

Softball Program Preparation Plan

Guidance for Sports Activities

In Accordance with the NJ Department of Health

- Organized sports: Resume on June 22, 2020 for practices.
- Organized sports: Resume on July 6, 2020 for games.

The public health data on which this document is based can and do change frequently. Organizers should check back frequently for updates.

Guidance for Operations:

Outdoor sports and Athletic Facilities Organizations for athletic activities should follow the safety measures outlined below.

1. Preparing a Sports Program for Practices:

- a. Each sports program shall create a plan (“program preparation plan”) to ensure the following:
 - i. Identify adult staff members or volunteers to help remind coaches, players, and staff of social distancing. Use of signs, tapes or physical barriers can be used to assist with guiding social distancing requirements.
 - ii. Individuals shall remain 6 feet apart from one another whenever possible.
 - iii. Coaching staff and parents/guardians should wear cloth face coverings. Athletes are also encouraged to wear cloth or disposable face coverings when not engaging in vigorous activities, such as when sitting on the bench, when interacting with an athletic trainer, etc. Face coverings should not be worn by staff or athletes when engaging in high intensity aerobic and anerobic workouts or while in the water, or where doing so would inhibit the individual’s health.

2. All staff should be educated on COVID-19 health and safety protocols prior to the resumption of athletic activities, including:

- a. Revised practice rules and regulations in place during COVID-19.
- b. The importance of staying home when experiencing symptoms of COVIC-19 or residing with someone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

- c. Social distancing and face coverings.
 - d. Proper hand hygiene.
 - e. How to address a situation in which an athlete presents with symptoms of COVID-19.
 - f. How to address situations in which social distancing or other necessary requirements are challenged by athletes or parents/guardians/visitors.
 - g. All athletes, coaches, and staff should bring their own water and drinks to practice activities.
 - h. Encourage athletes to use their own equipment to the extent possible.
 - i. If equipment is shared, coaching staff should be aware of the sanitation procedures for team equipment (balls, bats, etc.) and sufficient disinfecting wipes or similar products should be made available.
3. Preparing a Facility for Sports Practices and Games:
- a. Signage posted
 - b. Reduced crowding
 - c. Routine and frequent sanitization and disinfecting
 - d. Have hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or other sanitizing materials readily available at entrances, exits, benches, dugouts, and any other area prone to gathering or high traffic.
4. Conducting Sport Practices and Games:
- a. Screen athletes, coaches, staff and other participating in practice sessions, via temperature check and health questionnaire, at the beginning of each session.
 - b. Restrict spitting, handshakes, high-fives, team huddles, and any other close-contacting activities.
5. Additional Notes:

Programs that are governed by formal league rules or other binding agreements or affiliations should comply with any COVID-19 and other health and safety rules applicable under those authorities but must abide by the timeline regarding permitted practice activities and competition dates.

6. In addition to the Department of Health Guidelines, we as a league will temporarily implement the following safety precautions.
 - a. We will implement an Umpire/batter/catcher relationship with a minimum of 6 feet of space in the form of a triangle.
 - b. We will add two additional safety bases. One at second base and one at third base.
 - c. We will add a commitment line between first and second and second and third. The commitment line will be 20 feet from the previous base.
 - d. We will enforce the no sliding rule and runners will be allowed to over run all bases without penalty. This will simulate all the rules at first base for a batter runner.
 - e. We will place the extra safety bases 18" apart from the permanent base.
7. Handling of the bats and balls.
 - a. We will limit catcher contact.
 - b. We will limit umpire contact.
 - c. The on-deck batter only will handle and retrieve the previous batters' bat. That bat will be placed in the bat area so it can be sanitized by the owner of the bat.
 - d. We will require all pitchers to keep and sanitize the game ball in between innings.

8. Consequences:

Screening violations and or social distancing violations will be considered egregious offenses. First offense will be termination of play on that particular day and suspension the following week. Second offense will be dismissal from the league.

In our last meeting we all agreed that this pandemic is serious, and all 12 managers voted that they would comply with the state guidelines. In addition to the state guidelines, we unanimously voted to temporarily implement the above safety precautions. This is now our "program preparation plan" and we all are now responsible to implement all components of the plan.