

Hopewell Area School District
Athletic Department
Reintroduction To Sports Plan
Approved By HASD Board of School Directors on June 22, 2020
Revised on August 10, 2020

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to serve as guidelines for reintroducing students back into their sport/activity in a safe and effective manner. Resources listed are the most current and available sources to reference for standards for return to sport/activity. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. With the constant change that comes with these types of recommendations and guidelines, please know that our attempt is to stay as current as possible.

HASD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. HASD realizes the knowledge regarding COVID-19 is constantly changing as new information and treatments become available. These recommendations will be adjusted as needed as new information becomes available in order to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students, and spectators.

It is also important to note that while the status of the current phase may change, this document is meant to be utilized and referred to when those situations present themselves. Additionally, this document may be revised at any time new guidelines are provided to HASD.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for **all phases** for Hopewell Area School District Athletics:

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff should undergo a COVID-19 health self-screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If any Athlete, Coach, or Staff member presents any symptom, he or she should not attend any practice, event, or meeting.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing (20 seconds with warm water and soap) and employees wearing a cloth face covering as feasible. (Face coverings are recommended to help decrease potential exposure to COVID-19 respiratory droplets by an infected individual. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.) Hand Sanitizer will be available for team use as resources allow.
3. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
4. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
5. Require anyone who is sick to stay home.
6. Prepare for necessary steps if a student or employee gets sick.
7. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
8. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.
9. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
10. Identify staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions such as:
 - Age 65 or older
 - Lung disease, moderate-severe asthma
 - Serious heart conditions
 - May be immunocompromised
 - Diabetes

Phase 1 (PA State Yellow)

1. All school facilities remain closed as per PA State Guidelines.
2. Athletes and Coaches may communicate via online meetings (zoom, google meet, etc.).
3. Athletes may participate in home workouts including strength and conditioning.
4. Athletes and Coaches should abide by guidelines set forth by the local and state governments.

Phase 2 (PA State Green): Conditioning before the start of the sports season; Effective June 29, 2020

Indoor/Outdoor Facility Access

- Outdoor facilities will be available beginning June 29, 2020 for school related athletic teams.
- Indoor facilities will be available beginning July 6, 2020 for school related athletic teams.
 - Indoor facilities will include restrooms by AD's office, field house weight room, high school gymnasiums, JH pool and pool locker rooms.
 - Note: Locker rooms at the high school will be closed for use.

Pre-workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should self-report any signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form).
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19.
- Any person with positive symptoms reported will not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- Gatherings should only include athletes and coaches and other required staff and follow State and Local Guidelines.
- Controlled non-contact practices only, with an emphasis on conditioning in the beginning.
- Social Distancing should be applied, as feasible, during practices and in weight or locker rooms, and gathering areas.
- Locker rooms will only be available in the pool areas for changing purposes. Other locker rooms will not be made available and students will need to come dressed and return home to shower following any practice/competition. Field house locker room will be used for retrieval of equipment only and will not be a gathering area.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules will be implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings. High touch areas should be cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after any individual's use.
- Shirts and shoes should be worn at all times.

Physical Activity:

- Modified practices may begin for Moderate and High Risk Sports in an attempt to limit person to person contact.
- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shotput, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary.
- Sports equipment will be cleaned at the end of the practice day for use the following day by coaches.
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar and not overtop the athlete.

Classification of Sport

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.

Examples: football, wrestling, competitive cheerleading

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.

Examples: basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer, tennis, pole vault, high jump, long jump

Low Risk: Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors.

Examples: running events, cross country, throwing events, swimming, golf, weightlifting, sideline cheer

Hydration:

- Students and coaches **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (for direct consumption of water) should not be utilized
- Ice will be available through our Athletic Trainers as needed for injuries, etc.

Phase 3 (PA State Green): Beginning with the start of the Sports Season

Pre-workout/Contest Screening:

- All coaches and students should self-report any signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. (See Appendix for COVID-19 Screening Form).
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19.
- Any person with positive symptoms reported will not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.

Limitations on Gatherings:

- As per State and Local Guidelines.
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, social distancing should be considered and applied when able.
- Parents and/or guardians will be given preference as spectators if there are limits on large group gatherings.

Facilities Cleaning:

- Adequate cleaning schedules will be established and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable disease.
- Athletic Facilities should be cleaned prior to arrival and post workouts and team gatherings, high touch areas should be cleaned more often.
- Weight Room Equipment should be wiped down after any individual's use.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces.

Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- Students should refrain from sharing clothing/towels and should be washed after each practice.
- Students will not be able to utilize locker rooms or keep personal or sport items in a locker.
- Showers will be unavailable for use prior to or immediately after practice/competitions.
- Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shotput, discus, pole vault, etc.) should be cleaned intermittently during practice and events as deemed necessary.
- Hand Sanitizer should be used periodically as resources allow.
- Spotters for maximum weight lifts should be stationed at each end of the bar and not overtop the athlete.

Hydration:

- Students **MUST** bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration Stations may be used for refilling purposes only, and will be cleaned after every practice/event.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Transportation:

Modifications for student/coach transportation to and from athletic events may be necessary. This may include:

- Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus.
- Increasing the number of buses needed to safely transport students.
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus.
- Social distancing on a bus with one person per seat.

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, Department of Education, State and/or Local governments.

Social Distancing during Contests/Events/Activities

- Sidelines/Bench – appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench during contests and events, as deemed necessary by the school, PIAA, state and local governments. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

Who should be allowed at events?

Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which will be allowed at an event:

1. Tier 1 (Essential) – Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
2. Tier 2 (Preferred) – Media
3. ~~Tier 3 (Preferred, but Non-essential) – Parents/guardians/family (may require maximum of two passes per athlete until restrictions on mass gatherings are lessened)~~
4. ~~Tier 4 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors~~
(#3 and #4 were removed from plan on August 10, 2020 per directive from Governor regarding individuals allowed at events)

- Only individuals identified in Tiers 1 through 3 will be allowed to attend events until state/local governments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.
- Changes to seating capacity and social distancing may be necessary for each venue facility and will be determined as more recommendations are released by the local/state governments.

Overnight / Out of State Events / Events in COVID-19 Hot Spots

- HASD will evaluate each event and follow all local/state government guidelines on a case by case basis. Every consideration will be taken as to not expose students to unnecessary or potential high risk exposure.

Positive Cases and Coaches, Staff, or Athletes Showing COVID-19 Symptoms

What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms may range from mild to severe. (See CDC Fact Sheet in Appendix)

Symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore Throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What to do if you are sick?

- If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you are infected with the virus, **STAY AT HOME**. It is essential that you take steps to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home or community. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.
- Notify the school immediately (principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach).
- It will be determined by the school district and/or the Department of Health if others who may have been exposed (students, coaches, staff) need to be notified, isolated, and /or monitored for symptoms.
- If a Positive case of COVID-19 is diagnosed, Contact Tracing may be implemented by the local health professionals and the CDC/PA DOH. See Information in Appendix.

What to do if a student or staff become ill with COVID-19 symptoms during practice, event, or during transportation to or from an event?

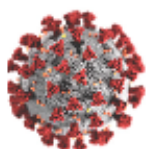
- Every effort will be made to isolate the ill individual from others, until the student or staff member can leave the school or event.
- If student, parent/guardian will be contacted immediately, and arrangements will be made for the student to be picked up.
- Ill individual will be asked to contact their physician or appropriate healthcare professional for direction.

Return of student or staff to athletics following a COVID-19 diagnosis?

- Student or staff should have medical clearance from their physician or appropriate healthcare professional, determined to be non-contagious.
- Individual must be fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), no vomiting or diarrhea.
- The Athletic Director, in consultation with the school nursing staff, will make final decisions for student or staff to return to athletics.

APPENDIX

What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others



Know about COVID-19

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.
- The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world.
- COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.



Know how COVID-19 is spread

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



Protect yourself and others from COVID-19

- There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others.
- Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Practice social distancing

- Buy groceries and medicine, go to the doctor, and complete banking activities online when possible.
- If you must go in person, stay at least 6 feet away from others and disinfect items you must touch.
- Get deliveries and takeout, and limit in-person contact as much as possible.



Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home.
- There is no specific treatment for COVID-19, but you can seek medical care to help relieve your symptoms.
- If you need medical attention, call ahead.



Know your risk for severe illness

- Everyone is at risk of getting COVID-19.
- Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more severe illness.



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)