

 USAFOOTBALL®

RETURN TO YOUTH FOOTBALL 2020





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THE BASICS

As youth football families seek a responsible return to play, USA Football is working with leaders across medicine, football and athlete development to provide helpful information for youth leagues.

Get started with the key points below. However, before beginning football activities, it's vitally important to fully review USA Football's Return to Youth Football 2020 Information and Considerations (this guide), with a phased approach to returning to football based on the phased re-opening guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A youth league's state and city or county department of health determines what "Phase" it is in, which can move up or down as COVID-19 information develops. Be aware that prior to a vaccine or cure, COVID-19 risk of infection remains, regardless of the fact that your local community may have "re-opened." Prior to resuming activities, inform all parents of the steps you are taking so they can make an informed decision regarding their child's participation. USA Football also recommends that you add COVID-specific language to your waivers (remaining aware that such waivers may not be enforced in certain jurisdictions).

RETURN TO YOUTH FOOTBALL 2020 KEY POINTS:

- Before opening any football activities, talk to your city or county department of health to learn “re-opening” procedures in your area.
- Connect with your local school system to learn of its plan to return to fall sports and what information and resources, such as sanitizing products, could be shared between your programs.
- Prior to every workout, practice or game, check for virus signs/symptoms. Parents must not allow children to participate in any activity if they’ve shown virus signs or symptoms or have possibly been exposed to the virus in the past 14 days.
- Maintain a six-foot distance between all players and coaches in Phases I and II (see below). Leagues in a Phase III location may adjust to three-to-six feet apart when not directly participating in practices or games.
- Face coverings (masks) should be worn by coaches, officials, and other on-field personnel and are optional for players.
- Sanitize all equipment frequently and have an alcohol-based hand sanitizer available for players and coaches.
- Have all players bring, label, and use their own water bottles, towels and other personal items.
- Players and coaches who are high-risk should not participate in practices or games.

PHASE 1: FOOTBALL WORKOUTS AND DRILLS

- Maintain at least a six-foot distance between all players and coaches.
- Limit practices to 10 people or less , whether inside or outside, and keep players in groups of five to 10. Players are to only practice together within their small group.
- Focus on football movements and overall athleticism, running drills unopposed without contact.
- Equipment is not yet shared between players, this including but is not limited to, footballs, flag belts, tackling dummies, donuts, sleds and other equipment.

PHASE 2: MODIFIED PRACTICES

- Maintain at least a six-foot distance between all players and coaches.
- Practice with up to 10 people inside or 50 people outdoors and keep players within the same group of 5-to-10 teammates by using station-based activities.
- Run individual drills that are either unopposed without contact or against bags or soft surfaces with coaches remaining six feet from players. Sanitize bags and sleds between each use.
- Passing, kicking, punting, and shotgun snaps between players are acceptable, however, hand-offs and snaps under center are not due to a lack of physical distancing. All equipment, including footballs, should be sanitized as frequently as possible during practice.

PHASE 3: MODIFIED FLAG AND 7-ON-7 GAMES; MODIFIED TACKLE PRACTICES

- Maintain a three-to-six-foot distance between all players and coaches when not directly participating in practices and games.
- Up to 50 people, indoors or outdoors.
- Continue to encourage the use of drills at the “Air” and “Bags” levels of contact. Bags and sleds are to be sanitized between each use.
- Introduce contact, including blocking and tackling with partners or within small groups. This may include limited 1-on-1 contact drills and 7-on-7 skeleton drills.
- Large group drills like 7 vs. 7 skeleton and 11 vs. 11 team must remain non-contact.
- Encourage small-sided type games and activities, such as 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 situations (i.e. “2 vs. 1 - Read the Defender,” “4-To-Score (3 vs. 3),” “Ultimate Football,” etc).
- In contact drills, continue to keep players within the same small group of 5-to-10 teammates.



RETURN TO REGULAR ACTIVITIES

You might consider returning to regular practices and games prior to a vaccine/cure once

- your local area has no restrictions on the size of group gatherings (this does not apply to mass gathering restrictions), and
- public health authorities in your area allow public facilities to reopen. Under such circumstances, regular practices and games might be appropriate to resume if participants satisfactorily pass relevant pre-activity screening procedures and all live in the same community.

Please consult your local public health authorities to determine whether it is appropriate to resume such activities before doing so. If doing so, continue to promote physical distancing and related procedures around your activities.

POSITIVE EXPOSURES

In the case of a known COVID-19 exposure/illness/positive test, immediately notify everyone across your league (without identifying the affected individual) and contact your local public health authorities to allow them to begin the process of contact tracing and other possible actions/steps. Individuals who have had close contact to someone who tests positive should self-isolate for at least 14 days. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 infection should self-isolate and avoid sports participation for a variable duration of time. Prior to returning to football, obtain a note from their health care provider releasing them to full participation.

PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

USA Football provides this document and collected resources for your information and consideration as you work through your analysis and decisions. **You should consult with your local public health authorities and your medical, legal, insurance, and other relevant advisors before engaging in any activities so that you understand as much as possible the medical, legal, and risk environment in which you operate. Be aware that many insurance policies contain communicable disease exclusions.**

This document is not provided as, and should not be relied upon as, either medical or legal advice, but rather is provided for your informational purposes only. If you use any information and/or considerations provided herein, you do so at your own risk and you specifically release from any and all liability USA Football, Inc., its affiliates, and any of their directors, officers, employees, volunteers, agents, and grantors in connection therewith. USA Football makes no warranties or statements as to the completeness, reliability, and/or accuracy of the information contained herein.



As you look at whether and how to resume your league's on-field activities, USA Football, in consultation with the following medical and football professionals, invites you to review the information and considerations included within this document:



Dr. Paul Roetert, Ph.D., Director of Education and Strategic Engagement for the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and Chair of USA Football's Athlete Health and Wellness Task-Force



Dr. Jonathan Finnoff, D.O., Chief Medical Officer for the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC)



Dr. Michael Koester, MD, Chair of the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)



Dr. Johna Register-Mihalik, Ph.D., Department of Exercise and Sport Science at the University of North Carolina



Uzma Samadani, MD, Ph.D., Chair of ThinkFirst Injury Prevention Foundation; Neurosurgeon at Minneapolis VAMC and Centracare; Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota



Mr. Jon Butler, Executive Director of Pop Warner Little Scholars



Mr. Brad Garrett, Assistant. Executive Director of the Oregon School Activities Association



Mr. Scott Heitland, Head Football Coach at Dallas Center-Grimes High School

As covered in USA Football's initial Return to Youth Football 2020 communication, many decisions concerning your on-field league activities will be particularly local to you. As an update to that initial information, we encourage you to consider the youth sports guidance released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/youth-sports.html>) and the PLAY Sports Coalition/National Council of Youth Sports (<https://playsportscoalition.org/returntoplay/>), the latter of which also includes risk, liability and general operational considerations for your review. The CDC has also produced the flowchart attached in the Appendix concerning "Youth Programs and Camps," an additional point of reference you may find useful.

We also encourage you to consider other resources specific to your local area that may be helpful. Such resources could include but are not limited to information from your state high school association, local high school and elementary school systems, and public health resources directly available in your area. In particular, there is likely significant cross-over between your league's activities and your local school system; your players are students at those schools. Knowing what those schools are doing will help you in addressing your activities.

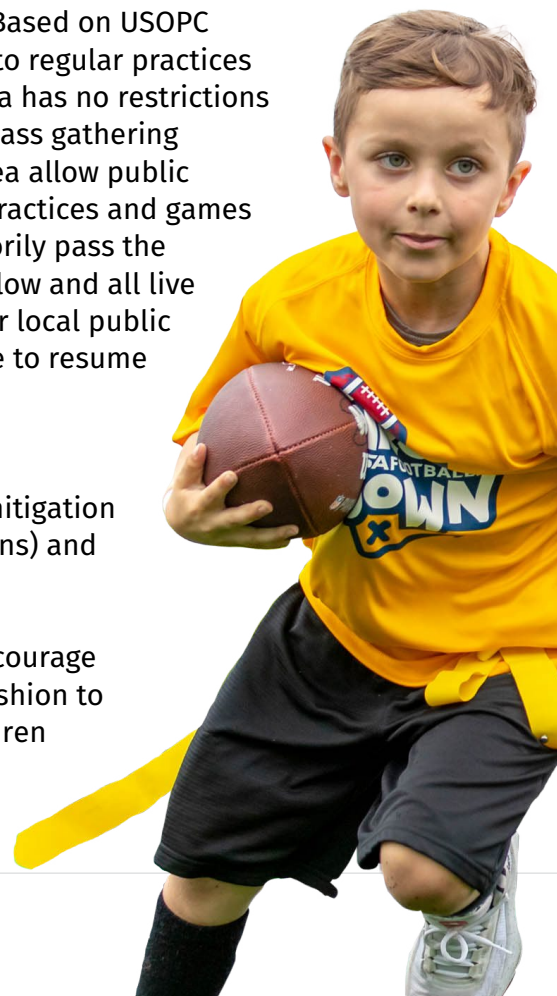
1. RETURNING TO ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO A VACCINE OR CURE

- a. There are many societal benefits and physical and mental health benefits to a return to youth football. Those benefits are balanced against the reality that until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way of completely eliminating the risk of fatal infection. We encourage you to keep those concepts in the forefront of your mind when designing your return to play program and activities. The focus of public health authorities across the nation is on mitigating the spread of the virus, as appropriate given each community's circumstances. Please consult with your local public health authorities before engaging in any activities to make sure you fully understand and are in compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and Local orders, regulations, and guidelines relevant to your league's operations and activities. Refer back to USA Football's initial **Return to Youth Football 2020 communication** for more information and links to certain of those resources.
- b. COVID-19 testing regimens, specific guidelines regarding mass gatherings, and response to an athlete, team member, or close contact testing positive for COVID-19 (including contact tracing) are all currently under review, and further guidance will come from CDC and state and local health departments. Limited testing availability, lack of resources for contact tracing, and expanding knowledge of the characteristics of COVID-19 transmission could all result in significant changes to the recommendations below. Follow and consult your local public health authorities to learn more as these items develop. Further, in your consultation of local school systems, inquire as to the extent if any that they are testing and whether your activities might draw in any way from theirs.

- c. USOPC guidance provides suggested levels of COVID-19 transmission risk for various sports, categorizing them from “Level 1” (Highest Risk) to “Level 3” (Lowest Risk). Football is not included in this guidance, but based on the guidance it would appear that Tackle Football is a “Level 1” (highest risk) sport while 7-on-7 and Flag Football are “Level 2” (Middle Risk) sports, given the group nature of those sports, the respective frequencies of close, sustained contact (lack of physical distancing) and the shared equipment (i.e. the football) utilized. Relevant NFHS guidance suggests the same categorization, placing Tackle Football in the “Highest Risk” category and 7-on-7 Football in the “Moderate Risk” category.

2. A GRADUAL RETURN TO “REGULAR” FOOTBALL ACTIVITY

- a. The White House and CDC have released joint “Opening Up America Again” guidelines, available <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>. That guidance presents 3 phases that states and localities are encouraged to move between based on certain gating criteria, including the rates of signs/symptoms, rates of transmission, and hospital capacity and testing considerations present in their areas and continuing over 14-day periods of time. The 3 football-specific phases contemplated in this document below are based on and correspond to that guidance and are adapted from the guidance released by NFHS concerning high school activities. Those 3 football phases all contemplate modified/limited football activities.
- b. Think of a return to regular activities as a fourth phase. Based on USOPC guidance, it would be appropriate to consider returning to regular practices and games prior to a vaccine/cure once (i) your local area has no restrictions on the size of group gatherings (this does not apply to mass gathering restrictions), and (ii) public health authorities in your area allow public facilities to reopen. Under such circumstances, regular practices and games **might** be appropriate to resume if participants satisfactorily pass the relevant pre-activity screening procedures presented below and all live in the same community. In any event, please consult your local public health authorities to determine whether it is appropriate to resume such activities before doing so, considering all possible alternatives and modifications in your planning.
- c. In returning to practices/games, continue to follow the mitigation procedures provided in Sections 11 (Further Considerations) and 12 (Monitoring) below.
- d. Before you are able to return to regular activities, we encourage you to consider resuming your activities in a modified fashion to provide parents options for activities in which their children could participate.



3. HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD

- a. With any resumption of on-field activities, USA Football recommends that you continue to adhere to USA Football's **heat acclimatization guidelines**.
- b. Notwithstanding the possibility that you may be facing delays to the start of your seasons and therefore a time compression of certain activities, the full acclimatization period is critical to preparing players for the rigors of football activity. The acclimatization period should not be shortened in an attempt to begin regular season games "on time."
- c. Also consider potentially lengthening certain preparatory pre-season periods given the likelihood that athletes may not have been as active generally during quarantine.

4. PHASING BASED ON FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL ORDERS AND GUIDANCE

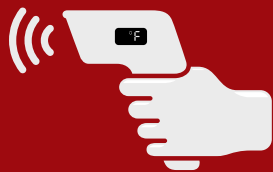
- a. Keep in mind that the White House/CDC guidance on reopening is intended to apply to the entire country and therefore is somewhat general in nature. Please consult with your local and state health departments regarding their plans for "opening up" your state and location. Not all states are using the same criteria, and what is allowable during specific phases will vary from state to state, or even within a state. Use the following as a resource in designing a plan for your league. Please note that there will be gating criteria to establish Phase 1 and the further criteria must be met to advance from one phase to the next. These criteria will be determined by state and/or local governments and must be strictly followed.
- b. As you prepare your plan for phasing in your activities, we encourage you to take that plan to your local public health authorities for their review, comment, and assistance. Continue to consult with those public health authorities to fully understand what phase your locality is in and what changes may occur over time.
- c. Note that the phases below lead to a resumption, in Football Phase 3, of modified 7-on-7 and Flag Football games and modified practices for Tackle Football. As mentioned, the appropriateness of a return to full practices and games will depend on forthcoming epidemiology data and experiences across the nation and particularly in your locality. Consult your local public health authorities and specifically ask them when these activities may resume.



5. FOOTBALL PHASE 1

a. Activities to Consider:

- Workouts and drills designed to ensure all guidelines may be followed. Workouts and drills should not occur with a football that will be handed off or passed to other teammates. Contact with other players is not allowed, and there should be no sharing of tackling dummies/donuts/sleds/etc. Physical distancing of 6 feet or greater must be maintained at all times.
 - Encourage individual development with a focus on football movements and overall athleticism.
 - Examples of Football Phase 1 activities could include such activities as:
 - o “60 Ways to Play” Starter, Indoor and Anywhere circuits composed of physical literacy exercises.
 - o Conditioning exercises.
 - o Speed training.
 - o Change of direction movement circuits.
 - o Movement foundations with change of direction and speed variations.
 - o Prep for Contact movement series: Falling, Tumbling, Crawling.
 - o Individual football or position specific movement skills on “Air” (level of contact).



Screen all athletes before any activities

b. Pre-Activity Screening:

- All participants (coaches, players, officials, personnel, etc.) should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout and asked if they have experienced any such signs/symptoms within the 14 days immediately preceding the activity. Players should be screened through communications with their parents/guardians to promote accuracy in responses. Consider sending an email to all parents/guardians asking them to screen and report before every gathering, including the sample form attached in the appendix. Such signs/symptoms include any of the following:
 - Fever (over 100.3)
 - Cough
 - Shortness of Breath
 - Sore Throat
 - Congestion
 - Headache
 - Chills
 - Muscle and/or Joint Pain

- Nausea/Vomiting
- Loss of Sense of Smell and Taste
- Diarrhea
- Consider including an on-site or self-temperature check of all participants in consultation with your local public health authorities concerning the taking of temperatures and temperature level(s) to screen.
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored (if possible in compliance with applicable law) so that there is a record of everyone present in case a participant develops COVID-19.
- Any person with positive symptoms reported should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.
- Vulnerable individuals should not oversee or participate in any workouts during Football Phase 1.
 - Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as people age 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy. See below on “Individuals at Higher Risk” for more information directly from the CDC.

c. Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gatherings of more than 10 people at a time (inside or outside).
- Workouts should be conducted in “pods” of players with the same 5-10 players always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Follow guidelines for allowed sizes of indoor and outdoor gatherings as directed by your state or local health department.
- Locker rooms should not be utilized during Football Phase 1. Everyone should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower at end of the workout.
- There must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between individuals at all times. If this is not possible indoors, then the maximum number of individuals in the room must be decreased until proper social distancing can occur.

d. Facilities Cleaning:

- Cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (locker rooms, equipment, restrooms, etc.).

- Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times indoors to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.
- Any equipment having holes with exposed foam should be covered.
- Participants must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home.

e. Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment

- There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or football equipment) between individuals.
- Participants should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All equipment, including footballs, should be sanitized after each use and prior to the next workout.
- Individual drills requiring the use of equipment are permissible, but the equipment should be sanitized prior to use by the next individual.

f. Hydration:

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized.

6. FOOTBALL PHASE 2

a. Activities to Consider:

- Workouts and drills consistent with Football Phase 2 guidelines.
- Modified practices, including modified 7-on-7 and Flag Football practices consistent with Football Phase 2 guidelines.
 - Continue to encourage small group activities. Examples of Football Phase 2 activities could include such activities as:
 - Utilizing a stations-based practice concept, keeping small groups consistent



- Rotate small pods of players together.
- Continue physical and movement training as outlined in Football Phase 1.
- Utilize limited contact activities run at an “Air” and “Bags” (levels of contact).
 - a. Bags and sleds can be used as long as they are **standalone** and sanitized between each use.
- Passing, tossing, kicking, punting, and shotgun snaps, are all acceptable means of exchange. (Hand-offs and direct snaps would violate physical distancing requirements).

b. Pre-Activity Screening:

- Same as Football Phase 1.

c. Limitations on Gatherings:

- No gathering of more than 10 people at a time inside. Up to 50 individuals may gather outdoors for workouts.
- Follow guidelines for allowed sizes of indoor and outdoor gatherings as directed by your state or local health department.
- If locker rooms or meeting rooms are used, there must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times.
- Workouts should be conducted in “pods” of players with the same 5-10 players always working out together. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- There must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between individuals at all times. If this is not possible indoors, then the maximum number of individuals in the room must be decreased until proper social distancing can occur. Appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines and benches during practices. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for players and coaches.

d. Facilities Cleaning:

- Same as Football Phase 1

e. Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:

- There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing or shoes between students.
- Players should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All equipment, including footballs, should be sanitized intermittently during practices.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all practices.

f. Hydration:

- Same as Football Phase 1.

7. FOOTBALL PHASE 3

a. Activities to Consider:

- 7-on-7 games considering rules modifications consistent with Football Phase 3 guidelines
- Flag Football games considering rules modifications consistent with Football Phase 3 guidelines
- Modified Tackle Football practices consistent with Football Phase 3 guidelines
 - Continue to encourage the use of stations-based practice concepts as outlined in Football Phase 2.
 - Encourage the use of small-sided games, drills and activities, such as 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 situations.
 - Begin to gradually introduce player-to-player contact, including blocking and tackling.
 - Gradually introduce 1 vs. 1, 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 3, etc., contact drills while staying in smaller pods.
 - Slowly begin to increase the intensity and levels of contact over a period of days.
 - Continue to encourage the use of contact drills at the “Air” and “Bags” level (players and coaches may now hold bags and shields).
 - The concept of using pods of a small number of players for contact drills should be utilized for all contact drills. This ensures limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
 - Larger group drills such as 7-on-7 skeleton and 11 vs. 11 “team” can be used but must remain non-contact.



Wash hands for a minimum of **20 seconds** with warm water and soap before participating in workouts

b. Pre-Activity Screening:

- Considerations below are for all activities except any modified Tackle Football practices, which should follow the same Pre-Workout Screening as for Football Phases 1 and 2.
- Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.

- A record should be kept of all individuals present.
- Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

c. Limitations on Gatherings:

- Gathering sizes of up to 50 individuals, indoors or outdoors.
- Follow guidelines for allowed sizes of indoor and outdoor gatherings as directed by your state or local health department.
- When not directly participating in practices or games, care should be taken to maintain a minimum distance of 3 to 6 feet between each individual. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

d. Facilities Cleaning:

- Same as Football Phases 1 and 2.

e. Athletic Equipment:

- There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing or shoes between individuals.
- Players should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all practices and games.
- Equipment should be sanitized between each use. Helmets, pads, and associated equipment should be worn by only one individual and not shared.

f. Hydration:

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) may be utilized but must be cleaned after every practice/contest.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND WAIVERS

- a. Before returning to any activities, communicate with your parents/guardians and inform them of everything they should expect from your league, your operations, and your COVID-specific mitigation procedures. Doing so will allow parents to make an informed decision as to whether they are comfortable with their child participating. It is then of course important that you follow those procedures.
- b. As part of that communication to parents/guardians, and without limitation, inform them of any actions you are asking of them in connection with your operations (for instance, arriving early for practice, reporting any symptoms, staying with their

child for the duration of activities, etc.). Necessarily, much of the behavior and screening information you might seek to obtain from your athletes will be driven and provided through and by their parents.

- c. USA Football also recommends that you consider adding COVID-specific language to the signed waiver that you collect from each participant (through their parent/guardian) and to signage appearing at points of entry. Sample language appears below for your consideration. Be aware, however, that such waivers concerning minors and “signage” waivers may not be enforced in certain jurisdictions. Consult your attorney to determine best practice in your location.

You acknowledge that an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases exists in any public place where people are present, including the football activities engaged in with [League]. By participating in those activities, you agree that you are voluntarily assuming all risks related to exposure to COVID-19 and/or other communicable diseases and agree not to hold [League], USA Football, Inc., and/or any of their officers, directors, employees, or agents liable for any injury, illness, or disease in connection with those activities.

9. INDIVIDUALS AT HIGHER RISK/ATTENDANCE

- a. Parents and coaches should assess level of risk based on individual players on the team who may be at **higher risk for severe illness** according to the CDC, such as children who may have asthma, diabetes, or other health problems.
- b. Encourage any family members and other individuals who may be at higher risk not to attend practice/games. Consider streaming activities so those individuals may still view (see below).
- c. Consider limiting overall non-participant attendance to a limited number of close family members (parents/guardians) and designating someone to live stream activities on league social media platform(s) so that friends and family can watch from home.

10. GENERAL CLEANING VERSUS SANITIZATION

- a. Throughout this document you will see references to “sanitizing” and “disinfecting.” This is different than general “cleaning.” For more information, see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

11. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Use signage throughout your facility to promote the concepts included in this document.
- b. Generally, to lessen exposures and as appropriate within your phased activities, consider intra-team scrimmages, shortened seasons, limited travel, and playing limited opponents (playing the same team multiple times to lessen exposures).
- c. Ask that parents check monitor their children and family members twice daily for any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 to assist with your planning and screening.
- d. Individuals should not participate in any activities, and should consult their healthcare provider, if they currently are experiencing/exhibit any of signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or report having experienced any within the immediately preceding 14 days.
- e. Individuals should not participate in any activities if they report that they have been exposed or that they have reason to think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 within the immediately preceding 14 days.
- f. Since the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 can be fairly non-specific and not just respiratory symptoms, it is recommended that athletes should not be in close sustained contact with anyone who is sick for 14 days prior to activity. This reduces the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the group by someone who may have COVID-19 but is not experiencing any symptoms yet.
- g. Have each participant clearly label their water bottle, towel, and other personal equipment to help promote the prevention of the sharing of personal items.
- h. Ask that everyone follow standard infection prevention measures (e.g., frequent handwashing, avoid touching of face, covering of mouth with inner elbow when coughing, avoid touching common surfaces, etc.).
- i. Ensure that appropriate infection prevention supplies are present in multiple targeted areas (e.g., hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings, etc.)
- j. Promote the rigorous, frequent sanitizing/disinfecting of any shared equipment (as appropriate within your phasing) before, during, and after all training sessions, practices, and games.
- k. Practice social distancing around your activities. This includes the generally accepted practice of keeping 6 feet in between individuals wherever possible but also encouraging everyone to do their best limit the extent to which they touch common surfaces.
- l. Reminders for workouts/practices/games:
 - The CDC currently recommends that coaches, officials, on-field/sideline staff, and other similar individuals wear cloth face coverings/masks during activities. Players may have the option of wearing a cloth face covering/mask during activities as preferred and indicated by their parents.



Minimum distance
of **6 feet** between
individuals at
all times

- Consider having coaches call plays from the sidelines rather than in a team huddle.
 - Consider adding additional timeouts to allow for hand hygiene periodically throughout practices and games.
 - Provide additional footballs, if possible, to allow for more frequent equipment switches and disinfect footballs with disinfecting wipes or alcohol as often as possible.
 - Discourage players from removing and re-inserting mouthguards.
 - Consider electronic or handheld whistles
 - Players should adhere to and maintain physical distancing whenever possible and avoid handshakes, high fives, or other congratulatory contact with teammates.
 - Avoid shared or team snacks after practice/games.
- m. Instruct parents to keep helmet, pads, gloves, uniforms in a plastic bag during the ride home and until they can follow cleaning and/or sanitizing instructions. Encourage parents to immediately wash all items upon returning home and to use sanitizing products and to wipe down any equipment that cannot be washed in a washing machine.

12. MONITORING – “HAT OR VEST PROGRAM”

Consider various individuals as monitors—for Entrance, Stands/Spectator, and Field/Equipment/Injury/Hydration. Each monitor could wear a particular color hat (or vest/tee-shirt/etc.), presented here as RED, WHITE, and BLUE. All monitors should wear a cloth mask and gloves at all times. If the individual performing this role will change over time, any shared equipment should be sanitized between uses. All activities should be consistent with the phase you are in and the activities in which you are engaging.

a. Entrance Monitor (RED Hat or Vest)



- If your facility allows, designate one entrance or area for people to enter practices/games. In any event limit the number of entry points to the greatest extent possible. Staff each entryway accordingly in conformance with your screening efforts.
- Consult with your state and local public health authorities to determine whether to conduct a check of each facility entrant with non-contact thermometers and the temperature level(s) that would be appropriate to consider.
- Inquire whether entrants have experienced signs/symptoms of COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
- Monitor entrants for any reasonably visible evidence of COVID-19 signs/symptoms.

- Have hand sanitizer available on tables for everyone that enters the facility and periodically throughout the facility.
- Remind people that enter to follow physical distancing, keeping at least 6 feet between them and others during the activity and limiting their contact with shared services to the extent safely possible (considering the need for guardrail usage and other general safety elements).

b. Stands or Spectator Monitor (WHITE Hat or Vest)



- If your facility has bleachers, mark X's with tape on seats at least 6 ft apart.
- If bleachers not available, mark X's with spray paint/chalk for families to stand/sit at least 6 ft apart. Monitor area to make sure people are adhering to this standard.
- Monitor individuals in stands for any reasonably visible evidence of COVID-19 signs/symptoms.
- Ensure bathrooms are sanitized on an increased basis, at least pregame, prior to halftime, and post-game. Make sure they are stocked with antibacterial soap.
- Do not open/operate any concession stands or similar operations.

c. Field Monitor (BLUE Hat or Vest)



- Ensure players keep at least 6 feet between one another on the sidelines.
- Make sure coaches, officials, on-field/sideline staff wear masks during practices and games.
- Monitor for signs and symptoms of concussions in players.
- Monitor players, coaches, officials, and on-field/sideline staff for reasonably visible evidence of COVID-19 signs/symptoms.
- Make sure players bring their own water bottle, towel, and other personal equipment and all items are labeled by name.
- Spray players' gloves with disinfectant spray between each series. Provide hand sanitizer to players not wearing gloves between each series.
- Sanitize field equipment and footballs before and after practice and games.
- Sanitize footballs between each series during games and between each drill during practices.
- Fill up players water bottles from cooler if needed so only one person is touching the cooler. Such individual should wear a mask and gloves during activity.
- Do not use shared drinking dispensers (i.e. water fountains).
- Provide coaches with large whiteboards so they can draw plays while keeping their distance from players.
- Ensure athletic trainers can attend to injured players if needed and other players and coaches are kept at safe distance.

13. RETURN TO YOUTH FOOTBALL KITS

- a. Create a kit of equipment and supplies. You should have a kit at each venue you are using for activities. Some ideas for items to stock in your kit include, without limitation:
- Noncontact thermometers
 - Gloves
 - Masks/Facial Coverings
 - Wipes
 - Disinfectant Spray
 - Hand Sanitizer
 - Hats/Lanyards/Vests for monitors.
 - Signage or Signage template to post at facility
- b. Kits for Parents / Players. Encourage parents to create their own kit of personal equipment and supplies. Some ideas for items to stock in such a kit include:
- Masks/Facial Coverings
 - Gloves (pack of 20+)
 - Small hand sanitizer for player's bag and parent
 - Disinfectant for player equipment
 - Parent Guide (safety steps to take for each week)

14. KNOWN EXPOSURES

- a. In the case of a known COVID-19 exposure/illness/positive test:
- Immediately notify everyone across your league that you had a player, coach, official and/or other category of individual test positive for COVID-19. Respecting Personal Health Information, you should not publicize that individual's name.
 - Immediately contact your local public health authorities to allow them to begin the process of contact tracing and other possible actions/steps.
 - Individuals who have had close contact to someone who tests positive are required to self-isolate for at least 14 days.
 - Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 infection will be required to self-isolate and avoid sports participation for a variable duration of time. Prior to returning to football, they need a note from their health care provider releasing them to full participation.



APPENDIX

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Camps-Decision-Tree.pdf>

Monitoring Form from https://www.nfhs.org/media/3812287/2020-nfhs-guidance-for-opening-up-high-school-athletics-and-activities-nfhs-smac-may-15_2020-final.pdf



Create your own kits with supplies that will help you return responsibly



usafootball.com/return