

# Professional Sports & Other Sporting Activities COVID-19 Requirements

## Summary of November 16 changes:

Pursuant to Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-25.8, *Stay Safe-Stay Healthy*, these requirements are effective November 16, 2020 through December 14, 2020. Summary of changes in November 16 Proclamation 20-25.8 update:

- School and Non-school sporting activities youth and adult now require facial coverings for all coaches, volunteers and athletes at all times.
- School and Non-school sporting activities youth and adult can are only allowed outdoors. Indoor practice, training, competitions, and other activities are not allowed.
- School and Non-school sporting activities youth and adult low and moderate risk sports are now allowed intra-team competitions and are not restricted to groups of six. No practice, training or competitions with other teams allowed.
- School and Non-school sporting activities youth and adult requirements are now the same for every county of the state. Non-essential travel such as out-of-state team or individual travel for sporting activities are subject to quarantines as detailed in the [Governor's Travel Advisory](#).

## New Higher Education, Colleges, Universities Sporting Activities Guidance, effective immediately with no end date:

- Section added for higher education, colleges and universities including requirements for school COVID-19 prevention plans for schools and COVID-19 prevention plan for athletic conferences, and clarification on spectator restrictions.

## Included Here:

- Professional sporting activities indoor and outdoor
- School and non-school youth team sports indoor and outdoor, and adult recreational team sports indoor and outdoor
- Higher education, colleges and universities sporting activities

All professional sporting activities, indoor and outdoor, outdoor youth team sports, and outdoor adult recreational team sports operating during the Safe Start Washington phased reopening must adopt a written procedure for employee safety and customer interaction that is at least as strict as this procedure and that complies with the safety and health requirements below, including recreation-specific guidance.

**No business may operate until it can meet and maintain all the requirements in this document, including providing materials, schedules and equipment required to comply. Additional considerations may be adopted, as appropriate.**

## Professional Sporting Activities, Indoor and Outdoor

### RESTART COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All professional sporting activities, including back office operations of up to 50 people, unless a county's then-current phase permits a greater number of people, full team practices, and spectator-less games

and competitions, can resume on June 5, 2020, regardless of phase, if all of the following conditions are met:

- The organization follows both the league-wide and team-specific “return to play” safety plans.
- The league-wide plan is approved by the player’s association or union representing players of the team.
- The team must report in advance to its respective county health department the dates when full team practices and spectator-less pre-season games will occur.
- For horse racing, instead of the above requirements, a horse racing safety plan safety plan must be developed and followed and, along with specific guidance to horse racing, which can be found [here](#).

### **School and Non-school Youth Team Sports Indoor and Outdoor and Adult Recreational Team Sports Indoor and Outdoor**

The risk of transmitting the SARS CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 depends on multiple factors including: 1) Number of people in a location, 2) Type of location, 3) Distance between people, 4) Length of time at location, 5) Level of protective equipment used (e.g. face coverings). As general guidance, smaller groups are safer than larger ones; outdoor locations are safer than indoor; sports that can ensure distance of six (6) feet or more are safer than closer contact; and shorter duration is safer than longer.

#### **Sport Risk Category guidance**

*For the purposes of this document, sports are defined using the following risk categories (The list below is not all-encompassing. Some sports are covered in other guidance documents, and if so those guidance documents govern those activities. If a sport does not appear on this list that does not necessarily mean it is prohibited at this time.):*

Low risk sports: tennis, swimming, diving, pickleball, golf, cross country, track and field, sideline/no-contact cheer and dance, disc golf.

Moderate risk sports: softball, baseball, t-ball, soccer, futsal, volleyball, lacrosse, flag football, ultimate frisbee, ice hockey, cricket, gymnastics, crew, field hockey, school bowling competitions.

High risk sports: football, rugby, wrestling, cheerleading with contact, dance with contact, basketball, water polo, martial arts competitions, roller derby.

**Pursuant to Governor Inslee’s Proclamation 20-25.8, *Stay Safe-Stay Healthy*, these requirements are effective November 16, 2020 through December 14, 2020 and apply to ALL counties regardless of current COVID-19 activity rates:**

#### High risk sports:

Facial coverings required for all coaches, volunteers and athletes at all times. Outdoor team practices and/or training can resume for high risk sports if players are limited to groups of six in separate parts of the field/court, separated by a buffer zone. Indoor practice, training, competitions, and other activities are not allowed. Brief close contact (ex: 3 on 3 drills) is permitted. It is preferable for the groups of six to be stable over time. Attendance rosters should include group contact information. Each league, organization, or club must publish and follow a “return to play” safety plan.

### Low and Moderate risk sports

Facial coverings required for all coaches, volunteers and athletes at all times. Outdoor team practices, training and intra-team competitions can resume for low and moderate risk sports. Scrimmage against other teams or training or practices with other teams is not allowed. Indoor practice, training, competitions, and other activities are not allowed. Coached training and practices for individual water sports, such as swimming and diving, are allowed in indoor or outdoor pools in accordance with the Department of Health [water recreation guidelines](#), but meets and competitions are not allowed. Attendance rosters should include group contact information. Each league, organization, or club must publish and follow a “return to play” safety plan.

### **Guidance applicable to ALL sporting activities at ALL county risk levels**

All Indoor facility operations are closed; all indoor activities, training, practice, and all contests and games are prohibited. Coached training and practices for individual water sports, such as swimming and diving, are allowed in indoor or outdoor pools in accordance with the Department of Health [water recreation guidelines](#), but meets and competitions are not allowed.

No tournaments allowed.

Non-essential travel such as out-of-state team or individual travel for sporting activities are subject to quarantines as detailed in the [Governor’s Travel Advisory](#).

No spectators allowed except for one parent/guardian/caregiver for each minor-aged participant allowed. Spectators must maintain physical distance of at least six (6) feet between each person and wear facial coverings at all times. No spectators allowed for participants 18 and older.

### *Stay home when sick or if a close contact of someone with COVID-19*

Athletes, coaches, umpires/referees, spectators and any other paid or volunteer staff should be required to stay home if they feel unwell, show any signs of COVID-19, or are a close contact of a confirmed case. All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. Screening should consider [symptoms listed by the CDC](#). Any person with symptoms of COVID-19 or who is a close contact of someone with confirmed COVID-19 should not be allowed to participate and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.

Those who are excluded from training or contests due to [COVID-19 symptoms](#) or because they are [close contacts](#) must follow DOH and local public health isolation and quarantine guidance before returning to training or contests.

People with underlying health conditions should consult with their medical provider regarding participation in athletic activities.

### *Masks*

Masks required for all athletes/participants. Coaches, trainers, managers, spotters, and any other paid or volunteer staff must wear face coverings at all times.

### *Physical Distance*

Physical distance of 6 feet must be maintained between staff, volunteers, and any spectators at all times with exceptions for training and medical personnel and volunteers performing their medical duties. Six feet of distance must be maintained among athletes when not engaged in sporting activities, huddles and team meetings must be physically distanced.

### *Hygiene*

Require athletes, coaches, umpires/referees and any other paid or volunteer staff to practice good hygiene including washing their hands frequently and covering their sneezes and coughs. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after practice, especially after touching shared objects or blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol content. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they are dry. Athletes should not share water bottles, uniforms, towels, or snacks and should not spit (saliva, sunflower seeds, etc.).

Provide handwashing or hand sanitizing stations at training and contest locations.

Limit the use of locker rooms to handwashing and restroom use only. Showers should not be used due to potential spread of aerosolized droplets. If use of locker rooms for changing is necessary, maximize ventilation and use tape, spots, or cones to signal 6 feet of distance for athletes who need to change. If locker rooms are used cleaning protocols must be included in the sporting activity safety plan. Stagger entry to the changing area and use of these facilities as appropriate with members of the same team or training cohort only. Limit occupancy of the locker rooms to avoid crowding.

### *Cleaning*

Clean high touch surfaces and disinfect shared equipment before and after each use. Ensure restrooms are cleaned and disinfected regularly. Current CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection for COVID-19 states that disinfectants should be registered by the EPA for use against the COVID-19. Find the current list here: [List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#). Disinfectants based on hydrogen peroxide or alcohol are safer than harsher chemicals. The University of Washington has a [handout with options for safer cleaning and disinfecting products that work well against COVID-19](#).

### *Ventilation*

Ventilation is important to have good indoor air quality. Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly. Increase air circulation and ventilation as much as possible by opening windows and doors. Offer more outside time, open windows often and adjust mechanical ventilation systems to bring in as much outside air as possible. Increase filters to MERV 13 if the HVAC can accommodate. Use of fans for cooling is acceptable. In indoor spaces, fans should only be used when windows or doors are open to the outdoors in order to circulate indoor and outdoor air. They should blow away from people.

Outdoors locations are preferred to indoors locations, and should be utilized to the greatest extent possible to allow for maximum fresh air circulation and social distancing. Outdoor temporary structures may be used. An outdoor temporary structure is defined as having no more than two walls to provide appropriate ventilation.

### *Transportation*

Limit exposure to those outside the household unit during travel. Encourage only those in the same household to travel together, and if not in the same household, travel in separate vehicles if possible.

For travel groups, (groups that include more than one household in the same vehicle whether in a carpool or on a bus) all members of the travel group, including the driver, must wear a face covering and spread out as much as possible within the vehicle. Limit travel groups to those who have been in regular contact (e.g. team members). Encourage family members to sit together. Maximize ventilation in the vehicle by opening windows.

Buses should install safety barriers (such as plexiglass shields) between the driver and passengers or close (block off/leave empty) the seats nearest the driver to ensure 6 feet of distance between the driver and passengers. Passengers should board from the rear door when possible. Buses should improve air filtration where possible. Buses should be cleaned and disinfected daily after use with attention to frequently touched services (doors, rails, seat backs).

### *Records and Contact Tracing*

Keep a roster of every athlete, staff and volunteer present at each practice, training session, and contest to assist with contact tracing in the event of a possible exposure. Similarly keep a roster and seating chart for each travel group. Attendance rosters and seating charts must be kept on file for 28 days after the practice, contest, or trip.

### *Employees*

Employers must specifically ensure operations follow the main Labor & Industries COVID-19 requirements to protect workers. COVID-19 workplace and safety requirements can be found [here](#).

## **Higher Education, Colleges, Universities Sporting Activities Guidance**

### **RESTART COVID-19 REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Before returning to play sporting and athletic activities colleges, universities, and higher education institutions must:

1. Adhere to the Governor's Office guidance in the [Higher Education and Workforce Training COVID-19 Requirements](#), and follow the principals of the [Campus Reopening Guide](#).
2. Adhere to the Secretary of the Department of Health [Face Coverings Order](#), and current DOH orders specific to higher education, and any other relevant DOH guidelines regarding hygiene, cleaning, ventilation, transportation, and records and contact tracing. [Department of Health Resources and Recommendation can be found here](#).
3. Ensure operations follow the Labor & Industries COVID-19 requirements to protect workers. COVID-19 workplace and safety requirements can be found [here](#).

In order to return to practices and competition colleges, universities, and higher education institutions must have a COVID-19 prevention plan for athletics. The plan must either:

- Adopt [sporting activities](#) guidelines from Governor's office **or**,

- Create a COVID-19 prevention plan for athletics and integrate requirements from an approved COVID-19 prevention plan for athletics adopted by the athletic conference in which the college, university, or higher education institution is a member.
- 4. A college, university, or higher education institution that does not adopt the Sporting activities guidance and adopts their conference COVID-19 prevention plan for athletics must maintain their return-to-play COVID-19 prevention plan on file for review upon request by the local health jurisdiction in the county where the college, university, or higher education institution resides or by the Washington State Department of Health. If a college, university, or higher education institution participates in an athletic conference, that athletic conference's COVID-19 prevention plan for athletics must be approved by all member schools of the conference who are participating in athletic competition with Washington state schools and be submitted for review, but not for approval, to the Washington State Department of Health. Schools participating in athletic activities are responsible for ensuring their athletic conference COVID-19 prevention plan is submitted to Washington State Department of Health for review.
- 5. Regardless of which plan (Washington State Sporting Activities guidelines or a conference COVID-19 prevention plan) a higher education institution follows, there shall be no spectators at games and competitions until such time as spectators are allowed for sporting activities and athletics under the Safe Start Washington Plan.