



# ATHLETIC RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

## Off-Season Sports/Camps/Clinics

### Methacton School District

May 2021- August 2021

#### Overview

While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of spreading and contracting COVID-19, current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and their families. The Methacton School District will take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of students and staff while following the recommendations of federal, state and local governments as well as the CDC, NFHS and PIAA. As more information becomes available about COVID-19, this plan may be modified and updated.

Guidance within this document stems from information released by the PIAA on 3/3/2021 with regards to school participation in 2021 spring sports. Those guidelines from the PIAA can be found at the below link:

[PIAA Spring Sports Guidelines](#)

#### Attendance

Any participant or coach attending an event (camp, clinic, practice, contest) should be in good physical condition. Anyone feeling sick or experiencing any unusual symptoms associated with Covid-19 must stay home to protect themselves and others.

If someone starts to feel sick while attending, the individual should immediately inform one of the coaches who should isolate the individual. The parent/guardian should be alerted immediately and the individual should be sent home.

#### PPE Requirements/Face Coverings

All coaches must wear face coverings at all times. Any exceptions to this – for medical reasons – must be approved by the school district.

Participants are required to follow the updated guidelines that require athletes to wear masks the entire time (with the exception of when they are in the swimming pool, playing football, boys lacrosse or girls lacrosse when having the combination of a helmet and a mouth guard), unless they fall under an exception in Section 3 of the Order.

PA DOH – Strengthening Masking Order:

FAQs <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Universal-Masking-FAQ.aspx>

**Does the order apply to athletics and sports activities?** *Yes. Everyone who participates in sport activities including coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear a face covering, such as a mask, unless they fall under an exception in Section 3 of the Order or in the sport of boys lacrosse and as a girls lacrosse goalie, athletes have a mouth guard and a helmet with a face shield in lieu of a face covering.*

**Indoors:** *Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings, when indoors and where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, etc.*

**Outdoors:** *Coaches, athletes (including cheerleaders), and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.*

### **Contest Screening**

The Methacton School District screening process for all functions must be completed prior to any gathering on campus. During this screening process, everyone must be wearing a face covering. Documentation will be done via a paper/computerized form or the use of online documentation. Responses of screening questions for each participant is to be recorded and stored, and may be used to keep a record of everyone present, should a student, coach, or staff member develop COVID-19. For any functions that have contact involved, temperature checks must be part of the screening process for participation.

If a participant or coach has symptoms, the situation will be handled per the schools health and safety plan.

If a participant or coach gets sick, he/she will be isolated and sent home and must follow the student-athlete/coach return to play protocol.

### **Social Distancing**

While contact is permitted, coaches and participants should stay 6 feet apart whenever possible. An example of this includes during warm-up runs and stretching. Participants should continue to remain 6 feet apart when not actively participating (i.e. sidelines, bench).

### **Hygiene**

At the conclusion of contests, student-athletes should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. Participants will be encouraged to shower as soon as they get home from an athletic function. In addition, participants should be encouraged to wash all garments and wash or disinfect equipment after each practice or contest.

### **Locker Rooms**

Locker rooms that are made available may have a capacity limit that must be monitored by coaches and staff to allow for proper social distancing. School administration will communicate availability and capacities with participants prior to hosting team functions.

### **Team Meals**

Family-style team meals will not be permitted. If there are team functions that require meals, these should be individually packaged and participants must stay 6 feet apart when eating.

### **Home Competitions**

All home competitions will follow the parameters of this plan and the home schools health and safety plan. Individual sports will have specific guidelines based on the facility being used and the unique requirements of each sport.

Sites will have sanitation supplies available for participants and coaches/workers.

### **Competition Considerations**

The pre-game conference in all sports will be limited to one official, the head coach from each team and one captain from each team. These individuals should be a minimum of 6 feet apart and/or be wearing masks. This includes the coin toss as well. These conferences will be moved to the center of the court/field and away from other coaches or players warming up.

Coaches and players on the bench should be wearing masks and sitting 6 feet or more apart.

The scoring table will be limited to the home team scorer and/or timer. If space is available, the visiting team scorer will be permitted at the table. All seating will be 6 feet or more apart when possible.

During the pre-game introductions there will be no hand shaking. In addition, all players and coaches must be 6 feet apart during introductions. There will be no post-game handshake line between teams and officials.

### **Spectator Information**

The Methacton School District encourages all participants to comply with all federal, state, county, and local mandates regarding spectator attendance and indoor/outdoor gatherings for athletic contests.

All spectators will be required to wear face coverings at all times and will not be allowed to enter the playing surface or bench area.

### **Gathering Limitations:**

All sports-related gatherings must conform to the most recent guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the Department of Health on March 1st, 2021 <https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#COVIDMitigationinPennsylvania>. Under the new amendment, venues hosting events or gatherings must determine their established occupancy limit as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend the event or gathering.

Please also review the All Sports Guidance document [All Sports Guidance Limit](#) which was released by the Governor's Office on June 10th and updated on November 19th.

- Caregivers and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Caregivers should monitor their children for symptoms prior to any sporting event. Children and athletes who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home.
- Seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household. To assist with proper social distancing, areas should be clearly marked.

### **Consideration for Coaches**

All facilities utilized will be cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. The Director of Buildings and Grounds will establish a schedule for cleaning.

- Coaches may access the building at select doors utilizing their access cards in order to gather necessary equipment/materials for practices and games.
- Communicate your guidelines in a clear manner to participants and parents.
- Consider conducting workouts/camps/clinics in "pods" of same students always training and rotating together in practice to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Keep accurate records of those participants and staff who attend each function in case contact tracing is needed.
- Coaches may have to limit game day squad sizes for social distancing purposes.
- Coaches should bring their own water bottle(s) and follow established guidelines for hydration.
- Coaches should emphasize the importance of social distancing, hydration and hygiene with their participants.

### **Consideration for Parents/Guardians**

(A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- Parents/Guardians should monitor their children of any symptoms prior to any sporting activities. Children who are sick or showing symptoms must stay home. (If there is any doubt, stay home).

- Parents/Guardians and coaches should assess levels of risk based on individual athletes on the team who may be at a higher risk for severe illness.
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your child's personal equipment after each practice or contest.
- Inform coaches if your child has been exposed to someone who is known to have COVID19.
- Be prepared with face coverings for members of your family if permitted to attend events.

### **Positive Case or Close Contact of COVID-19**

All participants must follow their schools health and safety plan guidelines with regards to a positive case or close contact of COVID-19.

### **Sport-Specific Accommodations:**

#### ***FALL SPORTS***

**Cheerleading** – When practicing, students must wear a face covering at all times. Students are to remain 6 feet apart when possible. Face shields are not permitted while stunting. During contests, cheerleaders should stand 6 feet from each other when possible. Poms should be assigned to each individual and labeled in some way. Cheerleaders should not touch anyone else's poms.

The NFHS has determined that competitive cheer is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

The type of contact found in cheer can vary greatly and can be adjusted to meet local distancing guidelines. Physical contact with other teams: Participation in cheer and STUNT does not involve physical interaction with other teams. In this regard, contact during games and competition is similar to that found in volleyball or tennis.

### **PIAA COMPETITIVE CHEER RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Cheerleading General Risk Management (2-1-14, 2-1-16):** Sideline and playing surface placement during game.
  - *Participants should be appropriately spaced on the court, field or sideline to ensure proper social distancing.*
- **Cheerleading Apparel / Accessories (3-1-1):** Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.
  - *Masks may be worn but are not required. No masks may be worn in routines that involve stunting. Any mask worn during a routine that does not involve stunting but involves tumbling must be taped and secure.*
- **Other Spirit Considerations Cheerleading General Risk Management:** Judge placement during adjudicated performance and competition.
  - *Judges, officials, adjudicators, etc. should be appropriately spaced to ensure proper social distancing.*

### **PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS:**

- Provide access to handwashing areas and wash hands during breaks or as reasonably necessary, with particular attention after participating in stunts.

- Athletes should maintain their equipment themselves and there should be no other shared equipment, including, but not limited to the following:
  - Water bottles
  - Poms
  - Megaphones
  - Signs

**PHYSICAL DISTANCING:**

- Limit contact between groups at exits and entrances by staggering arrival/departure times between cohort groups (individual stunt groups, teams, etc.) and designating separate entrances and exits when possible.
- Avoid congregating before, during, and after practice.
- Keep stunt groups together in their cohort. Refrain from mixing and matching bases and tops from different groups.
- Keep stunt groups distanced from other stunt groups when possible (i.e. when not building pyramids), while allowing for all groups to remain on the proper surface for stunting.

**FACE COVERINGS:**

*USA Cheer recommends allowing face coverings with the following guidelines:*

- Face coverings should not impede vision or movement.
- Face coverings should be soft and pliable with no exposed metal, and should provide adequate ventilation and protection from the spread of particulate matter.
- Modifications to skills should be considered while wearing face coverings, such as limiting inversions, twisting, and tosses.
- Face coverings should be snug-fitting.

*Use these examples when considering face coverings.*

- Coverings that are held in place with over-the-head straps using Velcro or other breakaway type connections.
- Full head coverings.
- Coverings that minimize the chance of having fingers caught in them or shifting to impede any visual sight.

**Cross-Country –**

During meets, each school may be limited in runners per race. The starting line may be extended to allow for greater distance between runners.

Food and Hydration –There will be no snack table at the finish line. Student-athletes should bring their own food and hydration.

No pre-game or post-game handshakes will be permitted.

**Field Hockey –**

Additional game balls will be placed throughout the field. If ball holders are being used, they will not be permitted to use their hands. They may either put a ball into play using their feet or using a field hockey stick.

Substitutions – Substitutes entering the game will check in with the scoring table from a 6 feet distance. They will then go to the sideline. When there are multiple subs, they will spread out on the sidelines. Subs will not slap hands with the player she is replacing.

Everyone must be wearing masks at all times.

Green/Yellow Card – 2 chairs will be spread out to accommodate players that may have a sit-out period.

Penalty Corners – Players may wear a penalty corner mask but each player must use their own masks. These should be individual labeled.

### **Football –**

The team box will be extended to the 10-yard line for players to allow for greater social distancing. Players should stay more than 6 feet from each other on the sideline when possible. Coaches are only permitted between the 25-yard lines (normal coaching box). Players and coaches should stay 5 feet away from the sideline (previously this was 2 feet)

There should be a minimum of 2 ball holders per team with 3 balls rotated throughout. Balls should be regularly sanitized during the game and ball holders must stand 6 feet from each other. These individuals should be wearing gloves.

Everyone must wear face coverings at all times, including managers and ball holders and all individuals working on the chain crew.

Timeouts and intermissions between quarters and following a try, successful field goal or safety (prior to the succeeding free kick) will be extended to 2 minutes. Players will be required to pick up their own water bottles during this time. They should not touch any other players' water bottle. If players come to the sideline for their water, individuals not in the game should move out of the way to allow for more distance between players.

### **Golf –**

Competitions and practices must strictly adhere to any COVID-19 modifications made to individual golf courses or golf practice facilities (driving ranges).

Normal golf groups are permitted but there should always be 6 feet of space between competitors.

If there is a need to access the golf shop, bathrooms or snack stand, competitors must have their masks on. This is a state requirement for indoor facilities.

The number of golfers attending a match may be limited by PIAA or league mandates.

Players should provide their own tees, pencils, ball markers and any other equipment. If appropriate, equipment should be marked with the golfers' name. Players should not touch any other player's equipment, golf ball, scorecard, etc.

There should be no exchange of scorecards by players. Each player will keep his/her own scorecard but there must be a verbal accounting of scores for each holes. Players may keep an unofficial score of their competitors. Electronic scoring is permitted for regular season competitions.

At the end of the match, players are permitted to depart with a parent/guardian and a permission note.

### **Soccer** –

Additional game balls will be placed throughout the field. Ball runners will not be permitted to use their hands. They should put a ball into play using their feet.

Substitutions – Substitutes will spread out on the sidelines in proximately to the center line. Subs will not slap hands with the player being replaced and/or may not exchange a pinnie or any other item to signal the substitution.

Everyone is required to wear a mask at all times.

Goalkeepers should keep a water bottle behind the net if needed for wetting their gloves. They are not permitted to spit on their gloves.

Coaches may decide to adjust team benches to be on opposite sides of the field in order to create more opportunities for social distancing.

### **Tennis** (Girls in Fall and Boys in Spring) –

There will be no pre-match introductions of competitors or hand-shaking. One head coach from each team and one player may participate in a pre-game meeting.

Competitors may only serve with their assigned tennis ball. To advance tennis balls to the opposing side, players should use a racquet or their foot. Players should not touch the tennis balls with their hands and should avoid touching their face. Players may bring a sharpie marker to label their tennis balls.

When picking up a large number of tennis balls during practice, ball hoppers or racquets should be used.

When changing ends of the court, players should walk to the right to maintain social distancing.

During doubles, players should maintain 6 feet apart as much as possible.

Players should utilize hand sanitizer regularly and avoid touching common surfaces such as the court gates, fences, benches, etc. Players should only touch their individual scorecard. These should be sanitized if being re-used for doubles after the singles matches are complete.

Tennis racquets and other equipment should be wiped down regularly. Players should not touch any other competitor's racquet, water bottle, towel, etc. All personal items should be labeled with the owner's name.

### **Volleyball** –

Rosters should not be submitted at the pre-game conference. Rosters should be submitted directly to the scoring table before the 10-minute mark. Between each set, coaches should fill out their line-ups in the team bench area instead of at the scoring table.

Everyone must be wearing a mask at all times, especially during player introductions, pre-game and between sets.

Teams will not switch sides of the court or benches. The home team will designate a side and will remain on that side for the duration of the match. The team bench area will be expanded to allow more room between chairs. Players on the bench and coaches must wear masks at all times and distance when possible.

Substitutions may occur at the attack line so that the substitute is socially distant from the second referee. Subs will not slap hands with the player being replaced and/or may not exchange a pinnie or any other item to signal the substitution.

A minimum of 3 game balls will be used. Balls should be routinely sanitized.

## **WINTER SPORTS**

**Girls and Boys Basketball** – The NFHS has determined that basketball is a moderate risk sport (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 OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants).

Everyone must be masked at all times and distanced when possible.

### **PIAA BASKETBALL RULE CONSIDERATIONS:**

- ***Pregame Protocol (2019-2021 NFHS Officials Manual, page 16, 1.8)***
  - Limit attendees to the referee, head coach, and one captain from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
  - All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***Team Benches (1-13-1)***
  - ***Social distancing should be practiced when possible. Below are some suggestions.***
    - Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
    - Place team benches opposite the spectator seating if possible.
    - Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater where possible.
    - Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.
    - Limit contact between players when substituting.
      - Substitutes shall report to the scorer's table but in the event there is more than one substitution, they may sit at the end of the scores table closest to their bench to maintain social distancing.
  - ***Officials Table (2-1-3)***
  - The host should sanitize the table before the game and at half time.
  - Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes where possible.
    - Limit seats at the table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.
- ***Pre and Post Game Ceremony***
  - Suspend pregame introduction and opposing head coach and officials handshakes prior to the game
  - Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.

- **Basketball Rules Interpretations**

- ***EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES***

- Basketball

- Ball shall be sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warm-ups.
      - The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during timeouts and between quarters.
      - Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the table.

**Wrestling**– The NFHS has determined that wrestling is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

Wrestling Protocol:

- Limit tournament competitions to one day
  - Use multiple mats when possible, alternate weights and clean used mat while other is used
  - If one mat is used, take a time out after 6 bouts to clean mats
  - Weigh in by team not weights, teams weigh in with legal uniform with no weight allowance for uniform (no remote weigh ins).
  - Locker room and shower use determined by host school health plan
  - Traveling teams should limit numbers to essential personnel, staff, and those with the ability to wrestle

**PIAA GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the table.
- Wash stations or sanitizer at mat side.
- No one touches the score sheet except the scorer.
- If writing implements are used, they should be sanitized and not shared with anyone.
- Disinfect the mats prior to and following competition.
- Events should be structured to ensure compliance with current indoor occupancy limits and mitigation requirements by the PA Department of Health and Governor's Office.
- Athletes and Coaches must wear masks off the mat.
- Schools should communicate in advance regarding any screening policies and occupancy levels to be expected from the host site.
- Schools may increase the bench area to assist in social distancing.
- For tournament settings, prohibit all wrestlers from warming up simultaneously for competition. Provide for separate warm-up areas off of the competition mats for use and sanitize regularly.
- Provide for separate warm-up mats off of the competition mat for teams involved in dual competition.
- Schools are recommended to only wrestle those schools within their close geographic area.

**Considerations for Coaches:**

- Wear masks on and off mat.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing teams post-match.
- Each team should be expected to provide their own leg bands for competition.

- **Limit the size of their traveling party to include essential personnel, staff, and only those with the ability to wrestle.**
- Consider practicing with wrestlers in pods to limit close contacts across the entire team.

#### **Considerations for Wrestlers:**

- Daily screening prior to practice and competition should be conducted pursuant to each school's adopted health and safety plan.
- Shower after each round and put on a fresh uniform, when able and facilities permit.
- Wear masks off the mat when not competing. ○ Eliminate handshakes with opposing coaches post-match.
- The use of a fist bump in lieu of a pre and post-match handshake is recommended.
- Officials may recognize the winner of the match by pointing to the wrestler and raising the appropriate color wrist band. Contact with wrestlers is discouraged.
- Officials may wear masks or face shields. Mask or face shields are required when not actively officiating the match.

#### **Pre-Match Meeting:**

- Limit attendees to the referee and one captain from each team.

**Girls and Boys Swimming** – The NFHS has determined that swimming and diving is a lower risk sport (sports that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors).

Athletes will remain 6 feet apart and wear masks when appropriate. Any equipment that is used should be sanitized after each use. Athletes should be placed in pods to be utilized in the different lanes within the swimming pool.

#### **PIAA SWIMMING & DIVING RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Conduct (1-3-2)** - Require athletes to arrive at venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for swimmers and divers to change that allows for 6 feet of social distancing.
- **Lap Counting (2-7-6, 3-4)** - Only one person per lane should be permitted at turning end. Provide hand sanitizer and require lap counters to clean hands and wipe down devices.
- **Pre-Meet Conference (3-3-6, 4-2-1d)** - Decrease number of participants or hold one conference with coaches and one meeting with captains. The referee can use P.A. system or starting system microphone to allow participants to hear but keep them properly separated.
- **Referee and Starter (4-2, 4-3)** - Various rules require interactions between officials, coaches and athletes. Alternative methods for of communications include utilization of the P.A. system, hand signals or written communication.
- **Notification of Disqualification (4-2-2d, e)** - Notification shall occur from a distance via use of hand signals or the P.A. system.
- **Meet Officials (4-8, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-13)** - Officials responsible for information processing are often located together at a desk/table adjacent to the competition course or in an office/remote location. Develop alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information. Require a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table.
- **Timers (4-9)** - Timers must assemble at the finish of each race, at the edge of the pool within the 6-8 feet confines of the lane which they are timing. Timers should wear cloth facial coverings.

- **Submission of Entries to Referee (5-2)** - Alternative forms of entry submission can be designed to reduce face-to-face interaction when submitting a proper entry, where/how/to whom entries are submitted, and a reduction or elimination of certain penalties currently attached to improper entries.
- **Relay Takeoff Judges and Relays (8-3)** - Require all takeoff judging from the sides of the pool. Space relay swimmers apart from one another. Timers and relay takeoff judges should wear cloth facial coverings.
- **Diving Officials (9-6)** - Alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of nonelectronic information will be required. Recommendations include a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table. Create a 3-6 feet space between judges by spacing groups of judges on opposite sides of boards or on one side of the board on a multi-level platform.

### **PIAA GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Swimming Warm-up Areas** - Establish multiple sessions for warm-up periods to limit number of swimmers per lane. Restrict the number of swimmers in competition area. Limit number of swimmers per lane during warm-up and warm-down periods.
- **Diving Warm-up Areas** - Limit number of divers during warm-up by creating multiple sessions. During competition, divers may not approach the board until their turn to compete. Hot tubs should not be permitted. Dive order sheets should be posted in multiple areas to reduce number of divers viewing at the same time.
- **Team Seating and Lane Placement** - Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool and require the home team to compete in lanes 1-3 and visitors to swim in lanes 4-6 when possible.

**Girls and Boys Indoor Track** – Everyone must be masked at all times and will remain 6 feet apart when appropriate.

### ***SPRING SPORTS***

**Baseball** – All individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health’s Order  
 Outdoors: Coaches, athletes, and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.

#### **PIAA Baseball Rule Considerations:**

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the field.
- Wash stations or sanitizer at each dugout.
- No one touches the score sheet except the scorer.
- Disinfect the bench/dugout prior to competition.
- Stagger seating of fans.
- Each team may provide sanitized balls (bucket) while on defense.
  - Have a bucket of available for used balls so they can be sanitized after the game.
  - Note: If a school is required to provide game balls for their half-inning as the visiting team, this is to be communicated in advance of the contest. o
- Sanitize bases after each contest.
- Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team plus the plate umpire. Coaches should stay outside the width of the batter’s box at home plate, maintaining 6 feet of distance between each person.

#### **Considerations for Coaches:**

- Eliminate handshakes post-game.
- Maintain 6' distance between players and umpires.
- No seeds, gum or spitting.

### **Considerations for Players**

- No seeds, gum or spitting.
- Players must clean and sanitize equipment after each game.
- Social distancing on the bench and/or dugout.
- No sharing of water bottles.
- The use of personal equipment is preferred. However, if equipment is shared, it is recommended to sanitize equipment between uses by players.
- Sanitize all equipment after each game.
- Eliminate handshakes post game.
- Eliminate handshakes with coaches/umpires pre-game.
- Pitchers are encouraged not to put their hands to their mouth.
- If the pitcher is wearing a face covering in the field, it must be a solid dark color.

**Boys Lacrosse** - All individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health's Order.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.

Using football as an example, wearing a mask in addition to a mouth guard and a helmet would likely create a medical issue for the athlete whether the athlete is a professional or youth player even if a previous medical issue was not present. For example, the CDC says that "wearing a mask with these types of protective equipment is not safe if it makes it hard to breathe." There are other sports where there are similar concerns that a mask would create a medical issue where one would otherwise not exist in an athlete.

### **PIAA Boys Lacrosse Rule Considerations:**

- Boys Lacrosse Rules Book Modifications (The Field (1-2-7)): The Scorer's Table.
  - Provide adequate spacing for 6-foot social distancing between individuals.
- Boys Lacrosse Rules Book Modifications (The Field (1-2-8)): Players' and Coaches' box.
  - Extend the players' box to end line to ensure proper social distancing.
- Boys Lacrosse Rules Book Modifications (Player Equipment (1-9-2)):
  - Optional Equipment, Face Shields and Masks – Clear, molded, and non-rigid face shields approved by the helmet manufacturer are allowed.
- Boys Lacrosse Rules Book Modifications Players, Coaches, and Other Game Personal:
  - Coaches and officials should attempt to maintain social distancing whenever possible during a game including stick checks, official's meetings, etc.
- Boys Lacrosse Rules Book Modifications (Facing Off (4-3-1, 2, and 3)): Starting Play with Facing Off.
  - The mechanic for faceoffs will be:
    - Place the ball on the ground with players 6+ feet away from each other and the official.
    - The official instructs both players to get into position by saying "Down".

- When players are positioned, the FO and Lead left officials will check the player's alignment (FO official checks neutral zone and "top to stop" alignment, Lead Left checks verticality by looking down midfield line) after both officials have backed away, FO official says "Set" (players may not move after "Set")
- The whistle shall be blown quickly with the expectation that the ball is moved quickly into play by the players.

o After a goal, the goalkeeper shall throw or roll the ball out to the official.

#### **Points of Emphasis and Pre/Post Game Considerations:**

- Optional pre-game checks shall occur at or near the wing line opposite the scorer's table.
  - o Players requesting a stick check shall remain socially distanced at all times while waiting. When the official is ready, the player will place their stick on the ground for the official. An official will check the stick and place it back on the ground for the player to retrieve it.

#### **Pregame**

- Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team and lead official.
- Make sure athletes are socially distant during the lineup, no handshakes.
- Officials should wear a mask when instructing table personnel. Table personnel should wear mask.
- Minimize table personnel – official scorer and timekeeper, visiting team personnel should be at their team bench and not at the table. Extend the table if needed.

#### **Substitution/Sideline**

- Team bench areas should be more clearly marked to remind players of proper location.
- Split substitution box with a cone so that each team subs in from their own half of the box.
- Players serving a penalty should sit in the back of each team's side of the substitution box to allow for social distancing from others.

#### **Postgame**

- Eliminate post-game handshakes.

**Girls Lacrosse** - All individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health's Order.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.

Using football as an example, wearing a mask in addition to a mouth guard and a helmet would likely create a medical issue for the athlete whether the athlete is a professional or youth player even if a previous medical issue was not present. For example, the CDC says that "wearing a mask with these types of protective equipment is not safe if it makes it hard to breathe." There are other sports where there are similar concerns that a mask would create a medical issue where one would otherwise not exist in an athlete. This face covering exemption will apply only to goalies in girls lacrosse who have a mouth guard and a facemask with a face shield.

#### **PIAA Girls Lacrosse Rules Considerations**

##### **Pregame**

- Pre-Game Meeting (3-5-3)
  - o Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team and lead official.

- o Ensure the pre-game meeting is away from sideline and all individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- o Eliminate handshakes following pre-game meeting and at the conclusion of the game.

### **Equipment and Protective Clothing**

- Equipment and protective clothing (2-4-1, 2-7-3, 2-9-5)
  - o Players and officials may wear gloves and long undergarments.
  - o Stick Checks:
    - o All players will put their sticks on the ground, in a line (not a pile) and players step back to their bench.
    - o Officials will then come through and conduct the stick checks without interaction or proximity to the players, and the players will not be in prolonged proximity to one another.

### **Table Personnel**

- Table Personnel (3-6-1, 3-7-1)
  - o Limit to essential personnel only at the table. Statisticians or visiting scorer personnel are not essential. Home team scorer and timer are essential.

### **The Draw**

- The Draw (5-2)
  - o No change from traditional draw mechanics.
  - o The goalie should roll or throw the ball to the official after a goal.

### **Substitution/Sideline**

- Team bench areas should be more clearly marked to remind players of proper location.
- Split substitution box with a cone so that each team subs in from their own half of the box.
- Players serving a penalty should sit in the back of each team's side of the substitution box to allow for social distancing from others.

**Softball** - All individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of Health's Order.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.

### **PIAA Softball Rule Considerations:**

- Face Shields (1-7-1, 1-8-4): Per guidance from the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, Plastic shields covering the entire face (unless clear and integrated into the face mask and attached to a helmet) shall not be allowed during contests. Their use during practices increases the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or teammates.
- Additional Equipment (1-8): Pitchers cannot wear optic yellow cloth facial coverings.
- Pregame Conference (2-14-2): Limit attendees to head coach and one captain from each team plus the plate umpire. Coaches should stay outside the width of the batter's box at home plate, maintaining 6 feet of distance between each person.
- Substitutions: (3-3-3): The verbal exchange should occur 6 feet from the coach to scorer and opposing team when making lineup changes.
- Coaching (3-5-1 NOTE): Umpires should not handle equipment on the field during play. Contact with the game balls should be as limited as possible.

- Coaching (3-5-3, 3-6-14): Coaches who wish to discuss a rule or a ruling on the field must maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance from the umpire.
- Bench and Field Conduct (3-6-6): The number of individuals in the dugout is dependent on the size of dugout. Players and coaches must maintain 6 feet of social distance. NFHS rules allow for dugouts/designated warm up areas to be extended toward the outfield to provide for social distancing; extension must be outside the field of play and away from spectators and general public. (Safety precautions should be taken).
- Exchange of Lineup Cards (4-2-1b): Lineups should be handed to the umpire, and the umpire will verbally approve or ask any questions about the lineup.
- Infractions by the Pitcher (6-2-2): Pitchers are encouraged not to lick fingers or blow into their hands prior to pitching the ball.
- Plate Umpire (10-2-1): The plate umpire is required to wear a face covering behind the plate. The field umpires shall follow the universal masking order. (Plate umpires will follow mechanics as listed in the NFHS rules book.)

### **Softball Umpires Manual Modifications**

- Mechanics Sections 3, 4b and c
  - Base umpires should maintain 6 feet from any player as a starting position when rotated and/or counter rotated.
- Section 2E
  - Keep the catcher and batter at a 6-foot distance when dusting off the plate

**Track and Field** – Individuals are required to wear face coverings at all times.

Outdoors: Coaches, athletes and spectators must wear face coverings at all times. This includes while actively engaged in workouts, competition, and on the sidelines, in the dugout, etc.

### **TRACK AND FIELD CONSIDERATIONS:**

- SP, DT, JT should enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
  - To limit contact: athletes can provide their own implements (that pass inspection) and retrieve their own implements after all throws.
  - If athletes cannot provide their own implements, then it is recommended that implements be sanitized between each use.
- LJ, TJ, HJ, PV should enforce social distancing for all athletes and officials.
  - To limit contact: athletes should not share vaulting poles.
- Sprint, Hurdle, relay events run entirely in lanes, may use every other lane to assist with distancing.
  - Blocks should be disinfected after each heat / race.
  - Recommend not using baskets at start line for apparel.
- Middle Distance and distance races on the track of 800m and longer (any event not run entirely in lanes) are considered moderate risk activities. To minimize contact, events are recommended to be run in alleys or minimally one turn staggers. To limit contact: athletes can provide their own implements (that pass inspection) and retrieve their own implements after all throws.

### **RULE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS:**

(States should abide by all NFHS rules as a default, adjusting relevant rules as needed to allow for COVID-19 risk mitigation factors where necessary for this year).

- Rule 5-10-5 Current rule: The baton is the implement which is used in a relay race and is handed by each competitor to a succeeding teammate. Gloves are not permitted in relay events.
  - The use of disposable gloves for the 2021 season by relay participants is permitted.
  - Schools can bring their own batons, or they should be disinfected after each heat/race.
- Rules 6-4-11 and 6-5-24: Schools may consider alternate ways to conduct the vertical jumps. Lowering the cross bar after competition has begun may be one-way states may modify rules. With small numbers of competitors, schools may wish to jump each athlete to completion.
- **Point of Emphasis:** Rule 4-2-4a. In dual meets, each school is entitled to enter three contestants in individual events, but it is recommended each school be permitted to enter as many contestants as conditions warrant.
  - This permits additional sections to be run to maximize participation in the event. Schools should communicate the anticipated number of additional sections with their opponent and officials in advance of the meet for planning purposes.