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## Guidance and Recommendations for Game Day Operations - Basketball

The focus of this document is to outline guidance and recommendations for institutions as they host basketball competition in their facility. All information contained in this document should be considered recommendations and/or considerations. As with prior NCAA publications, this document reflects the relevant scientific and medical information available at the time of print. These materials should not be used as a substitute for medical or legal advice. Rather, they are intended as a resource for member schools to use in coordination with applicable government and related institutional policies and guidelines, and they remain subject to further revision as available data and information in this space continue to emerge and evolve.

This document covers the period from when student-athletes and other team personnel arrive at the competition site through the competition. This document does not address travel, testing and officiating. For specific recommendations on COVID-19 testing and other health and safety guidance, please refer to the [Core Principles of Resocialization of Collegiate Basketball](#) document.

### Communication.

1. Recommend institutions provide visiting teams and officials with information pertaining to their facility at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled game. This document should include:
  - a. Which entrance to use to enter/exit the facility.
  - b. Any screening requirements needed prior to entry.
  - c. Availability of locker room and/or meeting space.
  - d. Protocol for use of the athletic training facility, if needed.
  - e. Any restrictions on fan attendance.

### Personnel.

1. All individuals necessary to host a home basketball game should be divided into three tiers, as described below. Tiers are based on the ability to wear masks/face coverings, the ability to practice physical distancing (6 feet or greater) and the role played in connection with the competition. All individuals should wear masks/face coverings and physically distance whenever possible. Only individuals assigned to Tiers 1 and 2 will be permitted access to the inner bubble (e.g., locker rooms, athletic training room, court area). The inner bubble must always be secured.
  - a. Tier 1 — This tier consists of individuals for whom physical distancing and face coverings are not possible or effective during athletic training or competition. Examples of relevant individuals include student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers and physical therapists, medical staff, equipment staff and officials. Tier 1 individuals should be limited (e.g., 25-30). All Tier 1

individuals should wear masks/face coverings, except for student-athletes and officials on the playing surface. Physical distancing should be adhered to whenever possible.

- b. Tier 2 — This tier consists of individuals who come into close contact with Tier 1 individuals but can reasonably maintain physical distance and use face coverings during their interaction. Examples of relevant individuals include certain team staff (e.g., athletic department staff) and certain operational staff (e.g., security, event staff and league staff). Tier 2 individuals will maintain physical distance and universal masking while performing their jobs, and any interaction with Tier 1 individuals must be approved by the designated event organizer or athletics health care administrator (or designee), and both parties must maintain physical distance and wear face coverings.
  - c. Tier 3 — This tier includes individuals who provide event services but are not in the same vicinity with Tier 1 individuals (and should closer contact become necessary, would be reclassified into Tier 2). Tier 3 individuals should minimize contact with Tier 2 individuals and observe masking and physical distancing at all times. Examples of relevant individuals include certain operational staff (e.g., housekeeping, catering, sanitation and transportation) and media/broadcast.
  - d. Spectators are not part of Tiers 1, 2 or 3, and, if present, should observe local health official mandates and guidance with seating clearly separated from these tiered individuals at all times, and as per below.
2. Each host institution's athletics health care administrator should maintain contact with local and state health officials regarding operations within the competition venue, including oversight of the daily screening log and any health developments of attendees.
  3. Recommend that visiting band and/or cheer groups avoid travel. If the home band and/or cheer groups are permitted, they should be managed as other Tier 2 personnel.

### **Physical distancing/PPE/masks-face coverings.**

1. Recommend all individuals, regardless of role or function, always wear a mask/face covering prior to entry and within the competition venue. The type of mask/face covering and the proper way to wear it should be consistent with [CDC recommendations](#).
2. Cough/sneeze etiquette and hand sanitization are recommended at all times.
3. Face shields may be worn but do not replace masks/face coverings, meaning that a face shield alone is not recommended as sufficient infection control mitigation.
4. No one outside of Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals shall be allowed in the team areas (e.g., athletic training room, locker rooms, locker room hallway) when student-athletes are present.
5. When feasible, Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals will not enter guest and public areas of the competition venue (e.g., stands, concession stands, concourse, ticket office).
6. Tier 2 individuals may interact directly with those in Tier 1 only as necessary and upon approval. All parties must wear masks/face coverings and maintain 6 feet of physical distance.
7. Universal masking and physical distancing are the rule except in the competition or medical care areas.
8. Medical staff should follow strict hand sanitization, especially during sessions with student-athletes. Whenever feasible, athletic training staff and student-athletes they are treating should maintain masking/face coverings and physical distancing.
9. Recommend the pregame meeting between game officials and table crew be conducted virtually or in a place that allows for 6 feet of physical distance among participants. Officials should always wear masks/face coverings and maintain physical distancing during all activities except active competitive play.
10. Recommend eliminating or modifying the captains meeting from its current format.

### **Cleaning and disinfecting.**

1. Competition venue cleaning staff shall ensure all team and game officials areas are cleaned prior to each practice and competition. This includes, but is not limited to, team and officials locker rooms, coaches' rooms, restrooms, team bench areas, the playing court, goal unit padding, nets and the scorers' table surfaces.
2. Time between practices and games should be adjusted to allow orderly ingress and egress and necessary cleaning protocols to be fully executed. Teams may be restricted to specific entry and exit times to allow cleaning.
3. Regular cleaning by competition venue staff of all high-touch areas, including, but not limited to, restrooms, handles, call buttons, chairs and workstations.
4. Athletic training areas, including treatment tables, stools, high-contact areas and equipment, shall be disinfected after each use.
5. Remind teams and officials to follow personal health guidelines (e.g., wash hands frequently; do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth; use hand sanitizer; maintain physical distance and wears masks whenever possible).
6. Minimize physical interactions, such as high-fives, fist bumps and hugs, with members of other teams.
7. Provide hand sanitizer stations and disinfectant spray bottles and/or disinfecting wipes in each team locker room, bench and scorer's table.
8. Recommend the elimination of ball persons who are not Tier 1 individuals. Designate a member of the host institution to clean game court and game balls as outlined.

## Hydration and towels.

1. Hydration:
  - a. Team members should drink only out of their own cup/personal water bottle.
  - b. Single-use cups with proper disposal are preferred.
  - c. Water bottles should be labeled for individual use.
  - d. Contactless water dispensers may be used.
  - e. Each team should have its own set of hydration coolers (two — one for water, one for sports drink), water bottles and bottle carriers. Cooler carts may remain behind the benches, but coolers shall be replaced once competition concludes.
2. Towels:
  - a. An allotment of clean towels should be placed in the locker room prior to the arrival of the visiting team.
  - b. Towels should be used by only one individual for one practice or one half of competition, then laundered.
  - c. Multiple towel bins will be needed to discard used towels (locker rooms, athletic training room, bench area, game officials).
  - d. An alternative is the use of disposable towels and appropriate disposal container.

## Team bench layout.

1. Team benches. If spacing allows, recommend using multiple rows of seats (with appropriate distance between each seat). Seats should be assigned to specific players and coaches. If an L-shaped configuration is used (which wraps around the baseline), benches must be 6 feet from the end line and must end prior to the 3-foot run-off lane, per NCAA rule 1-3.3 ([Men's Playing Rules](#) and [Women's Playing Rules](#)).
2. Individual water bottle and towel. Each player and coach will have their own water bottle and towel by their seat. Players and coaches will be responsible for getting their own water and towels, including during timeouts.
3. Masks/face coverings on the bench. Require that all bench personnel who are not on the court should always wear masks/face coverings. If a face shield is used, it should be done in conjunction with a face mask.

4. **Timeouts.** Recommend movable chairs be used during timeouts and period breaks. At the conclusion of each timeout or period break, the timeout chairs will be removed to a location to be cleaned by team staff.

### **Scorers' table layout.**

1. Entry tunnels/doors to the seating area:
  - a. No attendees seated or gathered next to entry/exit tunnels/doors; maintain at least 6 feet from seating area around tunnels/doors.
  - b. Tier 1 and 2 members should have a different entry tunnel/door to the court than Tier 3 members, if possible. Tier 1 and Tier 2 individuals will not use the tunnel/door at the same time.
2. Plexiglass barriers on the scorers' table are not necessary and could create a safety issue if the table is not sufficiently removed from the court area. Universal masking and distancing address infection control mitigation. Consideration needs to be given to officials who need access to replay monitors.
3. Even if a face shield is worn, masks must also be worn.
4. Recommend adjusting the courtside setup to allow for physical distancing from playing court and benches. If spacing allows, recommend using multiple rows of seats with appropriate distance between each seat. Only Tier 2 staff at scorers' table.
  - a. Row 1: recommend 4-6 essential Tier 2 staff (e.g., official scorer, shot clock operator, video replay).
  - b. Row 2: other essential Tier 2 staff.
  - c. On the team bench sideline, Row 1 shall be set back from the playing court sideline a minimum of 6 feet to allow distancing from the court.
  - d. Row 2 should be a minimum of 6 feet behind Row 1.
  - e. Baseline and/or opposite side of the court may be used for other necessary staff.
  - f. A minimum 12-foot physical distance barrier must separate the scorers' table and bench areas from the general seating area.
  - g. Similar spacing is recommended for "broadcast tables" on the other side of the court.

### **Facility planning — movement in/around areas.**

1. Entry/exit.
  - a. All entrants shall be subject to local health official restrictions and guidance, including health screening and temperature checks, before entering the competition venue.
  - b. Entrants should be advised not to enter the venue if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, feeling unwell or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive.
  - c. Head count controls must be in place at each entry point if local guidelines restrict competition venue capacity as needed.
  - d. Entry and exit procedures for the competition venue, back-of-house areas and courtside areas will be clearly marked.
  - e. No loitering in back-of-house hallways or common spaces.
  - f. Entry tunnels/doors to and from the court must be kept clear; no standing in tunnels/doorways.
2. Fan seating.
  - a. Subject to local health official restrictions and guidance.
  - b. Recommend that courtside seating be eliminated. If no Tier 1, 2 or 3 individuals occupy the space opposite the bench and/or scorers' table area, recommend the first row of fan seating be a minimum of 12 feet from the sideline.
  - c. Recommend the first row of fan seating be a minimum of 12 feet from the back of the bench and/or scorers' table area, the corners and ends of the court.
3. Isolation and quarantine rooms.
  - a. Diagnostic testing should be readily available for symptomatic or suspected cases of COVID-19.

- b. Recommend that isolation and quarantine rooms be identified and ready for use. Isolation rooms are for newly positive cases or evaluation of individuals with COVID-19 symptoms. Quarantine rooms are for high-risk exposure individuals of newly infected or symptomatic individuals. Local health official reporting protocols should be followed.
4. HVAC considerations.
  - a. Recommend review of HVAC-related engineering controls. Encourage three or more air changes per hour and use of more fresh recharge air vs. recirculation.
  - b. Discuss temperature settings targeting a 74°F temperature and 50+% relative humidity.

## **Locker room.**

1. Recommend all individuals, regardless of role or function, always wear a mask/face covering within the competition venue.
2. Once Tier 1 individuals reach the team bench, masks/face coverings may be removed for those individuals on the playing court.
3. Student-athletes and team bench personnel are recommended to wear masks/face coverings within their assigned team locker room.
4. If spacing allows, recommend 6 foot spacing between seats within the home and away team locker rooms.
5. Warmup:
  - a. Masks/face coverings must be worn while transitioning to and from the locker room and court.
  - b. On-court players must replace their masks/face coverings before leaving the court to return to their designated locker room.
6. Pregame and transitions between games (doubleheaders/MTE):
  - a. Teams may stretch and warm up pregame within a designated area or their locker room.
  - b. Teams must return fully to their team locker room with two minutes left in the preceding game.
  - c. Teams must wait for permission to enter the floor once cleared by the previous teams and appropriate sanitation procedures have been executed.
7. Showers:
  - a. Team members are encouraged to shower at their hotel after the game, as opposed to at the venue (if applicable).
  - b. Teams are encouraged to depart the facility immediately after their game. If student-athletes stay in the facility to watch the next game, they should preferably shower at their hotel. If this is not feasible, showering should be limited to prevent non-physically distant interactions.

## **Handling equipment.**

1. Each team should have its own rack (6-12 or an equal amount) of basketballs for use while in the venue. The basketballs should be cleaned by a designated member of the host institution's game operations staff (Tier 2) according to manufacturer's recommendations with dish soap and water, and not with a disinfectant.
2. Recommend three or four basketballs be set aside for game use only. Recommend replacing the game ball each time a ball goes out of bounds and is touched by an individual not in Tier 1 or 2. Game balls should be cleaned during media timeouts, halftime and each period break with dish soap and water.
3. Officials' water/towels should be located behind each basket or on a table across from the scorers' table. These must be specific to each official and handled only by the officials.

## **On-court operations.**

1. Eliminate any coach/official/scorers' table physical contact (e.g., handshakes, fist bumps) at all times.
2. Recommend eliminating the postgame handshake line involving the two participating teams. Consider some act of sportsmanship, such as the teams lining up at their respective free throw lines and giving

congratulatory waves to each other.

3. Consider eliminating or reducing the time allotted for any halftime and/or timeout promotions to allow the court to be cleaned.
4. Recommend assigned work areas for the media to minimize the need for cleaning workstations until after media representatives have exited the venue.

## **Rules, policies and protocols.**

1. Recommend eliminating hard copy stats to the bench.

### Options for stats on the bench:

- Conferences are encouraged to apply for the technology waiver by Dec. 1, 2020, which allows the transmission of live stats to the bench area ([men's playing rules website](#) and [women's playing rules website](#)).
  - Institutions may place sanitized printers in close proximity to each bench area, allowing coaches to retrieve updated hard copies of stats.
2. Establish guidelines for host medical staff. Team athletic medical personnel need to follow their established institutional guidelines.
  3. For doubleheaders, add additional time between games to allow for cleaning (at least one hour).
  4. In-venue catering should be limited to packaged, grab-and-go-type options. No catered buffets.
  5. Crowd noise piped into the facility (even during live play) would need to comply with decibel levels to be clarified by the NCAA Men's and Women's Playing Rules Committees, along with proper monitoring and enforcement procedures.

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