



Department of Public Health

Monroe County, New York

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Guidance Regarding Non-Professional, Non-Collegiate Higher Risk Sports and Recreation Activities in Monroe County

January 28, 2021

Effective February 1, 2021, New York State guidance allows for participants in higher risk sports and activities to partake in types of play as permitted by the Monroe County Department of Public Health (MCDPH). This guidance pertains to the owners/operators of sports and recreation businesses/leagues/organizations, their employees, and patrons/players/spectators.

The MCDPH has determined that the resumption of regular practices, scrimmages or pick-up games, competitions and tournaments for higher risk sports and activities within Monroe County, and travel within the Finger Lakes and contiguous regions (Western New York, Southern Tier, and Central New York), is reasonable provided the following circumstances remain true:

- There is no evidence of a more-transmissible variant of COVID-19 in the Finger Lakes or contiguous regions.
- The local rates of COVID-19 transmission and positivity are decreasing at a steady and reassuring rate.
- Monroe County residents demonstrate commitment to following guidance intended to protect the health and safety of our community during this pandemic. Education and enforcement measures have been effective.

If these circumstances change, the MCDPH may modify this guidance accordingly.

There are many physical and psychological benefits to these higher risk sports. However, the resumption of play in higher risk sports and activities does not come without risks. Players are not always able to adhere to the measures we know are effective in limiting the transmission of COVID-19, including mask wearing and physical distancing. In particular, a recent CDC study cited a wrestling tournament for a significant COVID-19 outbreak in Florida.

Therefore, stakeholders should carefully consider the risks versus the benefits before making a decision to resume any type of play beyond distanced group training and organized no/low-contact group training. In addition, any such resumption of play must follow the health and safety guidance established the [New York State Department of Public Health](#), and stakeholders should make every effort to follow the guidance established by the [Centers for Disease Control](#),

the NYSPHSAA (attached) and other, sport-specific associations. Stakeholders should also ensure that higher risk activities that occur off the playing field or court, such as team social gatherings and meals, are closely monitored.

The best way for our community to protect its athletes is for us all to continue taking steps to reduce the spread of the virus. Wearing masks, physical distancing, handwashing, and limiting gatherings remains critically important as we progress through the vaccination process.

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