work up intensity of activity
- Communicate all health and fitness-related concerns with coaches immediately
- Student-athletes should arrive prepared to go and avoid congregating before and after practice and game/match competitions
- Student-athletes should leave immediately following practice sessions and game/match competition
- All student-athletes should clean individual equipment and clothing after every use
- Student-athletes **MUST** have their own water bottle to participate in practice and game/match competition

Pre-Workout Procedure (3-week period before start of 1st playdate)

- All student-athletes and coaches in attendance must complete DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT through Family ID one hour prior to start of each practice and game/match competition
- Anyone with positive findings on DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT may not attend
 - Coaches may not allow athletes to return until they are given the ok by an athletic trainer or administrator.
 - Follow return to play protocol (see below)
- Athletic Trainer will continually monitor DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT (captured electronically on Family ID) and reach out to anyone with positive findings with further instructions.
- Coaches must review the DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT (provided through Family ID) at the start of each practice and game/match competition and confirm that everyone in attendance has completed a screening survey that day
- Coaches must maintain accurate attendance of each practice and game/match competition and submit to the athletics department immediately after practice
- Student-athletes and coaches should use hand sanitizer and/or wash hands prior to the start of practice and game/match competition and if needed throughout practice and/or at breaks
- Each student-athlete must have their own personal water bottle and a facial covering to participate. No coolers or hydration stations should be utilized at this time.

Screening Procedure (use of Family ID DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT) for each practice and game/match competition—suggestion that the DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT be completed no more than **one** hour prior to practice and game/match competition)

- DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT should be completed the same day as practice and game/match competition and student-athlete and/or coach may not remain on campus if the screening survey is not completed
- Student-athletes should complete DAILY COVID 19 HEALTH SCREENING REPORT in consultation with parents and/or guardian

Screening Survey Questions (Student-athlete, Coaches and Staff):

Question 1: In the past 72 hours, have you or anyone in your household experienced symptoms of acute respiratory illness, such as: a fever of 100.4°F or higher, fatigue, body aches, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, chills, and/or loss of taste and/or smell

Question 2: In the past 14 days, have you had close contact (i.e. within 6 feet for more than a few minutes) with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 (AKA coronavirus), is in the process of being tested for COVID-19, is isolating as a result of a suspected COVID-19 infection, or is experiencing acute symptoms of COVID-19?

- If a student-athlete, coach or staff member answers “YES” to either question and/or is concerned that she/he may be ill, they MUST remain home
- The athletic trainer will contact parents of student-athletes (or coaches) who have answered ‘yes’ to any questions and follow the return to play protocol (see below)

Return to Play Protocol

- Anyone sent home or remaining home as a result of answering “YES” to either of the two survey questions listed above may not return until they provide competent evidence to Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director demonstrating that:
 - After being sent home she/he was tested negative for COVID-19 (and must provide documentation); or
 - After being sent home she/he was tested positive for COVID-19 but she/he has since met PA DOH guidelines for ending isolation (and must provide documentation) OR
 - She/he can provide a doctor's note stating she/he is not contagious
- Any student-athlete, coach or staff member who previously were diagnosed with COVID-19 and have since recovered should receive clearance from treating health care provider and notify coaches and athletic trainers so an appropriate return to play plan can be established.
- If anyone tests positive for COVID-19 who was at a workout within 14 days, appropriate notification and tracing will be initiated.

Pre-Season Practice and Game/Match Competition Protocol –

- No group huddles
- No locker room use
- Instruction must be given in a socially distant manner or virtual platform
- Stretching, warmups, and cool-downs can be done in a socially distant manner
- Restrooms must be used one at a time if needed
- Facial coverings required for all coaches
- Facial coverings required when students arrive/leave and during down time when they are not doing exertional activity (i.e. during competitive game/match setting)
- No shared objects (including bottles, towels, sports equipment, pinnies, etc.)
- No handshakes, fist-bumps, high-fives, etc.

- Team meetings should take place on a virtual platform
- Vulnerable individuals should not oversee or participate in any workout sessions
 - “Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as people age 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma/sports asthma and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy
 - Any student-athlete, coach or staff that is considered “vulnerable” will be required to have a written clearance note from their physician in order to participate
- Athletes should take frequent breaks for handwashing or hand sanitizer use
- No spectators permitted to attend practices and/or game/match competitions
- Limit shared objects to those required for sport only (i.e. volleyballs, etc.).
- Team equipment should be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by coaching staff and individual clothing or equipment should be cleaned at the conclusion of each session by the participant

References

1. NFHS Guide for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities- May 2020
2. NATA COVID-19 Return to Sport Considerations for Secondary School Athletic Trainers- May 2020
3. PA Department of Education Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools- June 3, 2020
4. CDC COVID-19 Considerations for Youth Sports- May 29, 2020
7. UPMC Sports Medicine Playbook: Returning to Sports During COVID-19 Minimum Guidelines (High School)- May 28, 2020
8. PIAA Press Release- June 5, 2020
9. With special thanks to Pat Crater for the UCFSD Athletics Reopening Plan