

MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



Return to Soccer Activities Guidelines

Updated September 4, 2020
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Phase III, Step 1





MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION



Massachusetts Youth Soccer is dedicated to protecting the health of all people in and outside of our community. In an effort to assist our players, coaches and parents with their efforts to return to play after the recent suspension of activities due to COVID-19, Massachusetts Youth Soccer has put together the following guidelines for our affiliate members to use. Given the nature of this pandemic, this framework may change at any time based on the most recent CDC and or Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines. Please keep in mind that local municipalities may have additional guidelines in place that will need to be adhered to. Once this order has been relaxed, please be aware that individual counties and jurisdictions may have additional restrictions in place that affect your decisions.

The information contained in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only.

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RETURN TO SOCCER ACTIVITIES

Governor Baker has provided a 4 phase guideline to reopen the state. Each phase of return has specific guidelines that must be followed by your organization. It is important to note that these phases may not always proceed linearly, but rather a step backwards in phases may be required following continuous review of the ongoing situation and environment. Implementing the Return-to-Soccer Activities Guidelines presented here will require a cooperative relationship between the organization, coach, parent, and player. While the organization and coach must create a safe environment, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are the only ones who may make the decision for their child to return to soccer activities.



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NOTE: The information provided below is based on current guidelines provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for Phase III, step 1. This document will be updated once additional guidance documents are released for future phases or steps.

PHASE I (COMPLETED)- Please see addendum for description of Phase 1 activities.

PHASE II (COMPLETED)- Please see addendum for description of Phase 2 activities.

PHASE III (Updated information is highlighted in yellow)

Step 1 - In accordance with COVID-19 order no 43 issued by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on July 6, 2020, with amendments to supporting documentation issued on August 13, 2020 by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), youth soccer has been classified as a Moderate Risk sport.

Moderate risk is defined as a sport or activities that involve intermittent close proximity or limited, incidental physical contact between participants. Sports in this category are permitted to participate in Level 1, 2, and 3 training activities, if modifications are made to play.

- Level 1 activities are defined as individual or socially distanced group activities (no-contact workouts, aerobic conditioning, individual skill work and drills.)
- Level 2 activities allow for Competitive Practices (Intra-team/group games, contact drills and scrimmages)
- Level 3 - Competitions (Inter-team games, meets, matches, races, etc.)

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has stated that the ability to participate in sports and recreational activities is determined by a combination of: (1) risk of transmission of COVID-19 inherent in the sport or recreational activity itself as traditionally played; (2) level of risk associated with the :”Type of Play” without modifications to play; and (3) whether a sport or activity can “Modify Play” to reduce risk.

Based on the EEA’s latest directive, Mass Youth Soccer has determined the need to require specific modifications in order for Soccer to be continued to be played as a Moderate Risk Sport under the expansion of Phase III, Levels 1, 2, and 3. The guidelines below will outline how this will be implemented.



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Minimum Mandatory Standards for Modification to Play

All Facility Operators and Activity organizers of Moderate and Higher risk sports and activities must develop and implement sport-specific modifications to play to minimize the risk of transmission of infection among participants.

There will always remain an inherent risk participating in sports. To Plan activities and implement modifications to minimize risk, Facility Operators and Activity Organizers must consider the following:

There will always remain an inherent risk participating in sports. To Plan activities and implement modifications to minimize risk, Facility Operators and Activity Organizers must consider the following:

- Identify measures that can be implemented to significantly limit contact and increase physical distancing. Modify play and practice as much as possible to keep players spaced 6 feet apart for the majority of a game or practice.
- Conduct the activity or sport outdoors where possible as outdoor participation is generally safer than indoors and allows for greater distancing.
- Shorten activities, practices and game play or perform the activity with fewer participants to the extent possible.
- Modify the activity or sport to reduce the sharing of equipment or to allow for cleaning of shared equipment between participants.
- Incorporate protective equipment in a safe manner to further reduce the spread of respiratory particles.

Notwithstanding the above considerations, the below minimum standards for modifications must be met in order for Moderate and Higher risk sports to engage in Level 2 and Level 3 play.

MANDATORY MODIFICATIONS FOR LEVEL 2 AND LEVEL 3 PLAY

In order for Moderate and Higher risk activities and sports to engage in Level 2 and Level 3 play, Facility Operators and Activity Organizers must:

- Modify Play to Limit Contact or Increase Distancing for Participants where there is intermittent close participant proximity and/or sustained face to face contact between participants. Modifications should strive to keep participants 6 feet apart for the majority of play and must eliminate all deliberate contact. Such modifications for example



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- o **Eliminate Deliberate Contact:** Deliberate close contact must be eliminated. Deliberate close contact includes but is not limited to collisions, tackling, body checking, blocking
- o **Minimize Intermittent Contact:** Game Situations that result in intermittent close physical or face-to-face contact must be modified or eliminated, including, restarts, throw-ins, scrums for the ball or similar activities.

Those activities and sports that cannot modify play as outlined above cannot engage in LEVEL 3 play but may be able to participate in Level 2 play If modifications are incorporated.

MODIFICATIONS TO COMPLY WITH EEA GUIDANCE

Mass Youth Soccer is hereby immediately implementing modifications for all sanctioned soccer games (scrimmages, friendlies, league). Suspended activities to meet necessary modifications include:

Player Behavior Modification: Coaches should work with players to break habits that will minimize the spread of the virus. Spitting, nose clearing on the field or spitting on gloves during practices and competitions is not permitted.

Coin Toss- As a substitution for the coin toss, the away team shall be provided the choice to kick off or defer to the second half.

In Game Rule Modification

Heading - All intentional heading of a soccer ball is suspended for all ages. Any intentional heading will be treated as a violation of IFAB Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, Indirect Free Kick restart

Contact - Intentional body contact with a member of the opposing team member's body is to be considered a violation of Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, and will result in an Indirect Free Kick restart or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision. Intentional body contact will include "shoulder to shoulder" contact, backing into a player, and pulling an opponents shirt, shorts or mask.

- o A player is allowed to make intermittent and/or unintentional contact with opposing team members if the player is attempting to make foot to ball contact (legal tackle) and the contact occurs as a result of the tackle.



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- **Slide Tackling** - The use of slide tackling is suspended and is to be considered a violation of Law 12, Playing in a Dangerous Manner, Indirect Free Kick restart or other applicable foul or misconduct based on the referee's decision. "Going to the ground" to save a ball from going out of touch or to stop a long ground pass is not considered a "tackle" and is permissible as long as no other players are within 6 feet.

RESTARTS

At any time a ball is to be placed for a restart the ball should not be touched with a player or an official's hands. The ball should be placed where the restart will take place with one's foot. If hands are used the ball will need to be removed from play and sanitized.

For all restarts, all players must comply with the 6-foot distancing from both teammates and opponents. Opponents must remain at 10 yds (8 yards for small sided) from the ball prior to the kick. The use of a traditional defensive Wall is currently suspended.

- **Throw-Ins** as defined by IFAB Law 15 are suspended. When the ball crosses the touchline, the restart will be an Indirect Free Kick (IDFK) from the spot on the touchline where the ball went out of play. All IFAB Law 13 IDFK procedures, offences and sanctions, including those for small sided games (e.g. 8 yards), apply.
- **Corner Kicks** as defined by IFAB Law 17 are suspended and to be replaced by an Indirect Free Kick (IDFK). Similar to a Corner Kick, the ball must be placed in the corner area nearest to the point where the ball passed over the goal line. The restart will be an Indirect Free Kick (IDFK) from the corner area. All IFAB Law 13 IDFK procedures, offences and sanctions, including those for small sided games (e.g. 8 yards), apply.
- The use of a Dropped Ball as a restart is suspended. To replace this procedure, an Indirect Free Kick will be awarded to the team whom the referee deemed to be in possession when the referee stops play.



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LEVEL 3 PLAY - COMPETITION

For the purposes of these guidelines “Competition” is defined as multiple persons or teams, competing against one another in a single contest. A competition includes inter-team games (i.e. leagues), matches, shows, meets, and races.

No tournaments may be held during the duration of Phase III, Step 1.

A “Tournament” is defined by the Commonwealth as a formal contest that consists of multiple games between multiple persons or teams, that might include multiple stages, played in a condensed period of time, such as over the course of a single day or multiple days in a row.

Outdoor Competition:

1. No more than 25 players on any surface/playing area for team/group sports.

Note: For the purposes of the above bullet point #1, players are defined as any person on the official team roster and **who are actively on the field of play.**

2. No more than 50 people excluding players, coaches, referees, or facility/activity workers in the aggregate in, on, or surrounding any surface/playing area, provided that there is adequate space for all players, coaches, referees, facility/activity workers and spectators to maintain at least six feet social distancing, recognizing that for some moderate and high risk sports intermittent and limited contact may occur for players

Note: For the purposes of the above bullet point #2, players are defined as any person on the official team roster.

FROM MASS YOUTH SOCCER: During this current COVID-19 Pandemic state of emergency as proclaimed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mass Youth Soccer requires all member organizations to limit the number of spectators at all sanctioned soccer activities to One (1) per player. Spectators are defined as a Parent, Legal Guardian or Chaperone. Spectators must follow all Mass Youth Soccer Return to Soccer Activities Guidelines. If a player’s parent/legal guardian is present as a coach for their team, another spectator is permitted to be present for this player.



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- **Sanctioned Soccer Activities:** Includes, but is not limited to all games (of all types), practices, clinics, training, tournaments (when permitted) and in-person meetings.
- **Chaperone:** Any person, 18 years of age or older, designated by the Parent or Legal Guardian to be with the child while attending sanctioned soccer activities.
- **Exceptions:** Any Spectator who is responsible for other minors and is not able to have them cared for by others is permitted to be in attendance as a spectator with such children with them at all times.
- Spectators must wear facial coverings and maintain six feet of social distance at all times.
- Coaches, staff, referees and other officials are required to wear facial coverings and maintain social distance of 6 feet at all times.

Multiple Playing Surface Capacity Limits

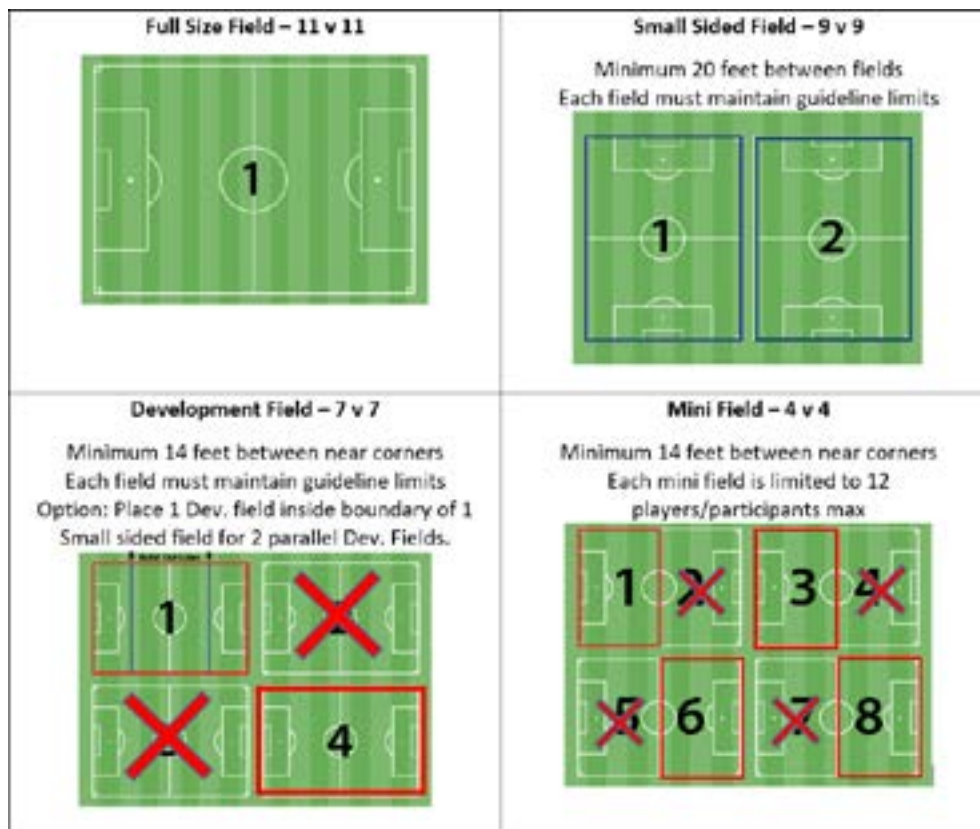
- For facilities with multiple fields, surfaces, courts, etc. the capacity limitations for Outdoor Competitions and Tournaments and Indoor Competitions shall apply per playing field, surface, court, etc. provided that there is adequate spacing for at least six feet social distancing for all individuals, including those at adjacent fields, surfaces, courts, etc.
- Activity organizers should set Competition schedules with a 20 minute buffer to prevent the overlap of participants and to allow for disinfection of equipment and cleaning of commonly touched surfaces, if necessary. Games should end in a draw if time expires.
- For facilities with multiple fields, surfaces, courts, etc. Facility Operators and Activity Organizers should mark off designated areas for spectators for each field, surface, court, etc. to minimize the overlap of spectators from adjacent fields, surfaces, courts, etc.

Field Configurations

- In order to maintain lower numbers on soccer fields and surrounding areas for spectators the following field configurations must be adhered to:
- The actual lined area of a full sized 11 v 11 soccer field or an approximately equal area (110 x 60 yards) must be limited to the following configurations for practices or games:
- One (1) Full Sized field to be used according to the 25 player/participant limit per , OR
- Two (2) small (9v9) or development (7v7) sized fields and each used according to the 25 player/participant limit. Ideally two 9v9 fields should be 20 feet apart and two 7v7 fields should be set up diagonal to each other with the near corners at least 14 feet apart, with an option to have 1 development sized field inside 1 small sized field parallel to each other, OR
- Four (4) micro (4v4) sized fields and each used according to a lower 12 player/participant limit. The fields should be set up diagonal to each other with the near corners at least 14 feet apart



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INDOOR COMPETITION:

For the Fall 2020 season, in the event games must be played indoors:

- No more than 25 players on any surface/playing area for team/group sports.
- If an indoor facility has a chaperone or spectator viewing area which allows for at least six feet social distancing between spectators and the presence of spectators plus player, coaches, referees and facility/activity workers does not cause the facility to exceed more that 40% of the maximum occupancy for the indoor facility, then 1 spectator per player under 21 years old is allowed to attend.
- Spectators must wear facial coverings and maintain six feet of social distance at all times.
- Multiple Playing Surface Capacity limits as stated in the section related to outdoor competition apply here as well



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PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND FACIAL COVERINGS

While limiting proximity of participants is the first line of defense to reduce the risk of transmission Facility Operators and Activity Organizers must require facial coverings to be worn by all participants except:

- During high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities.
- When distancing of 6 feet or more is possible between participants whenever feasible; or
- For individuals that are unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability.
-

Massachusetts Youth Soccer is requiring all players wear a face covering per the most current EEA Guidelines for Organized Youth and Adult Amateur Sports. Only face coverings that secure with loops around a player's ears are acceptable. Face coverings must be worn when a player steps onto the playing field. During play when spacing is greater than 6 feet from another player a "mask break" to catch their breath may be taken. The default expectation is that face coverings will be worn.

Players must properly wear their face covering at all times when on the sidelines and in any huddles except when 6 or more feet from another player for a "mask break" to catch their breath, drink or eat. If conditions are so severe as to warrant masks too dangerous to wear, the competition must be delayed, postponed or cancelled.

Coaches, staff referees, umpires, and other officials are required to wear facial coverings and maintain a social distance of 6 feet from players, coaches, spectators and other persons at all times.

REQUIRED SAFETY PROTOCOLS

All Facility Operators and Activity Organizers must incorporate the following standards for social distancing, hygiene, staffing and operations, cleaning and disinfecting.

Facility Operator

- For team and group sports, no more than 25 players or participants can be on a single playing surface/ area/court at one time. The number of coaches and staff should be limited. Larger playing areas and surfaces such as athletic fields, and facilities that have multiple courts or playing areas, may be used by more than one group of 25 at one time, provided that adequate social distancing and group separation can be maintained. To ensure group separation, groups must be spaced at least 14 feet apart while sharing a single playing surface, court or field.



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- **Outdoor Facilities:** Spectators must maintain distance of at least 6 feet between spectator groups. Operators are encouraged to mark off spectator/chaperone viewing sites to allow for social distancing and all spectators must be kept at least 8 feet away from the playing surface. Spectators must wear facial coverings.
- **Indoor Facilities:** If an indoor facility has a chaperone or spectator viewing area which allows for at least 6 feet social distancing between spectators and if the presence of spectators plus players/coaches as well as staff does not cause the facility to exceed more than 40% of the maximum occupancy for the indoor facility than one spectator per player is allowed. Spectators must wear facial coverings.
- Limit any nonessential visitors, spectators, staff, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible. Visitors, spectators, volunteers, and staff must wear face coverings.

Activity Organizer

- For team and group sports, no more than 25 players or participants can be on a single playing surface/area/court at one time. The number of coaches and staff should be limited. Larger playing areas and surfaces such as athletic fields, and facilities that have multiple courts or playing areas, may be used by more than one group of 25 at one time, provided that adequate social distancing and group separation can be maintained. To ensure group separation, groups must be spaced at least 14 feet apart while sharing a single playing surface, court or field.
- Sportsmanship should continue in a touchless manner- no handshakes/slaps/fist bumps.
- If social distancing is not possible in an athletic facility, chaperones/spectators may be asked to wait outside the facility until an activity is completed.
- If benches and bleachers cannot be removed, they are allowed to open ONLY if six feet of distance can be maintained between each participant at all times and they can be thoroughly cleaned using CDC recommended cleaning protocols between uses.

The following procedures should remain in place for all participants and spectators:

- No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have not been exposed to someone who has been ill in 14 days.
- Players must come from a low risk state (please refer to <https://www.mass.gov/guidance/guidance-for-travelers-arriving-in-the-commonwealth-of-massachusetts> for the most current list of low risk states) participate without quarantining. If a player lives outside of that area they must quarantine 14 days prior to beginning group training. This requirement reduces the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the training group by someone traveling from a different region.



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- Check for normal temperature before going to training - (temperature 100.4 or higher please stay home).
- Upon arrival to training, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider. They will not be allowed to return to training until they are cleared by a healthcare provider. A doctor's note must be provided.
- Participants, organizers, spectators, volunteers, and facility employees in high risk categories should not participate or attend organized sport activities. List of high risk categories can be found [here](#).
- Be sure appropriate infection prevention supplies (e.g. hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings) are present in multiple targeted areas (outlined later in this document).
- Small group training should take place in an area where physical distancing (6' apart) can be maintained.
- All spectators must adhere to CDC and DPH assemblage and distance guidelines. Spectators, nonessential visitors, staff, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations should be limited as much as possible. Operators are encouraged to mark off spectator/chaperone viewing sites to allow for social distancing.
- Spectators/Chaperones must practice social distancing including wearing face coverings.
- Participants should use their own equipment and be instructed to sanitize their equipment after every training session.
- Each participant will be required to have their own water bottle, towel, and personal hygiene products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, face coverings). Players are required to wear face coverings during all soccer activities, Coaches and spectators will be required to wear face coverings and maintain a social distance of 6 feet at all times. Tissues, wipes, or disposable gloves must be properly disposed in the appropriate receptacles.
- Cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment (cones, goals etc.) with disinfectant before, during, and after training.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, face coverings/masks) must be worn as required per DPH guidelines.
- Wear a face covering, when not actively playing and when a player cannot abide by the physical/social distance requirements from coaches, other players, and parents.
- Soccer will be permitted to be played by the players under the rules/laws of the sport.

PHASE IV - Return to new Normal

Full resumption of all outdoor recreation. Currently suspended, to be determined by future EEA directive.



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BEST PRACTICES TO LIMIT RISK TO OUR SOCCER COMMUNITY

FACILITIES

- Assign a COVID-19 Safety Officer who will communicate policy organization wide to organizations utilizing the facility. Regular updates and reminders should be provided.
- Assign staff to oversee the compliance of organizations at the facility. One staff per two playing surfaces.
- Operators should log persons (name and phone number or name and email address) who remain on site for a sustained period of time to facilitate contact tracing, including staff, participants, and spectators.
- Access to equipment storage and office space should be limited to employees only. First aid kits should be available at the playing area or court rather than in an office, where possible.
- Facility owners/operators and staff should clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Frequently touched surfaces and objects vary by location but may include doorknobs, light switches, handrails, sinks, faucets, toilet handles, drinking fountains.
- Restroom facilities shall be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with Centers for Disease control guidance and best practices linked [here](#).
- Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning.
- In the event of a positive case, shut down the site for a deep cleaning and disinfecting in accordance with current guidelines.
- If any equipment is provided by the Facility Operator, the operator must minimize equipment sharing and clean and disinfect shared equipment at the end of a practice session from the list of disinfectants meeting [EPA criteria for use against the novel coronavirus](#).
- Remove visible dirt and grime before using disinfectants. Disinfecting surfaces removes most germs and are most effective on clean surfaces and objects. Coronaviruses are relatively easy to kill with most disinfectants. When selecting disinfecting products, always read and follow the manufacturer's directions.
- Staff should use gloves and or other personal protective equipment. Throw away gloves after each cleaning.
- Indoor facilities must provide access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water, and allow sufficient break time for staff and participants to wash hands frequently; alcohol - based sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used as an alternative.
- Facility staff should ensure that all handwashing sinks have clean running water, soap, and paper towels at all times.



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- Operators must post visible signage throughout the site to remind employees and visitors of hygiene and safety protocols.
- As of Phase III, Step 1 - Water bubblers, fountains and bottle filling stations can open for refilling bottles/containers only. Managers are encouraged to install signs near any drinking equipment advising users to use for bottle refill only and not to touch the tap with their mouth or the mouth of their water bottle.
- Consider having alcohol based hand sanitizer in common areas to encourage hygiene.
- Facility managers must set, post, and monitor occupancy limits for bathrooms based on the ability to maintain six-foot social distancing.
- Facilities that house a concession stand must adhere to the guidelines for restaurants as outlined by both the local Board of Health and the Governor's office.
- Do not allow congregating in the parking lot, common areas, entrances, and exits before and after practice.
- Schedule groups/teams with a minimum of 20 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled arrival time.
- Teams who wish to schedule warm-up time prior to their sessions must build that into their scheduled session/rental time. Warm-ups will not be permitted adjacent to the assigned field prior to the scheduled start time for a team.
- Remove benches from all soccer fields. Players & spectators must bring their own chair. All chairs must be spaced according to physical distancing rules. (6' apart) If you can not remove benches and bleachers, they are allowed to open ONLY if six feet of distance can be maintained between each participant at all times and they can be thoroughly cleaned using CDC recommended cleaning protocols between uses.
- Facilities that permit the use of golf carts will allow 1 operator per cart.
- Indoor facilities must have proper ventilation allowing for the proper outside air to filter into the building.



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TOWN ORGANIZATION/CLUB

- Assign a COVID-19 Safety Officer who will communicate policies organization-wide, to coaching staff, administrators, parents, and players. Regular updates and reminders should be provided.
- Assign each team a coordinator to oversee compliance at the team level (can be a team parent who must register as an Adult with Mass Youth Soccer).
- Train and educate all volunteers/staff on return to activities protocols.
- Develop a relationship and dialog with local Health Department officials (identify risk tolerance).
- Develop a plan to communicate with the local health department in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within a team.
- If a team member or coach contracts COVID-19, all training and games sessions should be canceled for that team and any additional team associated with that coach for 14 days.
- Be prepared to shut down and stop operations. Develop plans for temporary closure of facilities (indoor, outdoor) to properly disinfect and ensure other adult leaders are not infected.
- Provide coaches and team coordinators with PPE (masks) and sanitizing products.
- Schedule groups/teams with a minimum of 20 minutes in between the time one team concludes and the other arrives. Players must leave immediately after their session. Players should not arrive at their field earlier than 5 minutes prior to their scheduled arrival time.
- Ensure accurate attendance for all practice and game sessions. This is necessary for contact tracing if this should become necessary.
- Teams that wish to schedule warm-up time prior to their sessions must build that into their scheduled session/rental time. Warm-ups will not be permitted adjacent to the assigned field prior to the scheduled start time for a team.
- Do not allow players or parents to congregate in parking lots, at drop off zones, facility entrances/exits before or after a training session.
- Provide adequate space at the field to allow for proper physical/social distancing (6').
- All parents, spectators, and players should have their own chair. Chairs should be placed to allow for proper physical and social distancing (6').
- All waste should be placed by the respective parent, player, coach, or spectator in the trash receptacle. Nothing should be picked up by anybody other than the originator of the waste.
- Require players to have their own water, sanitary products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, PPE (optional for play), ball, GK Gloves (if necessary), dark and light shirt (in lieu of shared scrimmage vests)).



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COACH

- Understand that there may be parents/guardians who may not be ready to have their child return to activities at this time.
- Only a face covering which attaches around the ears will be allowed, so as not to cause any injury if accidentally tugged or pulled on. No around the head or neck face coverings will be permitted during contact play.
- Ensure the health and safety of all athletes.
- Ensure athletes arrive dressed for practice and leave immediately after practice. No recreational play, or loitering is allowed.
- Upon arrival, inquire how athletes are feeling, send them home if you believe they are acting or look ill.
- Take accurate attendance use of Apps such as TeamSnap or TeamApp is encouraged to assist with Contact Tracing if required)
- No handshakes, fist or elbow bumps, or any other physical contact.
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands). Launder clothing after training session.
- Follow all state and local health protocols.
- Coach is to be the only one to handle cones, discs, goals etc.
- Ensure all athletes have their individual equipment. (Ball, water bottle, GK Gloves etc.)
- Ensure player's personal belongings (bags, coats, sweatshirts) remain in their personal space and are kept physically distanced from the belongings of others. Do not allow sharing of personal items.
- Ask players to bring their own personal practice vest (a.k.a. pinnie) or a dark and light shirt to eliminate the need of shared scrimmage vests.
- Do not allow shared team snacks. Participants and spectators should only drink from their own containers.
- Wear a face covering at all times and you must maintain social distancing of 6 feet from players, coaches, spectators, and other persons at all times.
- **STAY POSITIVE** – Players and parents will be looking to you to remain calm and supportive during this transition time.



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PARENTS

- Ensure your child's health. Take temperature daily. The average normal body temperature is generally accepted as 98.6°F (37°C). Some studies have shown that the "normal" body temperature can have a wide range, from 97°F (36.1°C) to 99°F (37.2°C). A temperature over 100.4°F (38°C) most often means you have a fever caused by an infection or illness.
- If your child has any symptoms, even mild ones, do not send them to practice or a game. Public health urges you to stay home and isolate until:
- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (without the use of medicine) AND
- Other symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) have improved AND
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- Anyone in your household that you have had close contact with (within six feet for approximately 10 minutes) should self-quarantine for 14 days, even if you haven't been tested for COVID-19.
- Notify the club immediately if your child has become sick.
- Adhere to physical/social distance requirements posted by the organization. These are based on state and local requirements. When at training, wear a face covering if you are outside of your car.
- Ensure that your child has a water bottle, equipment (ball and GK Gloves if necessary), light and dark shirt (no shared scrimmage vests will be provided).
- Ensure your child's personal equipment, cleats, balls, shin guards etc. are cleaned and sanitized before and after every training.
- Ensure your child's clothing is washed after every session.
- Do not assist the coach with equipment before or after a training session.
- No carpooling with other members of the team.
- Be sure your child has necessary sanitizer with them at every session.
- Ensure athletes arrive dressed for practice and leave immediately after practice. No recreational play, or loitering is allowed.
- **A face covering will be required per the most recent EEA guidelines while actively playing and while on the sidelines. A face covering should be worn during arrival and departure from the field. Only a face covering that loops around a player's ears will be considered acceptable. See PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND FACIAL COVERINGS section for full description.**



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PLAYERS

- Take temperature daily (see information outlining this in the parent's section).
- Practice and encourage proper hygiene, washing hands frequently with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds at a time. Use alcohol based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol). Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or sleeves, do not use your hands. Do not touch your face (eyes, nose, mouth) with unwashed hands.
- Have your own hand sanitizer with you.
- **A face covering will be required per the most recent EEA guidelines while actively playing and while on the sidelines. A face covering should be worn during arrival and departure from the field. Only a face covering that loops around a player's ears will be considered acceptable. See PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND FACIAL COVERINGS section for full description.**
- Only a face covering which attaches around the ears will be allowed, so as not to cause any injury if accidentally tugged or pulled on. No around the head or neck face coverings will be permitted during contact play.
- Practice physical distancing on the sidelines. When sitting on the sidelines you should be 6' from the next player and wear a mask as much as possible. Your belongings should remain in your space when not in use.
- Bring your own equipment (Ball, GK Gloves (if required), shin guards, jacket etc.) Do not touch anyone else's equipment.
- Bring your own water bottle and snack. Do not touch anyone else's belongings as sharing will not be permitted.
- Wash and sanitize your equipment before and after each training.
- No group celebrations, hugs, handshakes, fist bumps, etc.



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TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS / EVENT STAFF

- Tournament Directors should follow the guidelines set forth by Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association, CDC, Federal, State, and local governments.
- Tournament Directors should ensure that participants are following the specific local and state restrictions from their home location counties or associations before allowing teams from other associations/areas into the tournament.
- Predetermine appropriate emergency contacts should anything arise during your event and provide the information to all tournament staff and participants.
- All communication leading up to the tournament should include information on COVID-19, preventive measures and all procedures that the host has established as requirements for participants and spectators, including:
 - Information on physical distancing measures, personal protection equipment requirements, limits on spectators and what the plan of action will be for suspected cases.
 - Instructions to stay home if the participant or a member of the participant's family is not feeling well.
 - Instructions on what to do if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. If a participant is exhibiting symptoms of Coronavirus the participants should not attend or participate in the event until such time as the participant has been tested and cleared. Doctor's note would be required as proof of testing results.
- All participants and spectators should have access to handwashing and hand sanitizer.
- Bleachers and team benches should not be used. All spectators and players should provide their own seating. They should allow for 6' of physical distance from others.
- A procedure should be developed for any possible cases at the event. This should include a designated area for those who present with symptoms and those they came in contact with to be isolated until an ambulance is called.
- Event staff are to wear appropriate personal protection equipment when they come in contact with spectators, participants, and coaches.
- It is the responsibility of the tournament host to supply any and all masks, gloves and hand sanitizer for their tournament staff. The tournament host is the organization running the tournament and not the facility at which the event is held.
- Team registration/check in area should be set up to allow for necessary physical distancing for both the staff and the team representatives. Markers should be placed on the ground to ensure 6 feet of physical distance for those waiting in line. **Such markings should be at least 8 feet from field boundaries.**
- When possible, organizations will need to coordinate team registration and roster check-in electronically prior to the event. If needed, paper materials may be exchanged on the day of the event



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DISCLAIMER

Participants, parents, family and spectators taking part in soccer and soccer related activities do so with the knowledge of risk and potential exposure involved. In doing so they agree to accept any and all inherent risks to their personal health.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Reopening Massachusetts](#)

[Center for Disease Control - Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)

[CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)

[CDC Guide to Mass Gatherings](#)

[CDC List of people in high risk categories](#)

[COVID-19 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices](#)

[EPA Recommended Disinfectants](#)

[WHO Handwashing Video](#)

[FIFA COVID-19 Resources](#)

[US Soccer Play On](#)

[US Soccer Recognize to Recover - COVID 19 and Mental Health](#)

[US Youth Soccer Return to Activity Notice](#)

[Aspen Institute - Coronavirus and Youth Sports](#)

[COVID Safety Officer Enrollment Form](#)

CONTACT

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Addendum i: PHASE 1 - NO ORGANIZED YOUTH SPORTS

No organized youth sports. Included in the Reopening Phases in Massachusetts document for the reopening standards of and Parks, Open Space Outdoor Education Programs is the following guidance: Athletic fields and athletic courts can be utilized only for non-contact sports, with no shared equipment, such as tennis and pickleball. No permits should be issued for group gatherings and users should not engage in pick-up games, organized games or tournaments.

Youth Sports are not permitted to return under Phase 1 of the reopening and as such all soccer activities under the umbrella of Mass Youth Soccer, as well as all other youth sports in the state, will be suspended during this Phase.



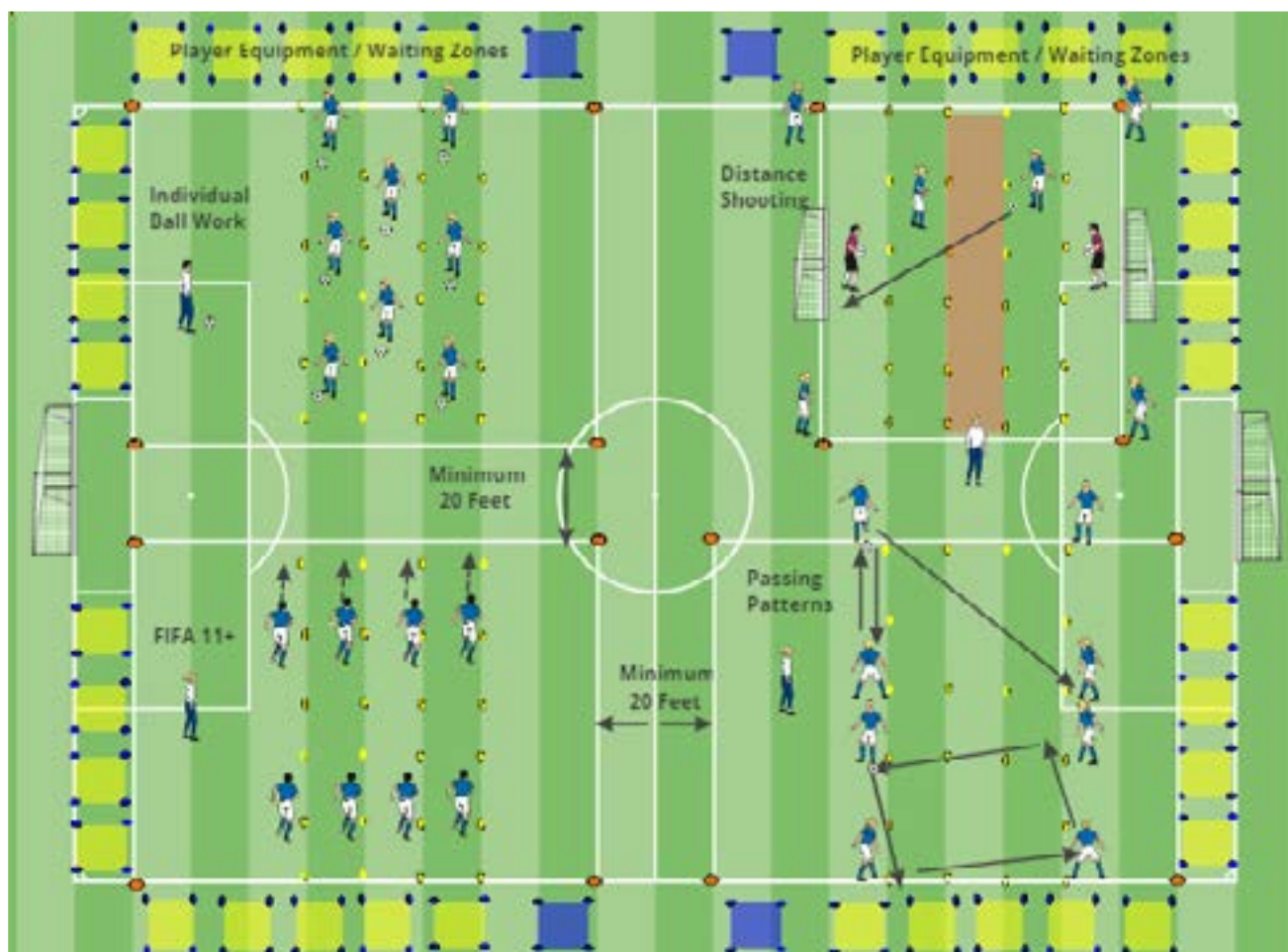
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Addendum ii: PHASE 2

With Soccer classified as a contact sport, activities under this phase will be allowed but will be limited to no-contact drills and training exercises only. No scrimmages, league games or tournaments may be held during the duration of this phase. This includes friendlies, intrasquad scrimmages or other arranged games. Session plans for conducting practice sessions using physical distancing are available on the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association Website under the section Coaches / Session Plans website. [CLICK HERE](#)

Programs must separate participants into groups of no more than 12 participants including coaches and staff. Larger playing areas and surfaces such as athletic fields may be used by more than one group of 12 at a time, provided that adequate social distance and group separation can be maintained. To ensure group separation, groups must be spaced at least 20 feet apart while sharing a playing surface.





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Criteria to participate in these Phase 2 training sessions should adhere to these guidelines (adapted from US Youth Soccer Guidelines)

- No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and have not been exposed to someone that has been ill in 14 days.
- Live in a general location for 14 days prior to beginning group training. This requirement reduces the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the training group by someone traveling from a different region.
- Take temperature before going to training.
- Upon arrival to training, coaches or staff should ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 they should be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider. They will not be allowed to return to training until they are cleared by a healthcare provider. A doctor's note must be provided.
- Participants, organizers, spectators, volunteers and facility employees in high risk categories should not participate or attend organized sport activities. List of high risk categories can be found [here](#).
- Be sure appropriate infection prevention supplies (e.g. hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings) are present in multiple targeted areas (outlined later in this document).
- Small group training should take place in an area where physical distancing (6' apart) can be maintained.
- All spectators must adhere to CDC and DPH assemblage and distance guidelines. Spectators, nonessential visitors, staff, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations should be limited as much as possible. Operators are encouraged to mark off spectator/chaperone viewing sites to allow for social distancing.
- Spectators/Chaperones must practice social distancing including wearing face coverings.
- Participants should use their own equipment and be instructed to sanitize their equipment after every training session.
- Each participant will be required to have their own water bottle, towel, and personal hygiene products (hand sanitizer, facial tissues, face coverings). Players are not required to wear face coverings during soccer activities, but must wear them when arriving and leaving a session. Coaches and spectators will be required to wear face coverings by DPH guidelines (currently whenever within 6 feet of others a face covering must be worn). Tissues, wipes, or disposable gloves must be properly disposed in the appropriate receptacles.
- Follow cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment (cones, goals etc.) with disinfectant before, during, and after training.



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- **Appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, face coverings/masks) must be worn as required per DPH guidelines.**
- **Wear a face covering, when not actively playing and when a player cannot abide by the physical/social distance requirements from coaches, other players and parents.**
- **Soccer will be permitted to be played by the players under the rules/laws of the sport.**

In Phase 2 Indoor athletic facilities shall be open and available exclusively for the use of supervised sports programs, including sports camps (which must comply with Reopening Massachusetts camp guidelines), for youths under the age of 18. Locker rooms and indoor common areas in these facilities must remain closed. One way entrances and exits must be instituted while still adhering to established fire and building codes.