

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

Recent Updates: (Changes are highlighted in yellow)

3/16/2022

- Beginning March 12, masks will be strongly recommended but not required for all organized youth sports indoor activities
- Youth Sports Leagues are required to offer upon request, for voluntary use, well-fitting medical masks and respirators to school employees who work indoors and are in contact with others
- Routine testing is no longer required but strongly recommended for participants in moderate-risk and high-risk sports

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 5 years and older, coaches and team staff are up to date* in their COVID-19 vaccinations and 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 12 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. It will also decrease disruption in team activities, because adults whose vaccination status is up to date and youth who are fully vaccinated are not required to quarantine if they are close contacts to a case of COVID-19, as long as they remain asymptomatic and continue to test negative.

*Individuals whose vaccination status is up to date have received a booster dose 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.
- ❑ **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.

- ❑ **Spectators:** When indoors, it is strongly recommend that all spectators, regardless of vaccination status, bring and wear masks. Consider making masks available for those who arrive without them. When outdoors, masks are recommended in crowded spaces among spectators at sporting events where distancing is not practical or possible.
- ❑ **Coaches and Volunteers:** When indoors, it is strongly recommended that all coaches and volunteers, regardless of vaccination status, to bring and wear masks at all times.
- ❑ **Referees and other game officials:** Strongly recommend all referees and officials, regardless of vaccination status, to bring and wear masks at all times.
- ❑ **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>

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 [Pasadena Public Health Department](#) officials, staff, and families immediately of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 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](#) and ensure that all unvaccinated close contacts and any symptomatic vaccinated close contacts quarantine.
- ❑ 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 strongly 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 who show proof that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and are not playing unmasked nor with unmasked teammates indoors, or 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. Adult participants (e.g., coaches, support staff, officials, volunteers) who show proof that their vaccination status is fully up to date*, or 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 whose vaccination status is up to date have received a booster dose of a COVID-19 when eligible or have completed a primary COVID-19 vaccine series if not yet eligible for a booster.
 - Individuals whose vaccine status does not meet the above requirements for their respective age category and 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.
 - **Indoor Moderate- or High-Risk Sports for youth of all ages and staff/coaches/referees/volunteers:**
 - A weekly negative test result is strongly recommended for all youth participants who are not fully vaccinated and all adult participants whose vaccine status is not up to date, 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 for youth athletes and adult non-employees. Under current Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards for Prevention of COVID-19 in the Workplace ([Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards](#)), testing required to be offered to employees may only include self-administered, self-read over-the-counter tests if the procedure is proctored or observed by the employer or a certified telehealth provider. If players are permitted and elect to participate without wearing masks, it is strongly 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 **strongly recommended** for all youth participants ages 12 years and older who are not fully vaccinated and for all adult participants whose vaccination status is not up to date, 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 for youth athletes and adult non-employees, as long as results are reported to the organizers of the team or sports program. Under current [Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards](#), testing required to be offered to employees may only include self-administered, self-read over-the-counter tests if the procedure is proctored or observed by the employer or a certified telehealth provider.
- For players on 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 **strongly 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 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.
- Socializing with other teams is strongly discouraged.

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