

PUBLIC HEALTH PROTOCOL YOUTH SPORTS LEAGUES, ORGANIZED YOUTH SPORTS, AND SCHOOL SPORTS TEAMS

Recent Updates: (Changes are highlighted in yellow)

8/22/2022

- For the upcoming 2022-2023 school year, masking policy for all youth sports participants, staff, volunteers, and spectators will reflect current language in the City of Pasadena Health Officer Order. While LA County is in the HIGH community LEVEL, masks are **strongly recommended** for all persons in indoor public settings, including any indoor youth sports setting. Well-fitting and better filtering masks (e.g., double masks, high filtration cloth masks, medical masks) and respirators (e.g., N95s, KN95s, and KF94s) are highly recommended. Updates to masking recommendations and requirements will be communicated through the Public Health Protocol for Youth Sports Leagues, Organized Youth Sports, and School Sports Teams and may reflect changes in health officer orders and/or changes in community and school conditions including: the level of community and/or school transmission, changes in illness severity associated with COVID-19, changes in vaccine effectiveness, and changes in state and/or federal guidance.
- Expanded section on youth participant mask exemptions.
- Changes in response and outbreak testing requirements for employers to align with updated Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards ([Cal/OSHA ETS](#)) and the City of Pasadena Health Officer Order.
- As of August 11, 2022, reporting of individual cases of COVID-19 in the youth sports setting is no longer required. Moving forward, any clusters of 3 or more cases within a 14-day period must be reported immediately and no later than 1 business day of the sports program being notified of the third case within a 14-day period.

This Public Health Protocol for Youth Sports Leagues, Organized Youth Sports, and Sports Teams includes requirements and recommendations for youth sports leagues (including organized youth sports and school sports teams) to enhance safety for participants, coaches, and communities, and to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the team and league.

Per published reports, factors that increase the risk of infection, regardless of physical distancing more than 6 feet away, include:

- **Enclosed spaces with inadequate ventilation or air handling** that allow for build-up of exhaled respiratory fluids, especially very fine droplets and aerosol particles, in the air.
- **Increased exhalation of respiratory fluids** that can occur when an infectious person is engaged in physical exertion or raises their voice (e.g., exercising, shouting, or singing).
- **Prolonged exposure** to these conditions.

It is strongly recommended that all sports activities occur outdoors where the risk of exposure is lower due to better ventilation than indoors. Masking is strongly encouraged, but not required, when indoors.

In addition:

- Youth sports leagues must follow the Pasadena [COVID-19 Exposure Management Plan Guidance for Youth Recreational Sports Programs](#).
- Youth sports leagues that employ coaches, referees, or other support staff must also adhere to the Cal/OSHA [COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS) and follow the Pasadena Public Health Department [General Guidance for Employers](#).
- Youth sports leagues operating concession stands must have a Health Permit from the Pasadena Environmental Health Division and should review and follow the guidance for [Providing Food and Beverage Services](#).

This document may be updated as new information and resources become available. Go to <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/covid-19/#guidance-faq-protocols> for updates and other resources.

Helpful Contact Information

If you have questions, or if you observe a violation, you can request information or submit a complaint through the Citizen Service Center. Call 626-744-7311 or visit <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/CSC>.

All Youth Sports Teams must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable.

Designate one individual to be in charge of planning and implementation of all items.

Submission of this protocol to the City of Pasadena Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is required for recreational sports activities at City-operated parks. Submission of protocol for recreational sports activities at other facilities is not required unless explicitly requested.

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PROTOCOL	
Youth Sports Team/League Name:	
Person in Charge:	
Title:	
Phone Number:	Date:

Key Practices



GET VACCINATED AND BOOSTED AGAINST COVID-19



COVER YOUR COUGH WITH YOUR ELBOW OR TISSUE (THEN DISPOSE AND WASH YOUR HANDS)



STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK



PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING OF 6 FEET OR MORE



WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR 20 SECONDS, FREQUENTLY



COVER NOSE AND MOUTH WITH A HIGH QUALITY MASK



PERFORM DAILY HEALTH SCREENINGS

Vaccinate

- It is strongly recommended that all student athletes ages **6 months** and older, coaches and team staff are **up to date*** in their COVID-19 vaccinations and **that those ages 5 years and older** receive booster doses as soon as they are eligible. Vaccination is safe and the most effective way to protect sports participants, their families, and the community from illness, hospitalization and death. Find a vaccination site at <https://www.cityofpasadena.net/public-health/covid-19-vaccine/#vaccination-sites>. Everyone **5** years and older should get a booster according to CDC and FDA recommendations. Having all athletes and staff in your youth sports league fully vaccinated and receive booster doses as soon as they are eligible will greatly decrease the risk of transmission of the virus among teammates and between teams, and will provide excellent protection against severe illness, hospitalization, and death.
*Individuals whose vaccination status is **up to date** have received booster dose**(s)** of a COVID-19 vaccine when eligible, or have completed a primary COVID-19 vaccine series and are not yet eligible for a booster.
- Youth sports leagues, team organizers, or coaches should maintain records of all athletes' and staff/coaches'/volunteers' vaccination status. They do not need to keep a copy of the proof of vaccination.

Follow Mask Rules for Participants, Coaches, Staff and Spectators

- Wearing face masks reduces the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
- All youth sports programs are required to adhere to any health officer orders requiring masking in the City of Pasadena, and to have plans in place to communicate such requirements to the workforce, participants, volunteers, and spectators or visitors.**
- Youth sports participants:**

- When INDOORS, it is **strongly recommended** that all participants, regardless of vaccination status, bring and wear masks even when actively practicing, conditioning, competing, or performing, even during heavy exertion, where practicable.
- IN ADDITION, it is **strongly recommended** that masks are worn indoors when participants are on the sidelines, in team meetings, and within locker rooms and weight rooms.
- Encourage participants to bring more than one mask to practice or games in case their mask gets wet or soiled during play.
- Any face mask that becomes saturated with sweat should be changed immediately.

Per the American Academy of Pediatrics, “Face masks have been shown to be well tolerated by most people who wear them for exercise.” However, masks should not be worn under the following circumstances.

- *For water sports.* It is strongly recommended that participants wear face masks when indoors and not in the water.
 - *For gymnastics.* Masks are strongly recommended for gymnasts when not actively practicing/performing on an apparatus.
 - *For competitive cheerleading.* Cheerleaders who are actively performing/practicing routines that involve tumbling, stunting, or flying may remove their masks because of the theoretical risk that the mask may get caught on objects and become a choking hazard or accidentally impair vision.
 - *For wrestling.* During wrestling contact, a face mask could become a choking hazard and is discouraged unless an adult coach or official is closely monitoring for safety purposes.
- ❑ **Coaches, Volunteers, Referees, and Spectators:** When indoors, it is strongly recommend that all **coaches, volunteers, referees (and other game officials), and** spectators, regardless of vaccination status, bring and wear masks **at all times (except while eating or drinking)**. Consider making masks available for those who arrive without them. When outdoors, masks are recommended in crowded spaces at sporting events where distancing is not practical or possible.
 - ❑ **Employees:** If the sports league employs coaches or other support staff, employers must provide employees in close contact with others, for voluntary use, a well-fitting medical-grade mask, surgical mask, or higher-level respirator such as an N95 respirator or KN95, at all times while indoors at the worksite or facility, including in shared vehicles, per ([Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards](#)). Respirators must be replaced if they get damaged, deformed, dirty, or difficult to breathe through. For more information about free and low-cost Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for businesses and organizations see: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/FreeAndLowCostPPE.pdf>
 - ❑ **Mask Exemption Policy:** At times when the Health Officer Order requires universal masking in indoor public settings including youth sports programs, alternative protective strategies may be adopted to accommodate youth participants who cannot tolerate masks or in situations where the use of masks is challenging due to pedagogical or developmental reasons (e.g., communicating or assisting young children or those with special needs), student safety, or an existing disability. Individuals may be exempt from wearing a mask for the following reasons:
 - Persons younger than two years old.
 - Persons who are hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

- Persons with a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability or whose medical provider has determined that it is unsafe for them to wear a mask, may file for an exemption with the youth sports program. A certification from a state licensed health care provider attesting that the student has a condition or disability that precludes them from wearing a mask safely will be accepted as proof of exemption. The following licensed health care professionals may provide such attestations: Medical providers including physician (MD or DO), nurse practitioner (NP), or physician assistant (PA) practicing under the authority of a licensed physician; and licensed mental and behavioral health practitioners including Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), clinical psychologist (Psy.D.), Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), or Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

At times when the Health Officer Order may require universal indoor masking, students who are exempt from wearing a mask are **strongly recommended** to wear a face shield with a drape at the bottom, as long as their condition allows it. Youth sports programs should enter into an interactive process with individuals who are exempt from wearing a mask and may choose to implement alternative protective strategies when accommodating such students in activities. Alternative strategies to consider may include:

- Regular (weekly) screening testing of any unmasked students;
- Strategies to improve ventilation in indoor spaces that accommodate unmasked youth participants; and
- Offering students and staff who share indoor air spaces with unmasked students upgraded respirator masks (e.g. N95, KN95, or KF94).

Please Note: Regardless of universal indoor masking policy, the City of Pasadena Quarantine Order currently requires close contacts to a case who remain asymptomatic to wear a highly protective mask for 10 days after last exposure when around others while indoors, and to test at least once 3-5 days after exposure, if they wish to avoid quarantine at home. Youth sports participants who are identified as close contacts with a valid mask exemption who wish to remain in the youth sports program after an exposure must remain asymptomatic, monitor for symptoms for 10 days after last exposure, and test negative for COVID-19 at least once 3-5 days after exposure **and** once again 6-9 days after exposure. Youth sports participants who are not able to meet these requirements and cannot wear a mask after exposure will need to remain at home for ten days after last exposure. Furthermore, all youth sports participants and their families, staff, and volunteers must cooperate with instructions from PPHD outbreak investigators who may implement temporary strategies that differ from these protocols if an outbreak occurs in the youth sports program. For example, youth participants who are unable to mask may be instructed to stay home during an active outbreak for the safety of those participants and the youth sports program as a whole.

- For employees who are unable to wear a mask, refer to Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards ([Cal/OSHA ETS](#)) for return-to-work requirements after an exposure event.

Screen for Symptoms and Isolate

- Ask participants and families to self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms prior to attending youth sports activities.
- Post [signage](#) to remind everyone who enters your establishment that they should NOT enter or attend the event if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they are under isolation or quarantine orders.

- ❑ Youth sports programs must exclude or isolate any participant, coach, or spectator who has symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Take action to isolate participants who begin to have COVID-19 symptoms during youth sports activities, from other participants, coaches and spectators.
 - Notify officials, staff, and families immediately of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. Notify Pasadena Public Health Department of any clusters of 3 or more cases of COVID-19 among staff, youth participants, volunteers, etc. who were on site at the youth sports program at any point within the 14 days prior to illness onset date. The illness onset date is the date COVID-19 symptoms started or the COVID-19 test date, whichever is earlier.
 - All cluster notifications should be reported to PPHD immediately, and no later than 1 business day of the school being notified of the third case within a 14-day period using the [COVID-19 Case and Contact Line List for Education Sector](#). If needed, additional time may be requested. Secure (encrypted) online email via nursing@cityofpasadena.net is the preferred method for notifying PPHD of COVID-19 exposures; or FAX (626) 744-6115.
 - PPHD will work with the youth sports program to determine whether the cluster is an outbreak that will require a public health outbreak response.
- ❑ Employers are required, per Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards ([Cal/OSHA ETS](#)) to exclude employees from the workplace who have COVID-19 symptoms. Cal/OSHA does not prescribe any particular method of employee screening, but implementation of some method as recommended will assist in compliance with this requirement.
- ❑ A 7-day suspension of all team activities and PPHD approval before resuming activity will be required of any youth sports team in which there has been an outbreak of four or more epidemiologically linked cases over a 14-day period. Individual conditioning and skill building may continue during the suspension period as long as everyone on the team complies fully with any individual isolation or quarantine orders that apply.

Reduce Crowding, Especially Indoors

- ❑ If possible, hold youth sports activities outdoors where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is much lower.
- ❑ Physical distancing is an infection control best practice that may be implemented as an additional safety layer to reduce the spread of COVID-19. During practices, encourage activities that do not involve sustained person-to-person contact between participants and/or coaching staff, and limit such activities in indoor settings.
- ❑ Consider limiting the number of participants who visit the restroom or locker room at any given time.
- ❑ Non-athletic team events, such as team dinners or other social activities, should be held outdoors with distancing and preferably, masking.

Routine Screening Testing for COVID-19

- ❑ Although unvaccinated persons are at much higher risk of infection, the virus that causes COVID-19 may infect any member of the youth sports league, even members that are up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations. At times when the [CDC COVID-19 Community Level](#) is HIGH, it is strongly recommended by PPHD to implement a routine screening testing program, especially for moderate- and high-risk youth recreational sports programs.
- ❑ Any infected person can potentially transmit the virus to others. One strategy to accurately identify infected individuals and then quickly isolate them is to conduct routine periodic testing

for COVID-19 with an FDA-approved diagnostic test (PCR) test, or an FDA-approved antigen test (including over the counter antigen tests). General guidance and recommendations about testing, including the types of tests available, can be accessed at our [testing information](#) website.

- ❑ Persons who show proof that they have recovered from/completed isolation for laboratory confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days should not be included in periodic COVID-19 screening testing if the person is asymptomatic. Screening for people who were previously infected with COVID-19 (and are not fully vaccinated) should start 90 days after the first day of symptoms or from the day of collection of first positive test (if they were asymptomatic).
- ❑ Whenever a confirmed case is identified on any of your youth sports teams, follow instructions listed in the [Exposure Management Plan Guidance for Youth Sports](#).
- ❑ Youth sports leagues, team organizers, or coaches should maintain records of all athletes' and staff/coaches'/referees'/volunteers' vaccination status and any testing done after having exposure to a COVID-19 case. They do not need to keep a copy of the original proof of full vaccination nor store copies of test results.
- ❑ The following testing guidelines are **recommended** and apply to all participating athletes and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers. See Table 1 below for examples of sports in different risk categories.
 - Youth sports participants **and adult participants (e.g., coaches, support staff, officials, and volunteers)** who have recovered from/completed isolation for laboratory confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days, should not be included in routine COVID-19 screening testing if the person is asymptomatic.
 - Individuals who were previously infected with COVID-19 should start or restart screening testing 90 days after the first day of symptoms or from the day of collection of first positive test (if they were asymptomatic). See Table 1 below for examples of sports in different risk categories.
 - When the [CDC COVID-19 Community Level](#) is HIGH, it is **strongly recommended** that youth recreational sports programs for Indoor Moderate- or High-Risk Sports for youth of all ages or Outdoor Moderate- or High-Risk Sports for youth ages 12 years and older and all staff/coaches/referees/volunteers implement a weekly COVID-19 screening testing program, as outlined below.
 - **Indoor Moderate- or High-Risk Sports for youth of all ages and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers:**
 - A weekly negative test result is **recommended** for all youth participants, including children who are playing and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers. Results from over-the-counter test kits, including self-administered, self-read tests performed at home, verified or not, are also acceptable to fulfill this obligation. If players are permitted and elect to participate without wearing masks, it is recommended that all team members, regardless of vaccination status, have screening tests for COVID-19 performed at least weekly.
 - **Outdoor Moderate- or High-Risk Sports for youth ages 12 years and older and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers.**
 - A weekly negative test result is **recommended** for all youth participants ages 12 years and older and for all adult participants, including children who are playing and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers.
 - Results from over-the-counter test kits, including self-administered, self-read tests performed at home, verified or not, are also acceptable to fulfill this

obligation, as long as results are reported to the organizers of the team or sports program.

- For players on **outdoor** moderate-risk and high-risk sports teams who are under age 12, and are regularly transported together via buses/vans, a weekly negative test result is recommended.
 - If players under age 12 are participating in a multi-county, multi-day competition of Moderate-risk or High-risk Outdoor sports, a negative test taken within the 3 days prior to their first game at the competition is recommended.
 - If there is a positive COVID-19 case among players, coaches and/or staff on an outdoor sports team, then all players/staff/coaches/volunteers (regardless of vaccination status) are **recommended** to have a weekly negative test result for two weeks from exposure to the case and must test negative prior to competitions.
- Team staff/volunteers whose role or functions do not include any direct interaction with athletes, coaches, or other staff (e.g., lending administrative support to the team or league but not working directly with youth or other team members) are exempt from these testing recommendations
 - Occasional volunteers who have very limited direct interaction with athletes, coaches, or other staff (e.g., a volunteer referee or umpire who officiates only once or twice during the season) do not need to perform weekly screening testing but are strongly recommended to produce proof of up to date vaccination status against COVID-19 and/or proof of a negative test performed within the 3 days prior to their volunteer activity.

Maximize Ventilation

- If youth sports activities are taking place indoors, prior to the start of practice the youth sports organizations must verify with building maintenance or the property manager that the building's HVAC system is in good, working order and receives regularly scheduled maintenance.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency (HEPA) air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in the indoor space.
- When conditions allow, increase fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors, while adhering to fire and other safety standards. Consider using fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows - position window fans to blow air outward, not inward.
- When indoor activities do occur, improved ventilation in gymnasiums is a critical strategy to lower risk of viral transmission and outbreaks occurring as a result of high-risk competitive play. Strategic use of fans to improve air exchange at floor level may have significant impact at mitigating this risk. See LA County's Guide for [Best Practices for Gymnasium Ventilation](#) for further guidance.
- Decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased.
- If your team or youth sports league utilizes transport vehicles, such as buses or vans, it is recommended to open windows to increase airflow from outside when it is safe to do so. Everyone is **strongly recommended** to wear masks in the vehicle.
- See State [Interim Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#) and CDC [Ventilation in Schools and Child Care Programs](#) websites.

Support Handwashing

- Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizer at convenient locations and post signage promoting use.

- Encourage frequent handwashing.

Communicate

- Consider posting [signage](#) so that visitors who are entering your facility are aware of your policies.
- Use your online platforms to communicate your COVID-19 safety policies to the public.

Take Additional Precautions for Team Travel and Multi-Team Tournaments

- When traveling in vehicles with other members of the youth sports team not from the same household, it is **strongly recommended** to wear masks during the entire trip and keep windows open. This includes when carpooling in family vehicles.
- If traveling outside of Pasadena or Los Angeles County for an event, adhere to the [Travel Advisory](#) and Guidance.
- When traveling overnight, it is recommended that team members not from the same household sleep in separate rooms and keep masks on whenever visiting other members' hotel rooms.

Understanding the Risks Associated with Sports during the Pandemic

Sports and physical activities that allow for 6-8 feet between other competitors, like golf or singles tennis, are going to be less risky than sports that involve frequent close contact, like basketball or wrestling. Those sports where athletes do not share equipment, like cross country, will likely be less risky than those which have shared equipment, such as football. Those sports with limited exposure to other players may be a safer option. A sprint in a track race, for example, may be less risky than sports that put someone in close contact with another player for an extended period of time, like an entire half of a game.

The specific location where athletes train, practice and compete also impacts risk. Choose outdoor venues for sports and classes whenever possible. COVID-19 is more likely to spread in indoor spaces with poor ventilation. Indoor sports and activities will likely present an increased risk of transmission, especially if the sport or physical activity also involves close contact, shared equipment, and more exposure to other players, such as basketball.

The more people someone interacts with, the greater the chance of COVID-19 exposure. So small teams, practice pods or classes that stay together, rather than mixing with other teams, coaches, or teachers, will be a safer option. This will also make it easier to contact individuals if there is an exposure to COVID-19.

Staying within your community will be safer than participating on travel teams. Traveling to an area with more COVID-19 cases could increase the chance of transmission and spread. Travel sports also include intermixing of players, so athletes are generally exposed to more people.

Table 1. Examples of Sports Stratified by Risk Level Depending on Degree of Participant Contact

Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery • Badminton (singles) • Band • Biking • Bocce • Bowling • Corn hole • Cross country • Curling • Dance (no contact) • Disc golf • Drumline • Equestrian events (including rodeos that involve only a single rider at a time) • Golf • Gymnastics • Ice and roller skating (no contact) • Lawn bowling • Martial arts (no contact) • Physical training (e.g. yoga, Zumba, Tai chi) • Pickleball (singles) • Rowing/crew (with 1 person) • Running • Shuffleboard • Skeet shooting • Skiing and snowboarding • Snowshoeing • Swimming and diving • Tennis (singles) • Track and field • Walking and hiking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton (doubles) • Baseball • Cheerleading • Dance (intermittent contact) • Dodgeball • Field hockey • Flag football • Kickball • Lacrosse (girls/women) • Pickleball (doubles) • Squash • Softball • Tennis (doubles) • Volleyball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball • Boxing • Football • Ice hockey • Ice skating (pairs) • Lacrosse (boys/men) • Martial arts (contact) • Roller derby • Rugby • Rowing/crew (with 2 or more people) • Soccer • Water polo • Wrestling