

West Chester Area School District

Athletic Departments

Resocialization of Sports Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. 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.

The WCASD will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from the federal, state, and local governments, CDC, PA DOH, as well as the NFHS and PIAA. The WCASD 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For ALL PHASES for Middle and High School Athletics:

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
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 for coaches/adults will be required (unless it jeopardizes their health) 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. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
5. Educate Athletes, Coaches, and Staff on health and safety protocols.
6. Anyone who is sick, not hydrated, unable to participate must stay home.
7. Plan in place if a student or employee gets sick.
8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.

9. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared.
10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments.
11. Identify Staff and students who may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions. (See - CDC “People Who are at a Higher Risk for Severe Illness”)

To conduct games and practices teams authorized to conduct in-person activities pursuant to this guidance **must adhere to the following:**

1. Coaches and league officials must review and consider the CDC guidance on consideration for youth sports to modify practices and games to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus. This includes focusing on individual skill building versus competition and limiting contact in close contact sports **and sign an acknowledgment form stating that they have read and understand the content of the CDC guidance document.**
2. The WCASD should develop a plan of action in the event an athlete, coach, or official falls ill, and make the plan publicly available on the WCASD website.
3. The WCASD will educate all athletes, staff and families about the symptoms of COVID-19 and when to stay home. Athletes also should be educated on proper hand washing and sanitizing. This information will be posted on the WCASD web site.
4. Coaching staff and other adult personnel should wear face coverings (masks or face shields) at all times, unless doing so jeopardizes their health.
5. Coaches and athletes must maintain appropriate social distancing at all times possible, including in the field of play, locker rooms, sidelines, dugouts, benches, and workout areas. During down time, athletes and coaches should not congregate.
6. Parents will be responsible for verifying that they will screen their student athletes prior to all pre-season practice sessions. Parents will sign a verification before the start of practices on July 6th. Student athletes will not be permitted to participate in summer conditioning programs unless this paperwork is signed by the parent/guardian.
7. Coaches and athletic staff must screen athletes for symptoms during games and practices. If individuals participating in activities show symptoms during an activity, the coach will remove the athlete from participation. After a minimum of 30 minutes have passes, the coach will take the temperature of the athlete. If the athlete has a temperature of 100.4 degrees of or higher, or are sick, the athlete must be sent home.
8. All athletes, coaches, **and officials** must bring their own water and drinks to team activities. Team water coolers for sharing through disposable cups are not allowed. Fixed water fountains should not be used.
9. **Recommendations** - One to two hours before the workout, drink 15 to **20 ounces** of water; 15 minutes before the workout begins, drink between 8 and **10 ounces of water.** During the workout, drink another **8 ounces every 15 minutes.** Athletes that do not bring adequate water or sports drinks will not be allowed to participate. (One-hour practice 32oz. min. Two-hour practice 64oz min. etc.)

Coaches will need to send students home and not have them stay and “watch practice.” If students are not participating in practice, they should not be present. Non-participating students add to the number of individuals that have to be monitored by the coaching staff. Coaches’ primary focus is on practice and coaches should not have to divide attention between practice and non-participants.

What will the WCASD do about hydration for the students / families that cannot afford to supply what is required?

Will the WCASD require officials to have in their possession adequate water or sports drinks before they are allowed to officiate? The District cannot be responsible for the officials’ health if they do not come prepared. They should not be allowed to officiate.

10. Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
11. Avoid shaking hands, fist bumps, or high fives before, during or after games and practices. Limit **unnecessary** physical contact (some sports require physical contact) with teammates, other athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators.
12. **Whenever possible**, equipment and other personal items should be separated and not shared. If equipment must be shared, all equipment should be properly disinfected between users.
13. If multiple games are to be held at the same facility, adequate time shall be scheduled between contests to allow for facilities to be cleaned and disinfected, and to minimize interaction between athletes. Sports complexes with multiple fields may operate simultaneous games or practices on fields within a complex only if social distancing can be maintained. Each individual game or practice at a complex must adhere to the gathering occupancy limits (25 in yellow, 250 in green), and the facility as a whole may not exceed 50% of total occupancy otherwise permitted by law.
14. Concession stands or other food must adhere to the Guidance for Businesses in the Restaurant Industry.

To operate games or practice, organizations and teams that are otherwise permitted to conduct in-person activities pursuant to this guidance **are encouraged to do the following:**

1. In counties in the Yellow Phase of Reopening, indoor training or sports may only be conducted by organizations subject to supervision or regulation of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association or National Collegiate Athletic Associations, and only in accordance with guidance provided by those governing bodies. Start by limiting games, scrimmages, and matches to teams in your region first. Expand beyond regional play if cases continue to stay low.
2. Coaches should create a back-up staffing plan which should include cross-training staff and coaches and training all coaches and officials on safety protocols.
3. Limit cash transactions to the extent possible; find alternative ways to charge admission and pay for concessions.

4. Create protocols to limit entrance and exit traffic, designating specific entry to and exits from facilities. Establish protocols to ensure staggered pick up and drop off for practice and events and ensure that athletes are not congregating while awaiting pick up and to ensure congregation or crowding does not occur on drop off. Pickups and drop offs should remain outside. Parents should not enter the facility. (This would apply to conditioning sessions, practices and games.)

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/van
- Using hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van
- Social distancing on a bus

These potential modifications will be determined by the school district, bus companies, Department of Education, State and 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 (Non-essential) – Spectators, vendors
- Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel 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

The WCASD 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.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

What you need to know:

- Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.
- Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- 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

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

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 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 will be implemented with the assistance of 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.
- Fever free (without fever-reducing medicine), improvement in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), no vomiting or diarrhea.

Education

Staff, Coaches, Parents and Athletes will be educated on the following (through posters, flyers, meetings, emails, phone calls):

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging), etc.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA
- Students should come dressed for activity
- Limit indoor activities and the areas used -- Locker room use is not permitted --Facility showers cannot be used
- Student Athletes should remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with
- No students allowed in training areas without the presence of an athletic trainer

APPENDIX

WHAT IS CONTACT TRACING?

BACKGROUND

Contact tracing is the process of reaching out to anyone who came into close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19. Contact tracing helps monitor close contacts for symptoms and to determine if they need to be tested. Contact tracing is a key strategy for preventing the further spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

- In contact tracing, public health staff work with a case to help them recall everyone they have had close contact with during the time they were infectious.
- Public health staff then inform individuals who have had close contact (e.g. “close contacts”) that they have potentially been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts are only told that they may have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19; they are not told who may have exposed them.
- Close contacts are given education, information and support so they understand their risk. They receive information on what they should do to separate themselves from others who have not been exposed, how to monitor themselves for illness, and are made aware that they could possibly spread the infection to others, even if they do not feel sick.
- Close contacts will be asked to quarantine themselves and are encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing through the end of their infectious period, which is about 14 days, in case they become sick. They should monitor themselves by checking their temperature twice a day and watch for any other symptoms of COVID-19. Public health staff will check in with these contacts to make sure they are self-monitoring and have not developed symptoms.
- If a close contact develops symptoms, they should isolate themselves and let public health staff know. The close contact will be evaluated to see if they need medical care. A test may be necessary unless the individual is already in a household or long-term care facility with a confirmed case, then the close contact would be considered a probable case without a test.

WHAT TERMS SHOULD I KNOW WHEN IT COMES TO CONTACT TRACING?

- A **case** is a patient who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. A case should isolate themselves, meaning they should stay away from other people who are not sick to avoid spreading the illness.
- A **close contact** is an individual who had close contact with a case while the case was infectious. A close contact should quarantine themselves, meaning they should stay at home to limit community exposure and self-monitor for symptoms.
- A **contact of a close contact** is an individual who had or continues to have contact with a close contact. A contact of a close contact should take all regular preventative actions, like washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning surfaces frequently. A contact of a close contact should be alert for symptoms.

RESOURCES:

NFHS: Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities (per update on May 2020)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Website: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

“What You Should Know About COVID-19 to Protect Yourself and Others”,

“Schools Decision Tree”

PA Department of Health

Website: [health.pa.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov)

“Coronavirus Symptoms”

“What is Contact Tracing”

“Phased Re-opening Plan by Governor Wolf”

A Guide to Re-Entry to Athletics in Texas Secondary Schools

By Jamie Woodall, MPH, LAT, ATC, CPH and Josh Woodall Med, LAT, ATC

West Chester Area School District

Middle and High School Athletic Departments

Participation Waiver for Communicable Diseases Including COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented athletics across the world with a myriad of challenges. The COVID-19 virus is a highly contagious illness that primarily attacks the upper respiratory system. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. Research from the Centers for Disease Control, among others, has found that while children do get infected by COVID-19, relatively few children with COVID-19 are hospitalized. However, some severe outcomes have been reported in children, and a child with a mild or even asymptomatic case of COVID-19 can spread the infection to others who may be far more vulnerable. 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.

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These Recommendations include but may not be limited to:

1. Athletes, Coaches, and Staff will undergo a COVID- 19 health screening prior to any practice, event, or team meeting. The type of screening will be dependent upon the available resources and the Phase level. The purpose is to check for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. It will include a questionnaire and temperature check as needed.
2. Promote healthy hygiene practices such as hand washing, using hand sanitizer, cough in your elbow, avoid touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, no gum chewing, No Handshakes/Celebrations (high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, hugging).
3. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation in all facilities.
4. Encourage social distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible.
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8. Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
9. Athletes and Coaches **MUST** provide their own water bottle for hydration. Water bottles must not be shared. **Refill Stations and Water Fountains will NOT BE Initially AVAILABLE!**
10. PPE (gloves, masks, eye protection) will be used as needed and situations warrant, or determined by local/state governments. Face Coverings will not be used for athletes while practicing or competing.

I understand that participating in athletic programs, events, and activities may include a possible exposure to a communicable disease including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, and COVID-19. While particular recommendations and personal discipline may reduce the risk, the risk of serious illness and death does exist. I knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of others, and assume full responsibility for my participation. I willingly agree to comply with the stated recommendations put forth by the WCASD to limit the exposure and spread of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

Sport: _____

Signature of
Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Student Athlete: _____
Date: _____

*Parents/Guardians may request a full copy of the WCASD Resocialization of Sports Recommendations. Contact the following people associated with your school. (See contact information below.)

School	Athletic Director	Athletic Trainer
East High School	Susan Cornelius scornelius@wcasd.net	Mark Grothmann mgrothmann@wcasd.net
Henderson High School	Ken McCormick kmccormick@wcasd.net	Brad Treadway btreadway@wcasd.net
Rustin High School	Devon Landgraff dlandgraff@wcasd.net	Stephen DePaol sdepaol@wcasd.net
Fugett Middle School	Tom Swift tswift@wcasd.net	N/A
Peirce Middle School	Sam Virgilio svirgilio@wcasd.net	N/A
Stetson Middle School	Willie J. Corcoran wcorcoran@wcasd.net	N/A