



# ATHLETIC HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

## Winter Sports 2020-2021

### Upper Perkiomen School District

#### Overview

COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus that affects the respiratory system and can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. Virus symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness that could require hospitalization. COVID-19 can affect people of all ages.

An individual can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19 since the virus is primarily spread from person to person. Infection occurs from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Infection may also occur by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of spreading and contracting COVID-19, current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. The Upper Perkiomen School District will take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of students and staff while following the recommendations of federal, state and local governments as well as the CDC, SLUHN, NFHS and PIAA. As more information becomes available about COVID-19, this plan may be modified and updated.

**Return to Activity Following Inactivity:** A thoughtful approach to exercise gives athletes a chance to acclimatize to the temperature and the intensity/duration of practices. This slow ramp up of exercise can decrease the risk of injury and heat illness. Since practices and competitions have been halted, many athletes are deconditioned, putting the athlete at much higher risk for injury if pushed too quickly with high volumes and high intensity. Overtraining, defined as prolonged or excessive repetitive activity or workouts in efforts to “catch up,” does not allow the body to adjust and recover, which can lead to decreased performance and/or increased risk of injury.

#### High Risk Groups

People with a higher risk of COVID-19 should consider delaying their participation in sports and activities given the increased risk.

Some of the higher risk categories are:

People at Higher Risk for Severe Illness	Individuals who are Pregnant or Breastfeeding
People who are immunocompromised	Individuals with Diabetes
Older Adults age 65 and Older	Individuals with Chronic Kidney Disease
Individuals with Asthma or Chronic Lung Disease	Individuals with Severe Obesity (BMI 40+)
Individuals with HIV	Individuals with Liver Disease

If there is a concern about the risk associated with participation due to underlying health conditions, the individual should consult their health care provider prior to returning to sports.

### **Point of Contact**

The primary point of contact for this plan is the Athletic Director. Secondary contacts are the Athletic Trainers.

### **Attendance**

Any student-athlete or coach attending a practice or competition should be in a good physical condition. Anyone feeling sick or experiencing any unusual symptoms associated with COVID-19 must stay home to protect themselves and others.

If a student-athlete starts to feel sick at a practice or competition, the individual should immediately inform one of the coaches who should isolate the individual. The parent/guardian should be alerted immediately by the coach or athletic trainer and the student-athlete should be sent home.

### **PPE Requirements**

All coaches directly interacting with student-athletes must wear face coverings at all times. Any exceptions to this – for medical reasons – must be approved by the Athletic Director.

In accordance with new state guidance, student-athletes must wear a face covering at all times, including during sport activities. The only exception is for swimmers, who should remove their face covering right before getting into the water or starting their race. Face masks which are worn during PIAA competitions may not have any advertising or corporate names on them.

### **Practice/Contest Screening**

When a coach or student-athlete arrives for a practice or contest, ALL will be required to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds (or use hand sanitizer if a handwashing station is not available). Following that, the individual will report to the athletic trainer, or coach, who will screen each individual. During this screening process, coaches, athletic trainers and student-athletes must be wearing a face covering. Documentation will be done via a paper/computerized form or the use of online documentation. Coaches that perform screenings will keep this documentation and will send it to the athletic trainers to have a backup copy in the medical files. Responses of screening questions for each student-athlete is to be recorded and stored, and may be used to keep a record of everyone present, should a student, coach, or staff member develop COVID-19.

Per the UPSD Health and Safety Plan, if a student-athlete or coach has one Group A symptom or two Group B symptoms, the student-athlete or coach will be isolated and sent home. Parents will be asked to have their student-athlete examined by a medical professional and to provide follow-up documentation that the student-athlete is free from the COVID-19 virus.

As part of this process, the individual conducting the screening will utilize a non-contact thermometer to take the temperature of each student-athlete and coach. If someone registers a temperature of 100.4 or higher, he/she will be isolated for 5 minutes and the temperature will be taken again. Following another 5-minute isolation period, the student-athlete will have a third temperature reading. If the average temperature of the 3 readings is 100.4 or higher, the parent/guardian must be contacted to pick up the student-athlete. At this point, parents will be asked to have the student-athlete examined by a medical professional and to provide follow-up documentation that the student-athlete is free from the COVID-19 virus.

If a student-athlete or coach gets sick, he/she will be isolated, parents/guardians will be notified and they will be sent home and must follow the student-athlete/coach return to play protocol.

### **Education and Acknowledgement Form**

Prior to participation in athletics, parents will be required to sign PIAA Section 10: Supplemental Acknowledgement, Waiver and Release: COVID-19 indicating that they and their child understand the risks of

COVID-19 associated with participation. This acknowledgement form must be electronically signed before a student-athlete can begin participation. Included in the form will be information about COVID-19 and safety precautions that can be taken.

All coaches are required to sign an Acknowledgement Form stating they have read the Health and Safety Plan for winter sports and agree to follow the guidelines.

Coaches will encourage any student-athlete who feels sick to remain home.

Signs will be posted in bathrooms and near training facilities emphasizing social distancing and proper hygiene.

### **Social Distancing**

While contact is permitted, coaches and student-athletes should stay 6 feet apart whenever possible. An example of this includes during warm-up runs and stretching. Workout and training activities must be organized to allow for this required spacing. Student athletes should continue to remain 6 feet apart when not actively participating (ie. sidelines, bench).

Coaches will group student-athletes in small pods as appropriate.

In addition, student-athletes should not enter or leave the practice facility together or within 6 feet of each other. Student-athletes must wear masks when entering and leaving the facilities. Parents picking up student-athletes should remain in their vehicles. If student-athletes must carpool, it is recommended that they wear a mask inside the car.

Student-athlete and coach bags, apparel, etc. should be separated 6 feet apart. All personal supplies should be labeled with the owner's name on it to prevent someone from picking up the wrong bag.

### **Number of Participants**

Each activity area will be limited to 25 participants (or such other numbers as the Commonwealth, PIAA, Montgomery County or CDC may determine) which includes coaches and student-athletes. Parents, community members and spectators may not be permitted to attend.

### **Equipment Sanitizing**

Prior to each workout, all equipment will be sanitized. Student-athletes should not share equipment with one another unless inherent to the sport. This includes athletic equipment, pinnies, towels, clothing etc. Whenever possible, any time equipment is used by one individual, it will be sanitized prior to the next person using that piece of equipment. If not feasible, athletic equipment should be cleaned often throughout the workout.

Every team will be provided with a minimum of one spray bottle filled with a sanitizing solution. This will be refilled as needed.

Student-athletes and coaches will be encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer frequently during training sessions. Student-athletes are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer to practices and games, especially for away games.

### **Bathrooms**

A maximum of 2 individuals may be in the bathrooms at any given time. These spaces will be cleaned on a regular basis. Doors to enter these areas will be propped open when possible to allow for air flow.

### **Hydration**

All student-athletes must provide their own water bottles and hydration which should be labeled with the individuals' name. Student-athletes will not be permitted to participate without water. The District will not provide water or the use of coolers during this time. In addition, water fountains will not be available.

### **Personal Conduct**

There will be no chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers or eating sunflower seeds. Student-athletes will not be allowed to shake hands, high five one another, chest bump, hug or fist bump during practices and contests.

### **Indoor Facilities**

Due to social distancing guidelines and state mandates, the following facilities may be used with all occupants wearing masks and being at least 6 feet apart but are limited to the number of occupants listed below:

HS Athletic Training Room - 9	MS Athletic Training Room - 3	4-5 Athletic Training Room - 5
Boys Gym Locker Rooms - 15	Boys Varsity Locker Rooms - 8	Girls Gym Locker Rooms - 12
Girls Varsity Locker Room - 10	Boys Middle School Locker Room - 12	Girls Middle School Locker Room - 12
Boys 4-5 Locker Room – 10	Girls 4-5 Locker Room - 16	Coaches Offices - 1
Swim Locker Rooms - 7	*Weight Room - 12	Natatorium – 25
Auxiliary Gymnasium - 25	Gymnasium – 25	

When using the weight room, masks must be worn and equipment will be allocated to one student-athlete at a time. Individuals must remain a minimum of 6 feet apart. All equipment must be wiped down after each use.

### **Hygiene**

At the conclusion of practices or contests, student-athletes should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. Student-athletes will be encouraged to shower as soon as they get home from an athletic event. In addition, student-athletes should be encouraged to wash all garments and wash or disinfect equipment after each practice or contest.

### **Facility Cleaning**

All facilities utilized will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. The Director of Buildings and Grounds will establish a schedule for cleaning.

### **Travel to Away Competitions**

Bus or van transportation will be provided to away events. Face coverings will be mandatory for all trips and any and all regulations established by the busing contractor and/or school district will be strictly followed and enforced.

### **Team Meals**

Family-style team meals will not be permitted. If there are team functions that require meals, these should be individually packaged and participants must stay 6 feet apart when eating.

### **Home Competitions**

All home competitions will follow the parameters of this plan. Individual sports will have specific guidelines based on the facility being used and the unique requirements of each sport.

Contest sites will have sanitation supplies available for players, coaches, officials and games workers.

### **All Competition Considerations**

The pre-game conference in all sports will be limited to one official, the head coach from each team and one captain from each team. These individuals should be a minimum of 6 feet apart and/or be wearing masks. This includes the coin toss as well. These conferences will be moved to the center of the court and away from other coaches or players warming up.

Coaches and players on the bench should be wearing masks and sitting 6 feet or more apart.

The scoring table will be limited to the home team scorer and/or timer. If space is available, the visiting team scorer will be permitted at the table. All seating will be 6 feet or more apart.

During the pre-game introductions there will be no hand shaking. In addition, all players and coaches must be 6 feet apart during introductions. There will be no post-game handshake line between teams and officials.

### **Competition Spectator Information**

Montgomery County is still mandating schools stay at or under the 25 maximum occupancy for all indoor facilities. Due to these guidelines, spectators will not be permitted to attend practices. Should that directive change, any and all guidance from the county and state will be followed.

If/When spectators are permitted to attend games, seating areas will be clearly marked and will adhere to social distancing guidelines. Spectator size may be limited depending on the facility being used and reservations may be required.

All spectators will be required to wear face coverings at all times and will not be allowed to enter the playing surface or bench area.

### **Live-Streaming Games**

Upper Perkiomen has installed 3 NFHS Network live-stream cameras on campus – One in Keeny Stadium, one in Tribe Stadium and one in the high school gymnasium. All regular season home games will be covered via the NFHS Network live-stream format for free for the 2020-2021 school year. All our home swimming meets will be streamed on Facebook Live under the group: Upper Perk High School Swimming Competition Live Stream. If you would like to watch away contests at local schools who have NFHS Network cameras, there is a monthly subscription cost of \$10.99 or a yearly subscription at \$69.99. This entitles the viewer to watch any game being live-streamed on the NFHS platform.

### **Consideration for Coaches**

All facilities utilized will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. The Director of Buildings and Grounds will establish a schedule for cleaning.

- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to students and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts in “pods” of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.

- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each practice in case contact tracing is needed.
- Coaches may have to limit game day squad sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.
- Coaches should emphasize the importance of social distancing, hydration and hygiene with their student-athletes.

### **Consideration for Parents/Guardians**

(A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- Parents/Guardians should monitor their children of any symptoms prior to any sporting activities. Children who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home. (If there is any doubt, stay home).
- Parents/Guardians and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student's personal equipment after each practice or contest.
- Be prepared with face coverings (masks or face shields) for members of your family if permitted to attend events.
- Inform coaches if your student-athlete is quarantined, has tested positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to (close contact) COVID-19.

### **Consideration for Spectators**

- Spectators are permitted depending on each individual school's policies.
- Seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household. To assist with proper social distancing, areas should be clearly marked.
- Everyone age 2 or older must wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times, unless they fall under an exception listed in Section 3 of the Secretary of Health's Order on Universal Face Coverings.
- Caregivers or spectators should not enter the field of play or bench areas.
- Non-essential visitors, spectators, and volunteers should be limited when possible, including activities with external groups or organizations. Parents should refrain from attending practices, or volunteering to assist with coaching.
- Caregivers and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Caregivers should monitor their children for symptoms prior to any sporting event. Children and athletes who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home.

### **Considerations for Media**

- Media are permitted, when possible, but are counted toward gathering limitations.
- Media members should complete a personal health assessment daily. Any media member who attends a game in person will be subject to school district COVID-19 screenings including having his/her temperature taken.
- The media must make contact with the school prior to attending to make appropriate arrangements for attendance.
- Media are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health's order of July 1, 2020, unless they meet exceptions under Section 3 of that order.
- Media availability may be limited especially if there are limits on capacity.
- Media should be restricted to areas outside of the team areas.
- Interview requests may be limited and only permissible if social distancing is possible.

### **Consideration for Game Workers and Officials**

- Game workers and officials should complete a personal health assessment daily. Individuals working a game will be subject to school district COVID-19 screenings including having his/her temperature taken. Any official or game worker that feels sick should stay home.
- Officials will not have access to the locker room unless arrangements have been made at least 1 day in advance.
- Maintain 6 feet of social distancing from players, game workers and other officials as much as possible.
- Officials and game workers are encouraged to wear a mask at all times. If any official is addressing a player or a coach less than 6 feet apart, a mask should be worn. This includes between periods/halves and before and after play.
- Officials should provide their own towels and hydration bottles. These should be labeled with each individuals' name on them and should not be shared with anyone

### **Positive Case or Close Contact of COVID-19**

If a student-athlete or coach contracts the COVID-19 virus, or has a close contact with someone who tests positive, the family must notify the athletic department, including the appropriate coach, athletic trainer and athletic director. The athletic trainers and the athletic director will then consult with the Pandemic Coordinator to develop a plan for return to play following current guidelines. The student-athlete or coach should consult with their primary care physician immediately. If the student-athlete or coach tests positive for COVID-19, physician

clearance (MD, DO, PA, CRNP) must be provided via e-mail to the athletic trainers. Per the UPSD Health and Safety Plan, if a student-athlete or coach contracts the COVID-19 virus, the individual should isolate for a minimum of 10 days if asymptomatic and monitor for symptoms; if symptomatic student-athletes or coaches should isolate until: 24 hours with no fever, improvement in symptoms and 10 days since symptoms first appeared. As always, student-athletes and coaches should follow their physicians orders.

In addition, the team will also quarantine and the season will be suspended for a minimum of 14 days (following medical guidelines). Any school that had a recent competition with the COVID-19 positive individual will be contacted by the athletic director. If a team is shut down due COVID-19, any game that is missed can be rescheduled if possible. However, if a contest cannot be rescheduled it will be recorded as a "no contest" and not a forfeit. The only time a team would forfeit a contest due to a COVID-19 situation would be in the case of post-season tournaments.

### **Classification of Sports**

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

EX – Football, Water Polo, Wrestling, Cheerleading (stunting)

**Moderate Risk** - Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants.

EX – Basketball, Baseball, Field Hockey, Girls Lacrosse, Softball, Soccer, Tennis, Track Jumping Events

**Low Risk** - Sports that can be conducted with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment of the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors

EX – Cross-Country, Track Running and Throwing Events, Individual Swimming, Golf, Sideline Cheerleading, Unified Bocce

### **Sport-Specific Accommodations**

#### **Basketball – Moderate Risk (St. Luke’s High Risk)**

##### **Team Benches**

- Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
- Place team benches opposite the spectator seating.
- Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
- Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.
- Limit contact between players when substituting.
  - Substitutes shall report to the scorer’s table but in the event there is more than one substitution, they may sit at the end of the scores table closest to their bench to maintain social distancing.

##### **Pre and Post Game Ceremony**

- Suspend the pregame introduction handshakes.
  - This includes shaking opposing head coaches and officials prior to the game.
- Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.

##### **Equipment and Accessories**

- The game basketball shall be sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warm-ups.
- The host school should ensure the basketball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.
- Players and coaches must wear face coverings at all times.

#### **Cheerleading – High Risk (stunting), Low Risk (sideline)**

Student-athletes must wear face coverings at all times. If stunting occurs, masks or gaiters should be used. Face shields are not permitted for stunting.

##### **Face Coverings**

USA Cheer recommends allowing face coverings with the following guidelines:

- Face coverings should not impede vision or movement.
- Face coverings should be soft and pliable with no exposed metal, and should provide adequate ventilation and protection from the spread of particulate matter.
- Modifications to skills should be considered while wearing face coverings, such as limiting inversions, twisting and tosses.
- Face coverings should be snug-fitting.

Participants should be appropriately spaced on the court and sideline to ensure proper social distancing.

Poms should be assigned to each individual and labeled in some way. Cheerleaders should not touch anyone else’s poms.

#### **Girls’ Indoor Track and Field – Moderate Risk (Jumping Events). Low Risk (Running & Throwing Events)**

- SP, DT, JT should enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
  - To limit contact: athletes can provide their own implements (that pass inspection) and retrieve their own implements after all throws.
  - If athletes can’t provide their own implements, then it is recommended that implements be sanitized between use.

- LJ, TJ should enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
- HJ, PV should enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
  - To lower the risk of these events, meets can sanitize the cover between each use and disinfected after each athlete.
  - To limit contact: athletes should not share vaulting poles.
- Spring, Hurdle, relay events run entirely in lanes, may use every other lane to assist with distancing.
  - Blocks should be disinfected after each heat/race.
  - Recommend not using baskets at start time for apparel.
- Middle Distance and distance races on the track of 800m and longer (any event not run entirely in lanes) are considered moderate risk activities. To minimize contact, events are recommended to be run in alleys or minimally one turn staggers.

**General Considerations**

- Schools are responsible for adhering to PIAA eligibility provisions for students and teams whether choosing to hold events indoors or outside. This would include, but not limited to, the defined season for indoor track & field, the minimum length of preseason and maximum numbers of competitions.
- The following suggested order of events is to be contested outdoors\*:

55- or 60-meter HH	High Jump
55- or 60-meter Dash	Long Jump
1600-meter Run	Pole Vault
600- or 400-meter Dash	Shot Put
55-meter or 60-meter LH	Triple Jump
1000- or 800-meter Run	
200- or 300-meter Dash	

\*Relays have been eliminated from the NFHS order of events to assist with social distancing.

- Schools are requested to pay close attention to weather and the impact it may have on events. Special attention should be made to vertical and horizontal jumps and the condition of the landing areas. Where possible, pole vault should be contested indoors.

**Swimming – Moderate Risk (Relays), Low Risk (Individual Swimming)**

**Rules Considerations**

- Require athletes to arrive at a venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for swimmers to change that allow for 6 feet of social distancing.
- Only one person per lane should be permitted at turning end.
- Decrease number of participants for pre-meet conference.

**General Considerations**

**Swimming Warm-Up Areas**

- Establish multiple sessions for warm-up periods to limit the number of swimmers per lane. Restrict the number of swimmers in the competition area. Limit number of swimmers per lane during warm-up and warm-down periods.

### **Team Seating and Lane Placement**

- Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool and require the home team to compete in lanes 1-3 and visitors to swim in lanes 4-6.
- Masks must be worn until right before the swimmer enters the water or starts their race.

### **Wrestling – High Risk**

#### **General Considerations**

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the scorer's table.
- Hand sanitizer stations at mat side.
- Disinfect the mats prior to and following practice and competitions.
  - For home matches, we will set up two mats and allow for one mat to be disinfected while a match is happening on the second mat.
- Athletes and Coaches wear masks at all times.
- Schools may increase the bench area to assist in social distancing.
- Provide for separate warm-up mats off of the competition mat for teams involved in dual meets.
- No sharing of athletic towels, clothing, headgear or shoes.
- Schools are recommended to only wrestle those schools within their close geographic area.

#### **Considerations for Coaches**

- Wear masks on and off the mat.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing teams post-match.
- Each team should be expected to provide their own leg bands for competition.
- Limit the size of their traveling party to include essential personnel, staff and only those with the ability to wrestle.
- Consider practicing with wrestlers in pods to limit close contacts across the entire team.
  - These pods will be matched up by weight and experience level.
  - Wrestlers will avoid switching partners from one group to another group during a given practice.

#### **Considerations for Wrestlers**

- Masks must be worn during sporting activities and when not actively participating.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposite coaches post-match.
- Using a fist bump in lieu of a pre and post-match handshake is recommended.
- Wrestlers will come to practice dressed in their practice gear.
- After practice, wrestlers will shower immediately after arriving at home.
- Wrestlers are encouraged to use protective skin products before and after practice.

### **Unified Bocce – Low Risk**

When possible, bocce balls will not be shared between individuals. If bocce balls need to be shared, they should be sanitized in between participant use. Masks must be worn, with the exception of medical conditions and special circumstances. Seats for matches will be at least 6 feet apart.

**Adopted December 7, 2020**



**Protect Yourself, Protect Others, Protect the Season**