

Covid-19 Sports Practice and Game Guidance for Youth and Adults

The decision to resume sports does not mean engaging in sports is without risk. Any time you gather with other people, you are putting yourself and others at risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. COVID-19 can lead to serious medical conditions and even death for people of all ages. We cannot predict who will become severely ill, although we know that older people and people with underlying health conditions are at higher risk. We do not yet know what the long-term effects of COVID-19 are; even people with mild cases may experience long-term complications. People with symptoms and without symptoms can spread COVID-19. The masking, distancing, and other guidance provided here is intended to reduce the risk of transmission but does not eliminate it.

- Starting Jan. 4, 2021, practices for organized youth and adult sports may resume.
- Practices cannot exceed pod sizes of more than 25. Starting Jan. 14, 2021, games and scrimmages with other teams may begin.
- Face coverings must be worn by all people at all times, including practices and games, with only a few exceptions.
- Concessions and entertainment are discouraged at this time.

Requirements for holding athletic events

- Create a preparedness plan
 - All businesses (sports facilities, gyms, associations, sports clubs/teams, etc.) are required to develop a program-specific plan. Templates for developing a program-specific plan can be found at Stay Safe MN (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>).
 - All youth sports programs must also develop a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and follow the parameters outlined in the COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth and Student Programs found at Stay Safe Guidance for Schools, Colleges, and Universities (<https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/schools.jsp>). “Youth programs” are programs providing care or enrichment to children or adolescents such as day camps, summer activities, and recreational or educational classes that require registration and have on-site supervision. “Youth programs” does not include licensed child care facilities or school district summer learning programs.
 - The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan must be available and accessible to participants, volunteers, and employees.
- Identify a plan administrator for your organization’s COVID-19 plan.
 - Communicate your COVID-19 plan to officials, umpires, and trainers.
 - This should include expectations around screening, face coverings, and other prevention efforts.
 - Plan templates are available at Stay Safe Guidance for All Business Entities (<https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/all-businesses.jsp>).
 - Whenever possible, identify a COVID-19 Coordinator (which can also be the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan administrator)

- This person will be the point person for any cases or outbreaks in the team/association.
- This person will report COVID-19 cases to MDH, and work with LPH, MDH, and school health professionals to ensure close contacts are quickly identified and that isolation and quarantine are followed, as well as prompt communication with parents and athletes.
- Create protocols that are considerate of coaches, staff, players, volunteers, and participants at highest risk of complications from COVID-19.
- Follow physical distancing
- Follow guidance for the event setting (e.g., gymnasium, rinks)
 - Do not exceed the number of people allowed in the venue.
 - Stagger game and practice times to avoid crowding and congestion when participants are arriving, playing, and leaving.
- Follow face covering requirements
- Promote health checks
 - Create protocols to maintain health checks and screening of participants and staff/volunteers.

Requirements for holding practices (effective beginning Jan. 4, 2021)

- Spectator requirements
 - Up to one spectator per participant is allowed to attend practices. However, spectators at practices are strongly discouraged.
- Practice requirements
 - Participants must maintain 6-foot social distancing when not actively playing (team meetings, side lines, waiting for a turn).
 - Keep practices small in size. For youth and adult organized sport practices or training

Requirements for holding games, scrimmages, and competitions (effective beginning Jan. 14)

- The total number of spectators at games must comply with the appropriate venue guidance and capacity limits
 - Strongly consider limiting spectators to one to two people per participant to minimize transmission
- Require advanced reservations and/or ticketing (e.g., online, app-based, email, will-call). Do not allow walk-ins, impromptu purchases or admittance.
 - Names, phone number, and/or email should be collected as part of the reservations so that quick notification can be done if an individual develops COVID-19.
- Schedule arrival times for longer than their typical duration to minimize the congregation of patrons waiting.