

TN PLEDGE Sports Guidelines

These guidelines are intended for youth and adult sports. The risk of COVID-19 transmission varies by sport/activity, and these guidelines are intended as a supplement to assist with safely engaging in practice and competition. Additional regulations from a sport's governing body or conference (e.g., TSSAA) may be applicable.

School-sponsored athletic practices and competition must be conducted in a manner consistent with TSSAA regulations, and non-school-sponsored athletics must be conducted in a manner consistent with Tennessee Pledge guidelines. For K-12 athletics, the decision to permit sports-related activities is the discretion of a school and its governing body for athletics. Collegiate and professional athletics must be conducted pursuant to the rules of their respective governing bodies and institutions.

- **Practice social distancing to the greatest extent possible**

- **Implement social distancing on the bench/sideline.** Eliminate or relocate non-essential persons from team areas. Use larger areas for practice, warm-ups, or other staging to allow for greater physical separation
- **Spectators should maintain at least 6 feet of separation** from others not from the same household, including in seating areas or bleachers. In localities where fan attendance is permitted, **venues are encouraged to limit fan attendance to a number that will allow social distancing and should mark/designate bleachers or seats in order to promote social distancing among spectators.** In consultation with local health providers, in areas experiencing high virus transmission, consider further limitations on attendance (e.g., family members only, or no spectators). Offer virtual/remote observation where possible
- **Limit use of, or congregation within, confined indoor areas** such as locker rooms
- **Venues should assure adequate space, staffing, and timing of entrances** so as to not promote crowding for any period of time during ingress/egress
- **Post venue signage** encouraging social distancing and other COVID-19 precautions.
- **If larger crowds are anticipated,** establish a “guest flow” plan
- **Consider caps on the number of teams or athletes** (and/or spectators) as appropriate
- **Manage the number of people in restroom facilities** at any one time to reduce potential exposure within those confined spaces, and ensure that disinfection is occurring at increased intervals
- **Wearing a cloth face covering may not be possible while actively participating** in a certain athletic activity (e.g., swimming, distance running, high-intensity aerobic activity), but **participants, coaches, officials, and spectators should wear a face covering** when not actively engaged in competition/practice
- **Athletes and coaches should refrain from high fives, handshake lines,** and other avoidable contact with teammates, opposing teams, coaches, umpires, and fans

- **Assess the risk of the particular activity or sport.** Noncontact sporting events and activities (including, but not limited to, baseball, softball, golf, disc golf, tennis, cycling, track and field and cross country or running events, swimming, skiing, archery, cricket, and equestrian) generally present lower risk in terms of COVID-19, while contact sporting events and activities (including, but not limited to, wrestling, football, rugby, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, competitive cheer, ice and field hockey, mixed martial arts, boxing, volleyball, water polo) can present moderate to high risk. Appropriate modifications and precautions can further the safe resumption of such activity
- **Certain components of training are appropriate to temporarily limit or modify.** Consider focusing on skill development and play that limits or reduces close contact between persons
- **Consider limiting competition to teams in your region or league/conference.** Expand play as appropriate in light of COVID-19 case prevalence existing at the time. **Avoid scrimmages** with other teams outside official competition
- **Limit transporting teams/athletes in large groups where possible.** When group transport is required, everyone in the vehicle should be encouraged to wear a cloth face covering and practice social distancing in the vehicle as much as possible. Give special consideration to appropriate precautions where overnight travel is involved
- **Disinfection and handling of sporting equipment.**
- **Whenever possible, equipment and personal items should not be shared.** If equipment must be shared, disinfect between each use or as regularly as possible, according to CDC/EPA guidelines for disinfection (e.g., track and field relay batons and field implements, ball racks, tackling dummies)
- **To the extent possible, avoid sharing equipment or balls between teams.** For applicable sports, balls and other equipment should be rotated on a regular basis to limit contact by multiple users, unless disinfected
- **Identify alternate rules of play due to COVID-19 where possible**
 - **Refer** to Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association's **modified regulations**, as applicable, or other rules from a league or sport governing body or association
 - **Running or similar events with larger groups of participants** should consider utilizing smaller heats/waves or interval starts. Use electronic timing if possible to minimize congestion at the start/finish, and have finish line officials wear face coverings. Use venues or courses that allow for greater physical separation of athletes
 - **Tournaments could utilize single elimination** to decrease interaction between teams and reduce the number of persons that remain on-site
 - **Expand the sidelines area** for social distancing, and limit pre-game meeting attendees
 - **Refer** to COVID-19 rules or resources from a sport's governing body (e.g., **USA Gymnastics**, **USA Track and Field**, **USA Softball**, **USA Football**, **USA Hockey**, **US Golf Association**, **Little League®**)

- **Use caution with indoor practices/training and competition.** Use social distancing and, when appropriate, face coverings. Improve ventilation where possible and as permitted by building regulations.
- **Athletes, coaches, and others are encouraged to use personal beverages** rather than use team/shared bottles
- **Positive COVID-19 case management:** Organizers/coaches should maintain a complete list of persons, with contact information, present at each practice/ competition and cooperate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 by a participant. An effort should be made to maintain a log of spectators with contact information, to the extent possible, so that participants may be notified by public health officials if close contact has occurred
- **Consider offering virtual participation or spectating options** where possible
- **Virtual team meetings** are encouraged where possible
- **Limit awards ceremonies or post-event celebrations** to reduce potential for larger crowds
- **Implement appropriate precautions for band section and cheerleaders,** if present. Due to the potential increased risk of virus transmission during