



MALDEN CATHOLIC

RETURN TO ATHLETICS

PLAYBOOK

2020-2021



LANCERS BETTER TOGETHER

The purpose of this playbook is to provide the coaches, athletes, athletics staff and our MC families with the guidelines and procedures that will be implemented and followed for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ever-changing nature of the pandemic and the recommendations from national and state governing bodies, these guidelines may require adaptation.

To our athletes and coaches, we have always stood together in our workouts, in practices and in competition and now more than ever we need to be there for one another and have support each other as we work to create a positive culture of wellbeing. Our goal this school year is to be able to offer athletic opportunities that will allow us to participate safely while limiting exposure to illness and ultimately successfully completing our seasons. We will continue to assess how COVID-19 will impact our specific safety culture and we'll be prepared to plan to adapt if necessary.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide easy access to procedures relating to our return to play during COVID-19. This does not replace our regular Malden Catholic Athletic Handbook which should be reviewed by each athlete and their family annually and may be found at: <https://www.maldencatholic.org/athletics/register-to-play/student-athlete-handbook>

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing should always be used when possible (six feet at a minimum).

- Large social gatherings in any spaces will be discouraged with virtual team meetings taking place when possible.
- When at practice or in competition, any unnecessary contact should be avoided such as handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, or elbow bumps.
- Student athletes should sit every other seat on a bench and should avoid using a dugout when possible. Student-athletes should consciously stand six feet apart when not participating in a drill or activity that requires closer contact.

SANITIZATION

- All equipment should be cleaned between each individual use. When possible, athletes should not share gear and instead use their own personal equipment.
- Each athlete should have his/her own personal defined hydration container that is never to be shared.
- Hand sanitizer or handwashing stations are available and should be used before, during, and after workouts.

PRE-PARTICIPATION EXAMS

The MIAA along with the Massachusetts Department of Health has issued a statement indicating that despite the difficulty for many to schedule annual exams, it **does not change** current regulatory language which indicates that an examination for student-athletes must be "conducted annually." As for application of this regulation, the current practice supported by the MA DPH of a valid examination within 13-months to the day still stands. The 13-month window was necessary to accommodate many health insurance plans.

For those families finding it difficult to schedule an annual physical scheduled prior to the season the MIAA recently announced a partnership with ConvenientMD and released the following information regarding physicals. In support of local youth, sports, and education, ConvenientMD Urgent Care is offering \$20 sports, school, and camp physicals. In addition, ConvenientMD is offering free flu shots for all ages and will donate \$1 to a local charity for each flu shot given in September through November. Please note that all clinics are following strict protocols to keep patients and team members safe and healthy. Visit your nearest ConvenientMD location in Massachusetts, 8am-8pm, 7 days a week. No appointments needed. Locations also available in New Hampshire and Maine.

THE FOLLOWING PRE-PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED

Student-athletes who presently have COVID-19, or who have tested positive for COVID-19, shall provide clearance from a physician before he/she will be permitted to participate in practices or games.

Student-athletes who have pre-existing medical conditions and/or are immunocompromised (e.g., diabetes, asthma, auto-immune disorders, etc.) shall provide clearance from a physician before he/she will be permitted to participate in workouts.

The daily COVID-19 Questionnaire must be completed prior to the start of the workout session and must be completed prior to practice or competitions and can be found at: <https://forms.gle/zcV2byCK23oG5Xrf8> or shared by the coaches.

Any athlete that does not have a COVID-19 Questionnaire on file will not be permitted to participate in any workouts. This is an electronic file and will be shared with athletes.

Coaches are also required to keep thorough attendance records to support contact tracing by the nurses if necessary.

Registration for sport must be completed on FamilyID.com prior to start.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PRACTICES AND CONTESTS

1. PRE-SCREENING

- a. Each participant must be prescreened for COVID-19 related symptoms or exposure with the daily questionnaire.
- b. Teams shall stagger arrival and departure times of student-athletes.



- c. Each day all coaches, student-athletes, and staff must clear the pre-screening process before they are permitted to participate in the workouts.
- d. The pre-screening process will consist of a review of the pre-screening questionnaire, which shall be completed and provided to designated school personnel, and a self-temperature check.
- e. Any individual who answers “yes” to any question on the questionnaire, or who has a temperature greater than 99.5°F, shall not be permitted to participate in the workout and shall be required to return home.
- f. Any Individual who answers “yes” to any question on the questionnaire shall be required to provide clearance from a physician before they will be permitted to resume participation in the workouts.

2. PRACTICES

- a. Practices shall be no more than ninety (90) minutes in duration.
- b. All practices shall take place outside.
- c. Access to practices must be limited to student-athletes, coaches, and appropriate school personnel and must be voluntary to attend.
- d. Throughout the practices shall be limited to conditioning, skill sets, and sport-specific non-contact drills.
- e. Coaches should have pre-drawn structured workouts for the duration of the session.
- f. Workouts shall always comply with the MIAA Heat Acclimation Policy.
- g. Student-athletes should be provided with unlimited access to fluids which the student-athletes provide.

During all workouts, coaches, athletes, and staff are reminded to be alert for any students exhibiting signs of distress regarding mental health secondary to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. FACE COVERINGS

- a. Student-athletes who are engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., running, sprinting, etc., are not required to wear face coverings during the period of the aerobic activity with social distancing required. Once the aerobic activity is over, student-athletes shall wear face coverings. This includes walking to and from the practice field.
- b. Student-athletes who are not engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., sitting on the bench, reviewing plays, watching videos, waiting in line, etc., are expected to wear face coverings.
- c. Coaches and school personnel must always wear face coverings .

4. GROUPINGS/SOCIAL DISTANCING

- a. The group size cannot exceed 20 (i.e., 18 students with two coaches) grouped together in a single area and the groups should be predetermined by the coach prior to the start of the workout. Additional groups are permitted on the playing surface at the same time but must comply with current DPH recommendations.
- b. Social distancing of at least six (6) feet shall always be maintained between student-athletes and staff ,
including within the student-athlete groupings.
- c. Once student groupings are determined, student-athletes should not switch to another grouping, even for another sport.
- d. More than one group of student-athletes can be in a single area, provided there is a minimum twelve (12) feet between each group of student-athletes but may not involve over 100 participants in that area.
- e. There shall not be celebratory contact, e.g., fist bumps, high-fives, huddles, etc.
- f. There are to be no spectators allowed at practices and limit spectators for contests.

5. ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

- a. Personal sports equipment shall not be shared at any time.
- b. Each student-athlete shall bring individual water bottles and towel to each workout for his/her own personal consumption. There shall not be any trading or sharing of water bottles or towels.
- c. All sports equipment and touchpoints (e.g., benches, agility cones, balls, ladders, clipboards, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected after each workout with EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants against COVID-19.

6. LOCKER ROOMS/RESTROOMS

- a. Student-athletes will have very limited access to the locker rooms with assigned times. Locker rooms are for changing clothes only and there should be no gathering and no items are permitted overnight.
- b. Restrooms, if available, shall be cleaned and disinfected regularly with EPA approved cleaners and disinfectants against COVID-19.
- c. Restrooms, if available, use shall be limited to one person at a time.
- d. To the fullest extent possible, appropriate social distancing shall be maintained, and face coverings are worn when more than one student-athlete is in the restroom.

7. HYGIENE

- a. Students and staff should make every effort to wash their hands as often as possible including before and after the workout.
- b. Hand sanitizer shall always be accessible.
- c. Student-athletes shall wear their workout gear to the workout and shall return home in the same workout gear.
- d. There shall be no spitting, chewing seeds or gum during the workout.

8. TRASH AND ITEMS BROUGHT TO PRACTICE

- a. Students and staff will be required to “Carry In, Carry Out” and no trash or personal items should be left at the practice location when the practices are over.

9. ILLNESS PROTOCOL

Should an individual athlete become ill during any of the above periods, they should be immediately removed from the group, masked if not already, and isolated in their individual space.

The parent or guardian should be notified right away by the Athletic Trainer.

Testing for COVID-19 should be done. If testing is positive, contact tracing should be initiated by the school nurse. This tracing will identify those individuals who would have been within six feet of the sick athlete for more than 15 minutes while the person was symptomatic or within the 48 hours prior to becoming symptomatic.

The athlete with the positive COVID-19 test may return to social interaction 72 hours after resolution of symptoms, including but not limited to: fever (without the use of fever reducing medications), cough, shortness of breath, AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared according to CDC guidelines. Emerging evidence in the field of cardiology recommends a 14-day convalescent period from the start of symptoms prior to starting back to strenuous activity and consideration of cardiac testing. Students who test positive for COVID-19 should provide a written release for return to activity from their medical provider before allowing continued participation.

10. TRANSPORTATION

Travel should be limited and when possible, done by parental transportation. When it is necessary and leaving from school, bus transportation will be provided. Weekend events the parents are responsible for transportation to and from athletic events.

Social distancing should be maintained, including masking and windows remained open when possible.

- When on a bus, social distancing is needed with no two athletes sitting in the seats next to each other.
- Preparations should be made for limited stops when en route (such as prepackaged meals).
- Overnight stays will be prohibited at this time. Games will be scheduled in groups in a geographic area when travel is necessary. We will consider limiting out of conference play this season and asking parents to assist in their child’s transportation.

11. MC ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM PROCEDURES

The following are the summary key points and changes in the athletic training room:

1. The athletic training room will have a student-athlete capacity limit of two (2) to accommodate social distancing.
2. Treatment sessions will operate on an appointment only format and student-athletes may only enter the athletic training room during this time. We will have an entrance and exit door marked for use.
3. Non-necessary pre-practice treatments are eliminated.
4. There will be a set time for which student-athletes may receive pre-practice taping.
5. Post-practice treatment will be eliminated. Ice bags will be placed in a specified location for student-athletes to grab.
6. Student-Athletes will be required to wear masks in the athletic training room.
7. Visiting teams may not enter the athletic training room.

12. CONTEST PARTICIPANTS AND SPECTATORS

Group sizes should be limited to fifty (50) total participants, coaches, referees, and spectators for all athletic contests. To comply with DPH and other state guidelines, we will limit spectators for all Catholic Conference games, home and away, to one guest per athlete. Once this number allowable is increased, we will issue a second pass. The pass (lanyard) must be with you to gain entry to any athletic contest and is also how we will track who is at our events.

We do plan to stream many of our games and we are currently working with several vendors to make this happen in a timely manner.

All should maintain social distancing while in the bleachers with masks remaining on.

Any additional team members can sit on the sidelines 6 feet apart from one another.

30-ft of distancing is maintained between groups/opposing teams on the sidelines, and areas for each group are clearly marked to discourage interaction between groups outside of competitive game play.

Students should maintain social distancing on the sidelines when not engaged in activities.

13. MC DAILY COVID-19 ATHLETIC QUESTIONNAIRE

In addition to your daily log in to the SAFETY App by AUXS you may be required to complete a quick survey of questions on your personal wellbeing prior to practices and games. For those programs that conducted summer workouts, you are already familiar with this process. It will be used to determine who is in attendance at daily practices and ensuring we are all doing so safely. The coaches will present you with your login for your team and you may access this through your laptop, iPad or Smartphone.

14. AFTER SCHOOL PRACTICES AND GAMES

To limit social congregating, we are asking those students not on an athletic team to leave the campus at 2:15pm when school is dismissed. We will conduct our practices for sub-varsity teams immediately after school and will conclude by 4:00pm and students should be picked up at their designated times.

Varsity practices will not start prior to the sub-varsity programs completing their practices to eliminate the over crowding of students in any one area. Sub-varsity practices will be limited to the days students are physically on campus and with their dedicated cohorts. Varsity practices will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday with Saturday as an option at coach's discretion.

We will attempt to hold our sub-varsity games primarily on the weekends and have set days for our varsity program games to alleviate any additional crowding on our playing surfaces at any particular time.

15. CHANGES IN SCHOOL STATUS

The above is while we remain in our "Yellow" or Hybrid Phase. If for any reason we need to elevate our status to "Red" or Remote Phase, all athletic practices and events will be postponed during that time.

16. HYDRATION

Hydration is crucial to every athlete's success and experts suspect that proper hydration helps in the prevention of disease. Each athlete is expected to provide their own water bottle for use at each practice and event. This water bottle shall be clearly marked with their name. There is no sharing of water bottles. You should bring more than one bottle of water. Communal water bottles are not allowed based on COVID-19 guidelines from the National Federation of High Schools and hydration coolers are not to be used. We have purchased a touchless refilling station that will be on the field but please consider refilling in school before coming out for practices or games.

17. REMOTE LEARNERS

For those students and families choosing to remain fully remote during our "Yellow" Phase, the decision has been made to allow for participation in athletics provided the following is completed daily.

1. The student must check-in on our mobile MC COVID Daily Questionnaire, this is different than the school's Safety App by AUXS and must be completed prior to your arrival. This may be found at this link: <https://forms.gle/LTSgcPMUApYGRLWDA>
2. The student must see the Athletic Trainer to have their temperature checked upon arrival.


MIAA SPORT SEASONS 2020-2021

<p style="text-align: center;">FALL I September 18th - November 20th</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Soccer Boys Soccer Golf Boys Cross Country Girls Cross Country Girls Swim & Dive</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>No MIAA Tournaments</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WINTER November 20th - February 21st</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Basketball Boys Basketball Wrestling Boys Ice Hockey Girls Ice Hockey Boys Swim & Dive Boys Indoor Track & Field Girls Indoor Track & Field Winter Cheer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FALL II February 22nd - April 25th</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Volleyball Football Fall Cheer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SPRING April 26th - July 3rd</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Girls Lacrosse Boys Lacrosse Baseball Softball Rugby Boys Outdoor Track & Field Girls Outdoor Track & Field Crew Boys Tennis Girls Tennis</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>MIAA Tournaments TBD</i></p>

MIAA Statement on Fall Sport Modifications August 28, 2020

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) COVID-19 Task Force met virtually on August 27, 2020 to review and approve sport modifications for the fall 2020 sport season. The MIAA Board of Directors approved, at their August 19, 2020 meeting, the formal athletic structure for 2020-2021 season, as well as additional Educational Athletic recommendations provided by the Task Force. These recommendations were

developed after months of meetings, discussions, research and collaboration with Massachusetts Governing entities

Cross Country

Fall 2020

General Information

Every school district/program should consult with their local health department to determine which risk level to start this program safely. Continued consultation with local health department should be used to determine when progression to the next risk level can be initiated.

This document is to be utilized in compliance with all EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines in place.

Pre-Workout/Pre-Contest Screening:

Athletes and coaches may not attend practices or games if they are isolated for illness or quarantined for exposure to infection.

Prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19 infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), they should not attend practices or games. Student-athletes and coaches who have symptoms of COVID19 infection should follow DPH guidance regarding isolation and testing.

For students with symptoms who test negative for COVID-19 infection, they may return to sport once they are approved to return to school (when afebrile for 24 hours and symptomatically improved).

Student athletes and coaches who are diagnosed with COVID-19 infection may return to school once they have been afebrile for 24 hours and with improvement in respiratory symptoms, and once ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared, according to DPH guidelines. In addition, persons with COVID19 infection need to receive written clearance from their health care provider in order to return to sport.

Student-athletes and coaches who were exposed to COVID should not participate in practices

or games until their 14-day quarantine is completed.

Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

Cohorts and/or Participants:

A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

Social distancing:

□ **Practice** – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between runners as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day.

□ **Locker Rooms** – Locker rooms and changing areas may be used but should be limited to 50% capacity. Facility Operators should ensure that users can abide by capacity restrictions and social distancing standards and establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed area. If locker rooms are utilized, staggered use based on time and distance is recommended. When possible, students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower, clean clothing, and equipment at the end of every workout.

□ **Practice Site/Course** – Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice site/course area. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic

trainers, and officials (competition). All others (i.e. managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be at the course.

□ **Personal Items** – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own gym bag for personal items (see gym bag information below). All personal items should remain in the gym back when not in use. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice.

□ **Huddles** – Social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained, as much as possible, and face coverings utilized when the coach is communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups. Communicating with smaller groups is preferred.

□ **Team Handshakes** – Athletes shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during or following practices and competitions. Some MIAA sport specific modifications suggest sportsmanship recognition practices which replace handshakes.

□ **Spectators** – Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines. The number of spectators is determined in compliance with EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines.

□ **Media** – All social distancing and hygiene guidelines for spectators must be followed by media members planning to attend games. Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry and available workspace.

Practice and Game Protocols:

□ **Masks/Face Coverings** – (See Cross Country Specific Modifications for additional clarity) Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per EEA guidelines.

Gaiters are acceptable. Face coverings comprised of multiple layers and a tighter weave are more effective and preferred.

Athletes should reference sport specific guidelines for mask breaks.

Caution should be exercised when replacing a mask if hands are soiled or dirty. For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. (Coach must possess the medical note/documentation excusing the player from wearing a mask)

It is the responsibility of the head coach to monitor and ensure that all runners not on the course are wearing face coverings. A game administrator, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this.

Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Coaches and officials may remove their face covering briefly for a “break” at any point during practice/competition when they are socially distanced greater than 6 feet. Spectators, workers, and others are required to wear face coverings and they are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

☐ **Player habits** – Coaches should work to break old habits and create new ones to minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting and nose clearing on the course during practices and competitions is not permitted. The habit of minimizing any touching of the face and covering the cough should be practiced.

☐ **Interaction with Officials** – Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet) when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach an official closer than 6 feet at any time.

☐ **Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes** – Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to and at the conclusion of running

□ **Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation** – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting, all participants will be required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants

If a school chooses to do introductions, runners will take their positions prior to being introduced. Introductions are suggested to be limited or eliminated to decrease time of athletes standing around. The National Anthem may be played before competition.

□ **Post-Game Procedures** – Refer to Team Handshakes in this guidance. Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet and should not delay departure from the competition venue. Teams and group of runners should maintain social distancing and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.

Equipment:

□ **General Equipment** – There should be no shared athletic equipment. Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following practice. Only one individual should handle the set-up and break-down of equipment on any given day (i.e. goals, cones, etc.).

□ **Personal Items** – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice/competition.

Hydration:

□ All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared.

□ Water fountains are to be used as refill stations ONLY.

COVID-19 Coach:

- It is recommended that schools could designate a coach to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.
- All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually and ensure that social distancing is maintained during training. (NFHS COVID-19 FREE Course)

Gym Bag: (Supplies recommended for your personal gym bag)

- Reusable facial covering(s)/mask(s) – The mask/face covering must be worn at all times. Sport specific modification may have further guidance for face coverings.
- Warm-up clothing, electronic devices, and other personal items that are used by the athlete, prior to practice/competition, must be placed back in the gym bag before practice/competition begins.
- Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available. There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. Be sure to have this inside a sealable bag, in case it leaks. This will be used when you enter and exit the practice/competition site, and at other necessary times in between.
- Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. When using a restroom area, it is best to disinfect any surface that may be touched, before and after using the facilities.
- Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal gym bag when not in use.
- Additional shoes should also be stored in a separate compartment or bag inside a gym bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in

the gym bag when it is not being used

****Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice and before return to practice again. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well. This is for everyone's protection.**

Cross Country Specific Modifications

When scheduling dual meets, leagues and/or schools should consider the following options where practical and/or possible:

- Contesting separate gender meets at opposite sites.
- Identifying one suitable (i.e. wider spacing) and available course, per league, to contest all league dual meets, using multiple days each week to schedule. This would provide a universal course for athletes to compete on and could also evolve into virtual scoring of a "league" meet.

Pre-Practice/ Pre-Contest:

- Practice Pods - Workouts should be conducted in pods of students, with the same 5-10 students always working out together.
- Personnel - Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice area and competition area each day (i.e. athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainer, officials and timers). All others (managers, photographers, media, spectators, etc...) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be in the starting box, finish line or practice area.
- Watches - Athletes and coaches should bring their own watch if use is desired and sharing is not permitted.

Meet Protocols:

- Dual Meets Only - Competitions should be dual meets (2 teams) only until further guidelines are given.

- Course Previews – Course previews should be provided virtually via maps or video before the day of the meet. No on-site course previews should be allowed. Consider increasing the amount of course markings and checkpoints to help guide runners (especially novice runners) through the course.
- Course Selection - An emphasis should be placed on a wider course that allows for social distancing and spacing throughout the meet.
- Warm Up Areas - Designated warm up areas should be provided for each team to ensure social distancing before the meet.
- Start Line:
 - o Staggered starts in smaller groups are required; possibly waves of 8-10 athletes**
 - Runners are to be spaced out 6 feet apart individually; ** possibly 4-5 from each school
 - Separated by school – 14 feet spacing between schools
 - Schools should use previously established cohorts from practice sessions
 - A minimum of three minute spacing should be allotted between each wave, however spacing time will be determined by size of the course to maintain social distancing.
 - o Runners should maintain social distancing throughout the race and not cluster on the course.
 - o Consideration should be given to creating waves of junior varsity (and/or freshman) runners to allow safe spacing near the start.
 - o Athletes should be grouped, with social distancing and face coverings, as a team at the start line and teams should be a minimum of 14 feet apart upon start.
 - o No common bins will be utilized at the starting line for personal items. All personal items, including warmups, headphones, etc.... cannot be taken to the

starting area.

Finish Line:

o Schools must develop a non-transmittal way of scoring the meet to ensure no popsicle sticks, cards, labels, etc..... are given out as athletes cross the finish line (consider FAT Timing, videoing, or multicolored bibs to score later).

o Consideration should be given to providing additional volunteers near the finish line to help disperse athletes who have just completed their race.

o Finish lines should be open with a minimum 28 feet to cross. Teams should be directed to finish on separate sides. Lanes should be created over the last 100 yards.

Masks/Face Coverings – Athletes can remove face coverings during the race when socially distanced but must wear it at the start of the race. Athletes should prepare to use a face covering at the conclusion of a race as soon as possible given social distancing needs as well as considering exhaustion/breathing at the conclusion of a race.

Post Workout/Post Contest:

Warm Down Areas - Designated warm down areas should be provided for each team to ensure social distancing after the meet.

Race Results

o Consideration should be given to providing additional volunteers to help compile race results in multiple, smaller gatherings

o Consideration should be given to providing race results virtually

End of Practice/End of Race – Athletes/teams should immediately disperse upon the conclusion of practice and meets.

Golf

Fall 2020

General Information

Every school district/program should consult with their local health department to determine which risk level to start this program safely. Continued consultation with local health department should be used to determine when progression to the next risk level can be initiated.

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Prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19 infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), they should not attend practices or games. Student-athletes and coaches who have symptoms of COVID19 infection should follow DPH guidance regarding isolation and testing.

For students with symptoms who test negative for COVID-19 infection, they may return to sport once they are approved to return to school (when afebrile for 24 hours and symptomatically improved).

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or games until their 14-day quarantine is completed.

Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

Cohorts and/or Participants:

A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

Social distancing:

□ **Practice** – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day.

□ **Locker Rooms** – Locker rooms and changing areas may be used but should be limited to 50% capacity. Facility Operators should ensure that users can abide by capacity restrictions and social distancing standards and establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed area. If locker rooms are utilized, staggered use based on time and distance is recommended. When possible, students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower, clean clothing, and equipment at the end of every workout.

□ **Practice Field/Course** – Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice/competition field. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials (competition). All others (i.e. managers,

photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be on the field of play.

☐ **Personal Items** –All personal items should remain in the athletes’ personal golf bag when not in use.

☐ **Spectators** – (If permitted on the golf course) Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines. The number of spectators is determined in compliance with EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines.

☐ **Media** – All social distancing and hygiene guidelines for spectators must be followed by media members planning to attend games. Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry and available workspace.

Practice and Game Protocols:

☐ **Masks/Face Coverings** – Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per EEA guidelines. Gaiters are acceptable. Face coverings comprised of multiple layers and a tighter weave are more effective and preferred. See Golf Specific Modifications for additional face covering guidance.

Caution should be exercised when replacing a mask if hands are soiled or dirty. For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. (Coach must possess the medical note/documentation excusing the player from wearing a mask)

It is the responsibility of the head coach to monitor and ensure that all players not on the playing field are wearing face coverings as required. A game administrator, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this.

Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Coaches and officials may remove their face covering briefly for a “break” at any point during play when they are socially distanced greater than 6 feet. Spectators, workers, and others are required to wear face coverings and they are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

□ **Player habits** – Coaches should work to break old habits and create new ones to minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting, nose clearing on the course, licking fingers, and spitting on gloves during practices and competitions is not permitted. The habit of minimizing any touching of the face and covering the cough should be practiced.

□ **Interaction with Officials** – Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet) when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach an official closer than 6 feet at any time.

□ **Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes** – Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to practice/competition and after. Additionally, it is emphasized to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

□ **Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation** – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting all participants will be required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants

If a school chooses to do introductions, players will take their position on the tee prior to being introduced. Introductions are suggested to be limited or eliminated to decrease time of athletes on the competition field.

□ **Post-Game Procedures** – Refer to Team Handshakes in this guidance. Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet and should not delay departure from the competition venue. Teams and group of players should maintain social distancing and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.

Equipment:

□ **General Equipment** – There should be no shared athletic equipment. Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following practice.

□ **Personal Items** – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag or golf bag. If separate gym bags are used by players, they should be placed in a predetermined area.

Hydration:

□ All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared.

□ Water fountains are to be used as refill stations **ONLY**.

COVID-19 Coach:

□ It is recommended that schools could designate a coach to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.

□ All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.

□ Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually and ensure that social distancing is maintained during training. (NFHS COVID-19 FREE Course)

Golf Bag/Gym Bag: (Supplies recommended for a personal bag)

- Reusable facial covering(s)/mask(s) – The mask/face covering must be worn at all times when not playing on the golf course. See Golf Specific Modifications below for further guidance about face coverings.

 - Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available. There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. Be sure to have this inside a sealable bag, in case it leaks. This will be used when you enter and exit the practice/competition site, and at other necessary times in between.

 - Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. When using a restroom area, it is best to disinfect any surface that may be touched, before and after using the facilities.

 - Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal golf/gym bag when not in use.

 - Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in the golf/gym bag when it is not being used
- **Everything inside the golf/gym bag must be disinfected after every practice and before return to practice again. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well. This is for everyone's protection.**

Golf Specific Modifications**Individual Player Safety Responsibilities Throughout the Season:**

- Players should not be using the Clubhouse, except for use of the restrooms, one by one.
- There will be no handshakes, fist, or elbow bumps among players.

- All players must use their own equipment and golf balls. Players should not handle or touch other players golf balls or equipment
- All safety protocols put in place by the golf course must be followed.

Coach Responsibilities:

- Prior to each match, visiting coaches should send a list of participants to the home coach. The home coach should send a copy of the local rules to the opposing coach to eliminate the need for any handouts, other than scorecards.
- All coaches should make sure that their players are familiar with the Rules of Golf and Golf Course modifications specific to Covid-19, especially free relief for disturbed areas in the bunker and not touching the flagsticks.

Mask and Social Distancing Protocol:

- Upon arrival at the course, face coverings must be worn and social distancing of six feet must be practiced in all common areas of the golf course, including the driving range and practice greens.
- Removal of face coverings is permitted during competition but must be returned to the face anytime players need to be within six feet of each other. Players should be especially cautious of small or narrow areas i.e. bridges or narrow walkways as well as travel from the green to the next tee.
- If social distancing prior to the match is not possible due to space constraints, then participants should remain in or near their mode of transportation until it is time to move to the 1st tee. The home coach is responsible for enforcing all regulations.

Event and Scorecard Protocol:

- When directed to, each group of players will move to the 1st tee, remaining socially distanced. Scorecards and pencils will be handed out to players by the home coach who will wear protective gloves during the process. Each player will receive a scorecard

as the Marker for another player's score and should also note his/her own hole by hole score as well. At no time will players exchange score cards.

- Single tee starts should be staggered, at a minimum of 10 minutes between groups to support social distancing.

- Social distancing must be maintained throughout the round and all Covid-19 course regulations followed. Coaches are encouraged to travel throughout the golf course during the match to ensure that all participants are following all safety guidelines.

- At the conclusion of each round, the Marker will put his/her signature on the scorecard that has been kept with the other player's score. The Marker and the player will then report to a designated scoring area and hand the scorecard to one of the coaches who will be recording the scores. The player will then verbally confirm his/her score.

Throughout this process, social distancing should be maintained, and face coverings should be worn. The coach will be wearing protective gloves to receive the scorecards.

Post-Match:

- Once scores have been officially recorded each group of players will then return to their mode of transportation.

- District and/or school transportation regulations are expected to be followed.

Soccer
Fall 2020
General Information

Every school district/program should consult with their local health department to determine which risk level to start this program safely. Continued consultation with local health department should be used to determine when progression to the next risk level can be initiated.

This document is to be utilized in compliance with all EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines in place.

Pre-Workout/Pre-Contest Screening:

Athletes and coaches may not attend practices or games if they are isolated for illness or quarantined for exposure to infection.

Prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19 infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), they should not attend practices or games. Student-athletes and coaches who have symptoms of COVID19 infection should follow DPH guidance regarding isolation and testing.

For students with symptoms who test negative for COVID-19 infection, they may return to sport once they are approved to return to school (when afebrile for 24 hours and symptomatically improved).

Student athletes and coaches who are diagnosed with COVID-19 infection may return to school once they have been afebrile for 24 hours and with improvement in respiratory symptoms, and once ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared, according to DPH guidelines. In addition, persons with COVID19 infection need to receive written clearance from their health care provider in order to return to sport.

Student-athletes and coaches who were exposed to COVID should not participate in practices or games until their 14-day quarantine is completed.

Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

Cohorts and/or Participants:

A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

Social distancing:

□ **Practice** – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day.

□ **Locker Rooms** – Locker rooms and changing areas may be used but should be limited to 50% capacity. Facility Operators should ensure that users can abide by capacity

restrictions and social distancing standards and establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed area. If locker rooms are utilized, staggered use based on time and distance is recommended.

When possible, students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower, clean clothing, and equipment at the end of every workout.

□ **Benches** – No benches should be used during practice. Players' items should be separated as below for personal items, at least 6 feet apart. Benches should be permitted only during games.

□ **Practice Field** – Only essential personnel are permitted on the practice/competition field. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials (competition). All others (i.e. managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be on the field of play.

□ **Personal Items** – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own gym bag for personal items (see gym bag information below). All personal items should remain in the gym bag when not in use. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice.

□ **Huddles** – Social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained, as much as possible, and face coverings utilized when the coach is communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups. Communicating with smaller groups is preferred.

□ **Team Handshakes** – Athletes shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during or following practices and competitions. Some MIAA sport specific modifications suggest sportsmanship recognition practices which replace handshakes.

- **Spectators** – Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines. The number of spectators is determined in compliance with EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines.

- **Media** – All social distancing and hygiene guidelines for spectators must be followed by media members planning to attend games. Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry and available workspace.

Practice and Game Protocols:

- **Masks/Face Coverings** – Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per EEA guidelines. Gaiters are acceptable. Face coverings comprised of multiple layers and a tighter weave are more effective and preferred.

During play when spacing between players is greater than 10 ft athletes may momentarily take brief face covering relief. The default expectation is that the mask will be on. Athletes should reference sport specific guidelines for mask breaks. Athletes that use mouthpieces should prepare to have extra face coverings available. Caution should be exercised when replacing a mask if hands are soiled or dirty. For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. (Coach must possess the medical note/documentation excusing the player from wearing a mask)

It is the responsibility of the head coach to monitor and ensure that all players not on the playing field are wearing face coverings. A game administrator, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this.

Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Coaches and officials

may remove their face covering briefly for a “break” at any point during play when they are socially distanced greater than 6 feet. Spectators, workers, and others are required to wear face coverings and they are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

□ **Player habits** – Coaches should work to break old habits and create new ones to minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting, nose clearing on the field, licking fingers, and spitting on gloves during practices and competitions is not permitted. The habit of minimizing any touching of the face and covering the cough should be practiced.

□ **Interaction with Officials** – Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet) when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach a referee closer than 6 feet at any time.

□ **Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes** – Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to taking the field and upon return to the sideline. Additionally, it is emphasized to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

□ **Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation** – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting all participants will be required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants

If a school chooses to do introductions, players will take their position on the field prior to being introduced. Introductions are suggested to be limited or eliminated to decrease time of athletes on the competition field. The National Anthem may be played before competition.

- **Ball Retrievers** – Ball retrievers for any sport ARE NOT permitted. See sport specific modifications for extra ball placement procedures.
- **Post-Game Procedures** – Refer to Team Handshakes in this guidance. Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet and should not delay departure from the competition venue. Teams and group of players should maintain social distancing and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.

Equipment:

- **General Equipment** – There should be no shared athletic equipment. Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately following practice. Only one individual should handle the set-up and break-down of equipment on any given day (i.e. goals, cones, etc.).
- **Balls** – Each player should bring their own ball or use the same school-issued ball during practice. Skill training, conditioning, agility, etc. can be done with the one player/one ball concept. Balls must be sanitized before and after each practice/game. Sport specific modifications also list other ball cleaning practices during competition.
- **Personal Items** – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice/competition.

Hydration:

- All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared.
- Water fountains are to be used as refill stations ONLY.

COVID-19 Coach:

- It is recommended that schools could designate a coach to be responsible for

responding to COVID-19 concerns.

- All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually and ensure that social distancing is maintained during training. (NFHS COVID-19 FREE Course)

Gym Bag: (Supplies recommended for a personal gym bag)

- Reusable facial covering(s)/mask(s) – The mask/face covering must be worn at all times. Sport specific modification may have further guidance for face coverings.
- Warm-up clothing, electronic devices, and other personal items that are used by the athlete, prior to practice/competition, must be placed back in the gym bag before practice/competition begins.
- Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available. There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. Be sure to have this inside a sealable bag, in case it leaks. This will be used when you enter and exit the practice/competition site, and at other necessary times in between.
- Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. When using a restroom area, it is best to disinfect any surface that may be touched, before and after using the facilities.
- Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal gym bag when not in use.
- Additional shoes should also be stored in a separate compartment or bag inside a gym bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in the gym bag when it is not being used

****Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice and before return to**

practice again. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well. This is for everyone's protection.

Soccer Specific Modifications

Massachusetts high school soccer will be played under the NFHS rules as has always been the case, with the following modifications.

Game Management:

- Each bench area must be set up at least 10 yards from midfield. Team benches (or chairs) must be set up to ensure social distancing between players, coaches, trainers, etc. on the sidelines. Teams may end up having players stretched out far down the sideline. Each team may have no more than 3 adults in the bench area throughout the contest (coaches, volunteers, statisticians, trainers, videographers - are all included).
- Cheerleaders will not be allowed. This is to limit the number of people on the sidelines during games.
- The Timeout Rule will be suspended. No timeouts will be allowed.
- All games will be played in four equal quarters with a 2-minute break between quarters 1 2, 3 and 4. Halftime will remain as 10 minutes. Each of the 11 players heading to the sidelines for two minutes may take their face covering off and get water from their own container. They should also use hand sanitizer at this time.
- All substitutes checking into the game should use hand sanitizer provided at the score table and check into the game "near" midfield but socially distant from others including game administrators.

Equipment:

- All players, coaches, referees, and other game personnel must wear a face covering during play except:

A player can take off their face covering at a point during the game when they are more than 10 feet away from an opponent. This is to take a "mask break."

The default expectation is that the face covering will be on. Failure to have your face covering securely/properly worn according to these modifications/guidelines, will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team as well as a yellow card for the player in violation.

- It is the responsibility of the head coach to certify that their entire team is wearing appropriate/approved face coverings prior to each contest. When the official asks the coach if the team is properly equipped, this will also include that the team has appropriate face coverings.
- If the game official feels that conditions are not safe in the bench area, as it relates to face coverings, they may issue a yellow card to the head coach for failure to enforce the face covering or social distancing rules in the bench area.
- The home team must provide at least 8 balls to have available around the playing area that may be put in play at any time. Members of each team who are not on the field may assist in retrieving balls with their feet to get them back to the sideline/goal line.
- Balls must be wiped down or sprayed (with approved disinfecting products) by the game administrator after each quarter of play and at the game's end.
- Goalkeepers may not spit on their gloves. They can wet them with a water bottle. If the coach/official sees this happen, gloves will be taken out of play.

Rules within the Game:

- It is a violation to intentionally head the ball. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- It is a violation to place your hands on any part of an opposing team member's body. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.
- It is a violation to intentionally make body contact with an opposing team member's body. This includes "shoulder to shoulder" tackling, backing into them or any other intentional contact. It will result in an indirect free kick for the opposing team.

However, a player is allowed to make unintentional contact with an opposing team member if the player is attempting to make "foot to ball" contact and the resulting

contact with the opposing team member is below the torso, fleeting and minor in nature.

- It is a violation to attempt or to slide tackle. This will result in a direct kick.
- Persistent infringement of any of the above modified rules (III a-d) will also result in a yellow card.

Restarts:

- All players on the field MUST properly wear their face covering on every restart. No restart may be taken prior to the official indicating that play may resume. On each restart, the referees will whistle as usual upon the violation or stoppage of play, then they will pause to make sure all players are properly wearing the face covering, then whistle to indicate that play may resume.
- All players must maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and all teammates and opponents at the commencement of all restarts.
- All indirect kicks MUST be played on the ground except for a goal kick which is addressed below.
- There will be no throw-ins. When the ball crosses the touchline, the restart will be a “kick-in,” which will be treated the same as all other indirect-kicks- including that the opposing team members must be at least 10 yards from the ball. The ball will be placed on the spot on the touchline where the ball went out of bounds or behind it.
- It is a violation to kick a goal kick in the air beyond the midfield line. If the ball does travel in the air beyond the midfield line without touching a player, the resulting restart is an indirect kick for the opposing team from the spot it crossed midfield.
- It is a violation for the goalkeeper to kick, punt, dropkick or throw the ball in the air beyond the midfield line. If the ball does travel in the air beyond the midfield line without touching a player, the resulting restart is an indirect kick for the opposing team from the spot it crossed midfield.
- The use of a dropped ball is suspended. To replace this procedure, an indirect kick will

be awarded to the team whom the referees deemed to be in possession at the time of stoppage.

- The use of a traditional defensive “wall” is not allowed on any restart. Players may attempt to impede the path of the ball to the goal by standing in the way but they must be at least 10 yards away from the ball and at least 6 feet away from other players.
- Corner kicks are an indirect kick.
- Penalty kicks will be handled in the same manner of a penalty shootout in that the ball will be dead once it has hit the goalkeeper or goal. No rebounds allowed. All the typical rules of a penalty shootout apply. If a goal is scored - it is a goal. If the ball goes over the goal line but is not a goal, it is either a goal kick or corner kick depending on the call of the official. If the ball rebounds off the goal or goalkeeper and comes to rest in the field of play, the restart will be a goal kick for the defending team.

Referees/Game Officials:

- If a player steps in the direction of the referee with intent to complain/argue, that player will be given a yellow card. If the player comes within 6 feet of an official to complain/argue, a red card will be issued.
- Referees are instructed to exit the field and facility immediately upon the final whistle. They are not expected to sign the game sheet this year. It is the responsibility of the game administrator/coaches to make sure the information on the game sheet is correct.
- Officials shall use alternative whistles such as electronic whistles; air horns are permissible.

Swimming & Diving

Fall 2020

General Information

Every school district/program should consult with their local health department to determine which risk level to start this program safely. Continued consultation with local health department should be used to determine when progression to the next risk level can be initiated.

This document is to be utilized in compliance with all EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines in place.

Pre-Workout/Pre-Contest Screening:

Athletes and coaches may not attend practices or games if they are isolated for illness or quarantined for exposure to infection.

Prior to attending practices or games, athletes and coaches should check their temperature. If a student-athlete or a coaching staff member has a temperature of 100 degrees or above, they should not attend practices or games. Likewise if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19 infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), they should not attend practices or games. Student-athletes and coaches who have symptoms of COVID19 infection should follow DPH guidance regarding isolation and testing.

For students with symptoms who test negative for COVID-19 infection, they may return to sport once they are approved to return to school (when afebrile for 24 hours and symptomatically improved).

Student athletes and coaches who are diagnosed with COVID-19 infection may return to school once they have been afebrile for 24 hours and with improvement in respiratory symptoms, and

once ten days have passed since symptoms first appeared, according to DPH guidelines. In addition, persons with COVID19 infection need to receive written clearance from their health care provider in order to return to sport.

Student-athletes and coaches who were exposed to COVID should not participate in practices or games until their 14-day quarantine is completed.

Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

Cohorts and/or Participants:

A record should be kept of all individuals present at team activities i.e. – practices, practice cohorts, competitions, etc.

Social distancing:

□ **Practice** – Coaches are responsible for ensuring social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This includes additional spacing between athletes while stretching, warming up, chatting, changing drills, etc. Athletes must maintain spacing, and there should be no congregating of athletes while running drills. Workouts should be conducted in ‘pods’ of athletes, with the same 5-10 athletes always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. Records should be kept of who is in each group, each day.

□ **Locker Rooms** – Locker rooms and changing areas may be used but should be limited to 50% capacity. Facility Operators should ensure that users can abide by capacity restrictions and social distancing standards and establish signage and visual guidelines. Signage should remind users to limit time spent in enclosed area. If locker rooms are utilized, staggered use based on time and distance is recommended.

When possible, students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower, clean clothing, and equipment at the end of every workout.

□ **Practice Site/Pool** – Only essential personnel are permitted on the deck or in the area where athletes are practicing/competing. These are defined as athletes, coaches, medical personnel/athletic trainers, and officials (competition). All others (i.e. managers, photographers, media, etc.) are considered non-essential personnel and are not to be on the deck in close contact with participants.

□ **Personal Items** – It is recommended that each athlete bring their own gym bag for personal items (see gym bag information below). All personal items should remain in the gym back when not in use. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice.

□ **Huddles** – Social distancing (6 feet between individuals) must be maintained, as much as possible, and face coverings utilized when the coach is communicating with the entire team, or in smaller groups. Communicating with smaller groups is preferred.

□ **Team Handshakes** – Athletes shall NOT exchange handshakes before, during or following practices and competitions. Some MIAA sport specific modifications suggest sportsmanship recognition practices which replace handshakes.

□ **Spectators** – Spectators must practice social distancing between different household units and accept personal responsibility for public health guidelines. The number of spectators is determined in compliance with EEA, DESE and DPH guidelines.

□ **Media** – All social distancing and hygiene guidelines for spectators must be followed by media members planning to attend games. Media members should contact host school administrators prior to arriving at games to plan appropriate entry and available workspace.

Practice and Game Protocols:

□ **Masks/Face Coverings** – Athletes are required to wear cloth face coverings/masks per EEA guidelines. Gaiters are acceptable. Face coverings comprised of multiple layers and a tighter weave are more effective and preferred.

Wet face coverings can lose effectiveness. It should be noted that extra face coverings for swimmers may be necessary and should be planned for.

During competition when spacing between participants is greater than 10 ft athletes may momentarily take brief face covering relief. The default expectation is that the mask will be on. Athletes should reference sport specific guidelines for mask breaks. Caution should be exercised when replacing a mask if hands are wet, soiled, or dirty. For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. (Coach must possess the medical note/documentation excusing the player from wearing a mask)

It is the responsibility of the head coach to monitor and ensure that all players not on the playing field are wearing face coverings. A game administrator, home athletic director, or other designee may also assist in monitoring this.

Coaches and officials are also required to wear face coverings. Coaches and officials may remove their face covering briefly for a “break” at any point during play when they are socially distanced greater than 6 feet. Spectators, workers, and others are required to wear face coverings and they are expected to follow social distancing guidelines.

□ **Player habits** – Coaches should work to break old habits and create new ones to minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting, licking fingers, and spitting on hands during practices and competitions is not permitted. The habit of minimizing any touching of the face and covering the cough should be practiced.

□ **Interaction with Officials** – Coaches must follow social distancing guidelines (6 feet)

when interacting with an official or any other individual. Conversations can occur at a distance. Athletes should not approach a official closer than 6 feet at any time.

□ **Hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes** – Athletes, coaches, and officials are encouraged to provide their own hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and/or sanitizing wipes and use them frequently – including prior to taking the field and upon return to the sideline. Additionally, it is emphasized to avoid touching the face throughout practice and competition.

□ **Pre-Game Introductions and Preparation** – If pre-game meetings are necessary, they should be held with limited team representation – a single coach, single captain, etc. At the pregame meeting, all participants will be required to wear face coverings and to socially distance from all participants

If a school chooses to do introductions, players will take their position on the field prior to being introduced. Introductions are suggested to be limited or eliminated to decrease time of athletes on the competition field. The National Anthem may be played before competition.

□ **Post-Game Procedures** – Refer to Team Handshakes in this guidance. Recognition of the other team, coaches and/or officials should be done from a distance greater than 6 feet and should not delay departure from the competition venue. Teams and group of players should maintain social distancing and/or staggering departure times at the conclusion of the contest.

Equipment:

□ **General Equipment** – There should be no shared athletic equipment. Any equipment that is used for practice should be cleaned and disinfected prior to and immediately

following practice. Only one individual should handle the set-up and break-down of equipment on any given day (i.e. goals, cones, etc.).

Personal Items – Shoes, clothing, towels, and other personal items must not be shared among athletes. Any items that are not currently being worn/used should be stored inside a personal gym bag. Gym bags should be placed in a predetermined area 6 feet apart for the duration of practice/competition.

Hydration:

- All students must bring their own water bottle. Water bottles cannot be shared.
- Water fountains are to be used as refill stations ONLY.

COVID-19 Coach:

- It is recommended that schools could designate a coach to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.
- All coaches, staff, officials, and families should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Train coaches, officials, and staff on all safety protocols. Conduct training virtually and ensure that social distancing is maintained during training. (NFHS COVID-19 FREE Course)

Gym Bag: (Supplies recommended for a personal gym bag)

- Reusable facial covering(s)/mask(s) – The mask/face covering must be worn at all times. Sport specific modification may have further guidance for face coverings. Extra face coverings should be planned for.
 - Warm-up clothing, electronic devices, and other personal items that are used by the athlete, prior to practice/competition, must be placed back in the gym bag before practice/competition begins.
 - Athletes are recommended to always have a personal bottle of hand sanitizer available.
- There will be less chance of possible cross contamination and less time standing

around waiting to use a shared hand sanitizer. Be sure to have this inside a sealable bag, in case it leaks. This will be used when you enter and exit the practice/competition site, and at other necessary times in between.

- Athletes are recommended to have disinfectant wipes for personal use. When using a restroom area, it is best to disinfect any surface that may be touched, before and after using the facilities.
- Athletic braces, tape, inhalers, or any other sports-medical item used before, during or after practice/meets should be stored in a personal gym bag when not in use.
- Additional shoes should also be stored in a separate compartment or bag inside a gym bag to prevent possible cross contamination with other items in the gym bag.
- Any other item that is deemed necessary for practice or competition must be stored in the gym bag when it is not being used

****Everything inside the gym bag must be disinfected after every practice and before return to practice again. Be sure to spray the inside and the outside of the bag as well. This is for everyone's protection.**

Swimming Specific Guidelines

All current and future EEA, MIAA, and DESE guidelines pertaining to the sport of swimming and diving will be adhered to throughout the Fall season. In addition, any state Mandated Safety Standards for Public and Semi-Public Pools will be incorporated into individual swimming and diving team practices and dual meet planning. It is also understood that local Boards of Health and individual facilities may impose additional standards as well as restrictions and will be the final authority on site usage rules for team practices/meets.

Recommended Guidelines & Best Practices for High School Dual Meets

- During the Fall I High School Swimming and Diving season dual meet in person competition will be the standard. If virtual meets are utilized, competition could be

expanded to more than two participating teams.

□ The host team will be required to contact the visiting school at least 48 hours in advance of the meet to review any facility restrictions in terms of spectators, number of athletes who can compete, warm up protocols, availability of locker rooms as well as the amount of time available to conduct the meet.

□ Hand sanitizer will be provided at the scorer's table.

General Considerations:

□ Team Seating and Lane Selection - Teams will sit on opposite sides of the pool whenever possible and remain in this area throughout the meet. The visiting team will have choice of either lanes 1 – 3 or 4 – 6 for competition. (Note this is a change from the traditional even/odd lane selection for competition.)

□ Spacing for Officials – It should be noted that 6 foot spacing is recommended to allow officials to work both sides of the pool during a meet.

□ Warm-ups - Depending on the time available and number of swimmers allowed per lane, teams may have to adjust within the normal warm –up period to accommodate as many athletes as possible (i.e. 2 – 15 min., 3 – 10 min. 4 – 7min. blocks etc.)

□ Warm Down - At the conclusion of each race all swimmers (including anchor leg of relays) must swim to the other end of the pool and exit from this location. This will supplement warm-ups and eliminate any additional congestion in the starting area while times are being collected and preparations for the next race are underway.

Swimmers participating on the first three legs of relays will depart the starting area immediately after finishing.

□ Submission of Entries NFHS 5 - 2 – To minimize multiple handling of paper entries and/or if electronic entries are not feasible, alternative submission methods should be designed to reduce face to face interactions. One method may be to submit all entries on a single sheet of paper to the scorer's table at the start of the meet with the understanding that a change can be made at any time prior to the long whistle signaling the start of an event. Where/how to/when entries are submitted should be a discussion

item during the coaches' phone conference and reviewed again in the pre contest meeting with head coaches and an official.

□ Diving - To streamline the meet, diving will be the first event per NFHS 5- 2a with a 10 minute in water break provided where the event would normally be held. The number of exhibition divers expecting to compete should be discussed in the pre meet coaches phone conversation and reviewed again in the pre contest meeting with head coaches and an official.

□ During Races - Athletes and team personnel must wear face coverings and remain on their respective side of the pool while all races are in progress. Athletes should be separated by a minimum distance of 3 – 6 feet (while wearing face coverings) if they line up on their team's side of the pool. Due to the increased possibility of virus transmission caused by yelling and many individuals speaking at the same time, group cheering will not be permitted.

□ Lap Counting - Per NFHS 2 – 7 -6 and 3 – 4 only one person per team is allowed behind the lane to serve as a counter for the 500 yd Freestyle event. Hand sanitizer should be provided, and each lap counter is required to clean their hands as well as wipe down their counting devices at the conclusion of the race.

Officials and Meet Admin Personnel:

□ To minimize personal contact, officials will hold the required pre-meet conference with just one member of each coaching staff, and a separate pre meet captains' meeting with just one representative from each team.

□ At the conclusion of each race, timers will remain behind their respective lane, and one of the two meet officials will record the individual time to maximize social distancing. The other official will check in with the scoring table after each event.

□ All relay "take off" judging will be performed from the sides of the pool. Relay swimmers will be spaced 3–6 feet apart (wearing face coverings) from each other behind their respective lanes. The next swimmer to enter the pool can unmask after previous

swimmer enters the pool and must maintain 6 ft spacing from the next relay participant and other participants. If this type of spacing is not attainable, the other relay participants will remain on their respective sidelines until it is appropriate for them to move in and swim their respective relay “leg”. Swimmers competing on the first three relay legs will leave the starting area immediately after finishing. Only one relay grouping will be allowed in the area behind the blocks while relay events are being conducted.

□ Various procedures, rules, and disqualification notices require interaction between officials, coaches, and athletes with social distancing and use of face coverings.

Alternative methods of communication can include utilization of electronic whistles, PA system, hand signals and/or written communication.

□ The diving event might also require alternative methods of submitting entries and movement of non-electronic information might be required. Individuals seated at the scorer’s table/desk must also utilize 6 foot spacing and wear face coverings.

Post Meet Responsibilities and Additional Information:

□ All “high touch” surface areas must be cleaned at the conclusion of each meet to include but not limited to team benches, scorer’s table, pool ladders, diving board/handrails and starting blocks.

□ Activity organizers should ensure that individuals are not congregating in common areas or parking lots following practices or events.

□ If “Virtual Meet” competition is utilized a list of guidelines for conducting this type of meet will be published in advance of the season start date to assist with logistics and planning.

Sources:

MIAA COVID Task Force, http://www.miaa.net/contentm/easy_pages/view.php?sid=38&page_id=317

Sports Medicine: Return to Sports during COVID-19 Minimum Guidelines (High School) <https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/sports-medicine/documents/return-to-play/high-school-athlete-guidelines-pdf.pdf?la=en>

NATA, National Athletic Trainers Association, COVID Resource Center, <https://www.nata.org/practice-patient-care/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus>

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities - Phase III <https://www.mass.gov/doc/safety-standards-for-youth-and-adult-amateur-sports-activities-phase-iii-step-1/download>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) COVID Information and Resources, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Malden Catholic Fall Re-Entry Guidelines,
<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1598634114/malden/kw0bws5i4uo20opyfhc/MCReopeningBrochure-Final3.pdf>