



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association

Return to Competition: Individual Sport Considerations

Referencing Orders and Guidelines from the Following Resources:

National Federation of State High School Associations

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Pennsylvania Department of Health

Sports Medicine Advisory Committee

(Please note this is a fluid document as new orders and updates are ever changing.)



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Return to Competition: General Considerations for All Sports



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), drawing on the expertise of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and PIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC), offers this document as guidance on how PIAA member schools may consider approaching the “Return to Competition” for high school athletics in Pennsylvania. While we all remained concerned about the dangers of COVID-19, PIAA believes it is essential to the physical and mental well-being of high school students across the Commonwealth that efforts be made to return to physical activity and athletic competition where that can occur in a reasonably safe environment.

With that goal in mind, PIAA offers these considerations for the 2020-2021 school year on “Return to Competition”. The considerations outlined in this document are meant to decrease potential exposure of COVID-19 to a degree that competition can occur. As we continue to gain more information about the virus and receive continued feedback from the Governor’s Office, Department of Health, and Department of Education, these documents may be adjusted or even suspended to adapt to an ever-changing environment.

PIAA is committed to maximizing the athletic opportunities for student-athletes across the entire Commonwealth and will remain flexible in considering that certain sports may be impacted differently and post-season play may need to be modified.

Based on currently known information, the PIAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee believes that **STRICT ADHERENCE** by schools and teams to their school-adopted plans and the Governor’s School Sports Guidance should provide a reasonably safe environment for student-athletes to participate in interscholastic athletics as currently scheduled. Participation in High School sports is voluntary for both the individuals and the schools.

Protect Yourself, Protect Others, Protect the Season

NFHS Update on Risks of COVID-19 during High School Sports – January 27, 2021

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS (APPLY TO ALL SPORTS):

- Individuals (student-athletes, coaches, officials, and other athletic personnel) should complete a personal health assessment daily.
 - If your temperature is 100.4 or higher, individual is showing symptoms or is sick, stay home.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
 - Adhere to school adopted plans if you begin to show symptoms.
- Regularly and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
 - Make sure to emphasize to all participants the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after competitions.
- Schools are recommended to ensure that your facilities have been properly sanitized and have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available for practices and contests.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls. (Please use recommendations by the ball manufacturer)
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times, where feasible. Encourage teams to limit hugging, high fives, shaking hands, or fist bumps for support/encouragement.
 - Social distancing should be maintained during the National Anthem and on sidelines.
 - Outdoor sports may need to extend bench areas to permit social distancing. Indoor sports may need to use bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure social distancing.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))
 - Schools are encouraged to evaluate the order and consult with your school solicitor and physician to determine if individuals meet the exception under Section 3 of the order.
 - According to Section 3, the athlete would be asked to work through alternatives that would reduce or eliminate the respiratory droplets that would impact others in proximity. If the sport, equipment, or exertion level does not allow for face covering to be worn safely then the athlete should not wear a face covering.
 - There are no color restrictions on face coverings (except if listed specifically in individual sport considerations); however, face coverings must adhere to the Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.
- **Have a hydration plan and ability to provide water to student-athletes and coaches in a safe manner. Coordinate with visiting Teams to ensure that they have safe access to water for their participants.**
- If a positive COVID-19 case is determined, follow their school safety plans, Department of Health, CDC, and local health guidelines in determining the plan of action.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES:

- Teams should consider making each student responsible for their own supplies.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing and not share clothing. Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletes should tell coaches immediately when they are not feeling well.
- Student-Athletes should keep their mouth guards in their mouth throughout the competition. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected before doing so.
- Student-athletes are encouraged to develop healthy habits including, but not limited to, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and proper hydration.
 - Healthy eating and attention to hydration is especially important for student-athletes to enhance training capacity and reduce the risk of illness and injury.
- Bring and use your own water bottle.
 - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that you drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
 - Student-athletes should follow established guidelines for hydration.
 - Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource:
 - [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- Student-athletes are encouraged to shower as quickly as possible after practice and games.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES:

- 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 should limit game day squad sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches are reminded to wear proper coaching attire per weather conditions.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.

CONSIDERATIONS 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 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 game or practice.
- Be prepared with face coverings for members of your family if permitted to attend events.
- Inform coaches if your student-athlete has been exposed to someone who is known to have COVID-19.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TRAVELING TO A COMPETITION:

- Make sure to communicate with the host school prior to the competition to discuss plans.
- Follow all policies and guidelines the host school has communicated.
- Make sure your team is bringing its own medical supplies and emergency action plans.
- Have a plan in place if someone begins to show symptoms.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN HOSTING A COMPETITION:

- Make sure to have an administrative contact (cell number and email address) for all events.
- Communicate ahead of time with the incoming schools and officials about procedures, policies, and guidelines.
 - Examples to be covered include but not limited to, the following:
 - Parking;
 - Where to enter facility;
 - What equipment should the visiting team bring;
 - Water availability;
 - Bench area seating (how many players can be accommodated to maintain social distancing);
 - Locker room availability and resources;
 - Emergency action plans;
 - How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange of information is preferred);
 - Masking exemptions.
- Make sure facilities have been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived.
 - Have hand sanitizer and disposable masks readily available.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls.
- Have a plan in place if someone begins to show symptoms.
- If your school will require anyone to execute a liability waiver before entering the premises, that requirement and document should be provided to all persons in advance so that it may be reviewed.

GATHERING LIMITATIONS:

- All sports-related gatherings must conform to the most recent [guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the Department of Health](#) on March 1st, 2021. Under the new amendment, venues hosting events or gatherings must determine their established occupancy limit as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend the event or gathering.
- Please also review the [All Sports Guidance](#) document which was released by the Governor's Office on June 10th and updated on November 19th.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPECTATORS:

- Spectators are permitted.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))

- All sports-related gatherings must conform to the most recent [guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the Department of Health](#) on March 1st, 2021. Under the new amendment, venues hosting events or gatherings must determine their established occupancy limit as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend the event or gathering. Please also review the [All Sports Guidance](#) from the Governor's Office.
 - 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 at all times, unless they are outdoors and can consistently maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet or 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:

- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))
- Media are permitted but are counted toward gathering limitations.
- The media must contact the school prior to attending to make appropriate arrangement for attendance.
- Media members should complete a personal health assessment daily.
 - If temperature is 100.4 or higher, individual is showing symptoms or is sick, stay home.
- Media availability may be limited especially if there are limits on capacity.
- Media should be restricted to areas outside of the team areas.
- Interview request may be limited and should be accommodated only if social distancing protocols can be followed.
- Locker room access and access to student-athletes should be monitored or limited on a case by case basis and, if it occurs, media must wear face coverings while in a building and maintain social distancing in all locations.
- Press box availability may be limited.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR GAME DAY WORKERS:

- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))

Return to Competition: General Considerations for Officials



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

OFFICIALS

STAFF LIAISON: Pat Gebhart

These considerations are meant to cover officials in all sports while keeping in mind that protocols may be different in each sport and adjustments may need to be made.

Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))

Below is language directly copied from the FAQ's on the masking order from the PA Department of Health, as it does not mention officials, officials will follow the same guidelines as athletes.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings if they cannot maintain sustained physical distance from persons outside of their household. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.

Indoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings, when indoors and where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, etc.

OFFICIALS' GUIDELINES WHEN RETURNING TO OFFICIATE:

Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring obligation remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.

CONTACT THE HOST SCHOOL:

- Contact should be made with school athletic administration leading up to the contest about (1) school expectations, (2) to determine where you should enter the host school's property and (3) to obtain other information that you or the school may want to communicate to each other prior to your arrival.
 - Officiating crews should designate one crew member to contact the host school and provide information to other members of the crew.
- Request separate and secured parking areas away from other participants.
- Request hand sanitizer be available at scorer's table, if applicable, and use it between periods and during time outs. (Officials are encouraged to bring their own in the event none is available.)

- Conversations should occur with the host school administration regarding the size of changing areas or locker rooms to ensure social distancing can occur.
- When possible, officials should come to contests fully dressed in uniform.

GENERAL OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:

- Be prepared to have your temperature taken and a health screening conducted upon arrival at school campus.
- You may also be asked to sign a liability waiver by the school. While not a PIAA requirement, it may be a host site requirement. You should inquire the host school before arriving whether that requirement exists and, if so, request an opportunity to review the document in advance. If you are unwilling to sign it, you should decline the engagement. You should not wait until arriving on site to ask to see the waiver or to inform the school that you will not sign it.
- Upon conclusion of the contest, leave the contest area and do not interact with others.
- Officials must pay special attention to playing rules that require distances between players during play.
- Reminders should be issued for situations that involve hygiene (spitting, etc.).
- Maintain distance from players if an altercation occurs and minimize the times you are within 6 feet of others.
- Be aware of the location of medical personnel while you are on school property.
- Limit the exchanging of documents between yourself and others.
- Once the contest begins, avoid conversations within 6 feet with coaches.
- Wash your hands frequently. When in doubt about wearing a mask – put it on.
- Officials' Uniforms and Equipment.
 - Electronic whistles are permissible.
 - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
 - Be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
 - Gloves and long undergarments are permitted by officials.
 - Bring your own towels and hygiene materials. Do not share them with others.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))
 - According to Section 3, the athlete (official) would be asked to work through alternatives that would reduce or eliminate the respiratory droplets that would impact others in proximity. If the sport, equipment, or exertion level does not allow for face covering to be worn safely then the athlete should not wear a face covering.
 - There are no color restrictions on face coverings; however, face coverings must adhere to the Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.

GAME DAY:

- Complete a personal health assessment on the day of your contest. **If you feel sick – STAY HOME.** Notify the contracted schools, your partner(s) and the assignor to let them know.
- Notify site administrator immediately if your temperature is 100.4 or above.
- "Vulnerable individuals" are defined by CDC as people 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions. Officials fitting this description may wish to seek medical advice prior to returning to officiating.

- Communicate with school athletic administrator frequently during the days leading up to your contest about school expectations.
- Upon arrival at the host site and throughout the contest, wash and sanitize your hands frequently.
- When traveling to contests, considerations should be given to limiting carpooling or traveling with other individuals.
- Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel, and equipment.
- Always maintain social distancing of 6 feet, including while in the locker room and/or on the court/field.
- Bring your own water bottle or rehydration beverages.
- Use a face covering when communicating verbally within 6 feet of others.
- In an effort to maintain social distancing, officiating positions may need to be changed in a manner that are not necessarily in conformance with standard officiating mechanics.
- If an official is sent home or unable to officiate for any reason, follow the PIAA policy on “Absence or Withdrawal of Official at Contest”, in the Policies and Procedures section of the PIAA Handbook.

PREGAME CONFERENCE:

- Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team, while maintaining social distance.
- Pre-contest official crew meetings should be held outside when possible and where social distancing is more easily accomplished.
- Coin Toss – should involve only the Head Referee (wearing a face covering) and 1 captain and head coach from each team.
- Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the court/field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- No handshakes are permitted.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities.
- Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Encourage social distancing of 6 feet between substitutes and teammate(s).

OFFICIALS’ TABLE:

- Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer, with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials’ table.

PREGAME AND POSTGAME CEREMONY:

- No shaking hands during introductions.
- Traditional pre-game introductions should be altered to ensure social distancing occurs.
- No postgame shaking hands.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Training
 - Review current and past year rule and case books.
 - Attend online and in-person meetings to review the rules for the coming year.

- Start physical training using online video or complete skills alone. If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you should be cleared by your medical provider prior to initiating an exercise program.
- Positive COVID-19 Test
 - You should notify the school(s) administration where you officiated and partners of those contests.

UNIFORM OF CONTESTANTS:

- Gloves and long undergarments are permissible.
- Undergarments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color.

Return to Competition: General Considerations for Baseball



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

SPORT:	Baseball	STAFF LIAISON:	Mark Byers
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Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))

This information below is directly copied from the FAQ's from the PA Department of Health:

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings if they cannot maintain sustained physical distance from persons outside of their household. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.

BASEBALL RULE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the field.
- Wash stations or sanitizer at each dugout.
- No one touches the score sheet except the scorer.
- Disinfect the bench/dugout prior to competition.
- Stagger seating of fans.
- Each team may provide sanitized balls (bucket) while on defense.
 - Have a bucket of available for used balls so they can be sanitized after the game.
Note: If a school is required to provide game balls for their half-inning as the visiting team, this is to be communicated in advance of the contest.
- Sanitize bases after each contest.
- Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team plus the plate umpire. Coaches should stay outside the width of the batter's box at home plate, maintaining 6 feet of distance between each person.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COACHES:

- Eliminate handshakes post-game.
- Maintain 6' distance between players and umpires.
- No seeds, gum or spitting.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLAYERS:

- No seeds, gum or spitting.
- Players must clean and sanitize equipment after each game.
- Social distancing on the bench and/or dugout.

- No sharing of water bottles.
- The use of personal equipment is preferred. However, if equipment is shared, it is recommended to sanitize equipment between use by players.
- Sanitize all equipment after each game.
- Eliminate handshakes post game.
- Eliminate handshakes with coaches/umpires pre-game.
- Pitchers are encouraged not to put their hands to their mouth.
- If the pitcher is wearing a face covering in the field, it must be a solid dark color.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR UMPIRES:

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Do not share equipment.
- The umpire-in-chief is required to wear a face covering behind the plate.
- The field umpires shall follow the universal masking order. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.
- Clean equipment after each game.
- Follow social distancing guidelines. Consider six feet minimum distance when talking to others (players, coaches, other umpires) at plate meeting.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-game ceremony guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARENTS:

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

- Make sure your child and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your students' personal equipment after each game or practice.

- When players are positioned, the FO and Lead left officials will check the player's alignment (FO official checks neutral zone and "top to stop" alignment, Lead Left checks verticality by looking down midfield line) after both officials have backed away, FO official says "Set" (players may not move after "Set")
- The whistle shall be blown quickly with the expectation that the ball is moved quickly into play by the players.
 - After a goal, the goalkeeper shall throw or roll the ball out to the official.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS AND PRE/POST GAME CONSIDERATIONS

- Optional pre-game checks shall occur at or near the wing line opposite the scorer's table.
 - Players requesting a stick check shall remain socially distanced at all times while waiting. When the official is ready, the player will place their stick on the ground for the official. An official will check the stick and place it back on the ground for the player to retrieve it.

PREGAME:

- Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team and lead official.
- Make sure athletes are socially distant during the lineup, no handshakes.
- Officials should wear a mask when instructing table personnel. Table personnel should wear mask.
- Minimize table personnel – official scorer and timekeeper, visiting team personnel should be at their team bench and not at the table. Extend the table if needed.

SUBSTITUTION/SIDELINE:

- Team bench areas should be more clearly marked to remind players of proper location.
- Players should remain in their half of the substitution box until their substitution is imminent (within 5 seconds).
- Players serving a penalty should sit in the back of each team's side of the substitution box to allow for social distancing from others – until the final 10 seconds of penalty time.

POSTGAME:

- Eliminate post-game handshakes.

- **Table Personnel (3-6-1, 3-7-1)**
 - Limit to essential personnel only at the table. Statisticians or visiting scorer personnel are not essential. Home team scorer and timer are essential.

- **The Draw (5-2)**
 - No change from traditional draw mechanics.
 - The goalie should roll or throw the ball to the official after a goal.

- **Substitution and Sideline Protocol (1-1-4h thru l, 4-7-3, 4-7-4)**
 - Ensure that players substituting, coaches, and the table personnel are maintaining social distancing.
 - Split substitution box with a cone so that each team substitutes in from their own half of the substitution box.
 - Players serving a penalty should sit in the back of each team's side of the substitution box to allow for social distancing from others.

outfield to provide for social distancing; extension must be outside the field of play and away from spectators and general public. (Safety precautions should be taken).

- **Exchange of Lineup Cards (4-2-1b):** Lineups should be handed to the umpire, and the umpire will verbally approve or ask any questions about the lineup.
- **Infractions by the Pitcher (6-2-2):** Pitchers are encouraged not to lick fingers or blow into their hands prior to pitching the ball.
- **Plate Umpire (10-2-1):** The plate umpire is required to wear a face covering behind the plate. The field umpires shall follow the universal masking order. (Plate umpires will follow mechanics as listed in the NFHS rules book.)

SOFTBALL UMPIRES MANUAL MODIFICATIONS:

- **Mechanics Sections 3, 4b and c**
Base umpires should maintain 6 feet from any player as a starting position when rotated and/or counter rotated.
- **Section 2E**
Keep the catcher and batter at a 6-foot distance when dusting off the plate.

Return to Competition: General Considerations for Tennis



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)
USTA COVID 19: Playing Tennis Safely

SPORT: Tennis

STAFF LIAISON: Jen Grassel

Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#))

The information below is directly copied from the FAQ's from the PA Department of Health:

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings if they cannot maintain sustained physical distance from persons outside of their household. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc. If sustained six-foot distancing can be maintained, face coverings may be removed when outdoors.

TENNIS MATCH CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PRE-MATCH CONFERENCE:**
 - Limit attendees to any pre-match conference between athletes and coaches. Make sure to maintain social distancing of 6 ft.
 - Instead of shaking hands, tap racquets.
- **TEAM AREAS:**
 - Make sure team personnel observe social distancing of 6 ft.
- **DURING MATCHES:**
 - While there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted by touching tennis balls, sanitary precautions, such as hand-washing, should still be utilized.
 - Maintain physical distancing if changing ends of the court.
 - Avoid touching your face after handling a ball, racquet, or other equipment.
 - Wash your hands promptly if you have touched your eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - When playing doubles, coordinate with your partner to maintain physical distancing, where possible.
 - Wash your hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer before, during (between sets), and after play.
 - Clean and wipe down your equipment, including racquets and water bottles. Use new balls and a new grip, if possible.
 - Use only your own towels and water bottles. Avoid sharing food and touching common surfaces such as court gates, fences, benches, etc.

- Schools can bring their own batons, or they should be disinfected after each heat/race.
- Rules 6-4-11 and 6-5-24: Schools may consider alternate ways to conduct the vertical jumps. Lowering the cross bar after competition has begun may be one-way states may modify rules. With small numbers of competitors, schools may wish to jump each athlete to completion.
- **Point of Emphasis:** Rule 4-2-4a. In dual meets, each school is entitled to enter three contestants in individual events, but it is recommended each school be permitted to enter as many contestants as conditions warrant.
 - This permits additional sections to be run to maximize participation in the event. Schools should communicate the anticipated number of additional sections with their opponent and officials in advance of the meet for planning purposes.

Return to Competition: General Considerations for Volleyball



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

SPORT: Volleyball

STAFF LIAISON: Jen Grassel

Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's Order](#) effective November 18th, 2020. ([FAQ's on Order](#)).

The information below is directly copied from the FAQ's from the PA Department of Health:

Indoors: Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings, when indoors and where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, etc.

***Line Judges are required in the Spring, as they are required by the NFHS Rule Book. In the Fall due to capacity limitations of 25 they were optional.**

VOLLEYBALL RULES CONSIDERATIONS:

- **PRE-MATCH CONFERENCE:**
 - Limit attendees to the first referee, head coach, and one captain from each team.
 - Move the location of the pre-match conference away from table and center court to an area with enough space for social distancing. All four individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
 - Suspend roster submission at the pre-match conference. Rosters should be submitted directly to the officials' table before the 10-minute mark.

- **TEAM BENCHES**
 - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches between sets.
 - Home team will select their bench prior to the match and remain on the same side for the duration of the match.
 - Team areas may be expanded to promote social distancing outside of playable areas.

- **DECIDING SET PROCEDURES:**
 - Move the location of the deciding set coin toss away from table and center court to an area with enough space for social distancing. One team captain from each team and the second referee maintaining the appropriate social distance of 6 feet.
 - Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides/benches before a deciding set.

- ***SUBSTITUTION PROCEDURES:***
 - Maintain social distancing of 6 feet between the second referee and the player and substitute by encouraging substitutions to occur within the substitution zone closer to the attack line.
- ***OFFICIALS' TABLE:***
 - Limit to essential personnel (which includes home team scorer, libero tracker and timer), with a recommend distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential personnel and will need to find an alternative location.

VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS MANUAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- ***PRE AND POST MATCH CEREMONY***
 - Establish volleyball specific social distancing match protocols including the elimination of handshakes before and after the match.

VOLLEYBALL RULES INTERPRETATIONS:

- ***EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES:***
 - Gloves are permitted.
- ***LEGAL UNIFORM***
 - Long sleeves are permitted.
 - Long pants are permitted.
 - Under garments are permitted, but must be unadorned and of a single, solid color similar in color to the predominant color of the uniform top or bottom.
- ***OFFICIALS UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:***
 - By state association adoption, long-sleeved, all-white collared polo shirt/sweater is permitted. (Electronic whistles are permitted.)
 - Gloves are permitted.

CONSIDERATION FOR VOLLEYBALL OFFICIALS:

- Please review the General Considerations for Officials.
- Long sleeves and gloves are permitted.
- Officials are permitted to use electronic whistles but must be aware of signaling difficulties when using both hands and the increased chance of inadvertent whistles.
- Use of a three-ball rotation system should be considered for matches. This would allow for periodic sanitation of volleyballs.