



# **Southern Lehigh School District**

## **Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan**

**Updated  
November 2020**

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## **Introduction**

The goal of the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan is to provide recommendations for the resocialization of sport with regard to practice and competition, keeping in mind the health and safety of our secondary school athletes, coaches, district staff, parents/guardians, and overall Southern Lehigh School District community.

## **Benefits of Sport**

Participation in sport has known health benefits, including promoting physical fitness and mental wellness. Sports provide a social construct and interaction which is necessary in a time of uncertainty for the Southern Lehigh School District student-athletes. It is widely recognized that physical activity, performed for the right amount of time and intensity can provide benefits to the immune system. In addition, sports can provide a template for young athletes to learn concepts of teamwork, leadership, work ethic and integrity.

## **Inherent Risk of Sport**

Participation in sports involves unavoidable exposure to an inherent risk of physical injury. It is important to recognize that rule books, safety guidelines and equipment standards, while helpful means of promoting safe athletics participation, are themselves insufficient to accomplish this goal. To effectively minimize the risks of injury from athletics participation, everyone involved in athletics must understand and respect the intent and objectives of applicable rules, guidelines, and standards.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has presented local and national athletic programs with a myriad of distinct challenges. The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages and has been proven to be a highly contagious infection that primarily affects the upper respiratory system. While it is not possible to eliminate all risk of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests that there are steps that institutions can take to reduce the risks to students, coaches, and the community.

The Southern Lehigh School District will take the necessary precautions and recommendations from federal, state, and local health and safety authorities including [the Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), the [Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\)](#), as well as the [National Federation of State High School Associations \(NFHS\)](#) and the [Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association \(PIAA\)](#). As more public health information becomes available, the SLSD will work with local health and safety agencies and the PIAA to release further guidance which could impact the fall, winter, and/or spring seasons. These recommendations will be adjusted as new information becomes available in order to ensure a decreased risk of exposure for our staff, students, and the community. In addition to the guidance and recommendations present in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan, the SLSD Athletic Department will follow the information outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan. The recommendations discussed throughout this plan are meant as general guidelines that reflect current federal, state, and local health and safety guidelines and recommendations. Additionally, the Southern Lehigh School District may place stricter criteria than what is listed in this document pending health and safety guidance

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## General Information

- All Southern Lehigh School District students and staff will be required to complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) as a critical component of the SLSD Health and Safety Plan. All SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening process prior to the start of practice or a competition. This additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics. Fundamental health screening criteria are as follows:
  - If a SLSD student-athlete or staff member has a temperature of 100.0 or higher or an individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 they will immediately be isolated and sent home.
  - All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** stay home and not attend athletic practice if they have a temperature of 100.0 or higher or are showing symptoms of COVID-19. Any student athlete or staff member exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 should seek medical guidance.
  - Additional health and safety guidelines are outlined within this plan if student-athletes or staff begin to demonstrate [symptoms of COVID-19](#).
- Per the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Covering \(November 17, 2020\)](#), all Southern Lehigh School District student-athletes and coaching staff are required to wear a mask or face covering **AT ALL TIMES**.
  - All SLSD student-athletes **MUST** wear masks or face-coverings while participating in indoor physical activity (gym, fitness center, or group fitness classes) where another person or persons who are not members of the individual's household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance unless a student with disabilities whose IEP or 504 teams have granted an exception. (Student-athletes who are physically in a swimming pool would be permitted to remove their face-covering while in the water but would need to wear a face-covering upon exit from the pool)
  - SLSD student-athletes **MUST** wear masks or face coverings while participating in outdoor physical activity with others who are not members of a person's household and are unable to maintain sustained or consistent physical distance unless a student with disabilities whose IEP or 504 teams have granted an exception.
  - It is expected that all adult staff (coaches, athletic trainers, etc.) wear masks or face coverings **AT ALL TIMES** both indoors and outdoors in accordance with the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#).
  - There are no color restrictions on masks or face coverings; however masks or face coverings must adhere to Southern Lehigh School District Code of Conduct requirements and Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- The SLSD encourages all student-athletes to regularly and thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
  - The SLSD Athletic Department will emphasize to all participants the importance of washing hands or using hand sanitizer before, during, and after competitions.

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- The SLSD will follow the School Board approved cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection plan established in the District Health and Safety Plan to ensure that the athletic facilities have been properly sanitized, that hand sanitizer is available, and reserve disposable face coverings are available for practices and competitions should they be needed.
- The SLSD will ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces and equipment including balls will occur in a manner that follows health and safety recommendations.
- The SLSD will follow appropriate social distancing guidelines of **AT LEAST 6 FEET** at all times, whenever feasible, including during the National Anthem and while student-athletes and coaches are on the sidelines. Student athletes should refrain from hugging, high fiving, shaking hands, or fist bumping for support/encouragement.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will extend sideline or team areas for outdoor and indoor sports to ensure appropriate social distancing of **AT LEAST 6 FEET** is achievable. All indoor sports may need to use additional locations within facilities including bleachers or multiple levels of seating to ensure appropriate social distancing of **AT LEAST 6 FEET** is achievable.
- The SLSD Athletic Department has an established hydration plan within the Return to Competition Athletic Health and Safety Plan. Within that plan is an ability to provide water to student-athletes and coaches in a safe manner in the event of an emergency. The SLSD Athletic Department will coordinate with visiting teams to ensure that they have safe access to water for their participants during competition.
- If a positive COVID-19 case is determined, the SLSD Athletic Department will follow the Board Approved Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan, the Pennsylvania Department of Health Guidelines, CDC, and local health guidance in determining the plan of action.
- Per the [PA DOH COVID-19 Information for Travelers](#), all Pennsylvanians visiting other states or countries are required to have a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to their return to the commonwealth, or quarantine for 14 days upon return to Pennsylvania. This **DOES NOT** apply to people who commute to and from another state for work or medical treatment.

## STUDENT-ATHLETES

- SLSD Athletic Teams should create a plan that meets the equipment needs for each sport that each student-athlete is responsible for their own athletic supplies and equipment, when feasible.
- Student-athletes should wear their own sport appropriate workout clothing and all student-athletes are **NOT** permitted to share clothing. Individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned following every workout, practice, or competition.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that hand sanitizer is available at all practices and contests.
- All SLSD student-athletes will communicate with their coaches immediately when they are not feeling well or are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19. SLSD Coaches will **IMMEDIATELY** contact the Athletic Director or the Athletic Trainer to notify him of any situation where a student-athlete or staff member is demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19.
- Student-athletes should keep their mouth guards in their mouth for the duration of all workouts, practices, and competitions. If the mouth guard is taken out proper disinfection of the mouth guard should be performed prior to reinsertion. Hands should also be washed or disinfected.
- The PIAA encourages that all student-athletes are encouraged to develop healthy habits including, but not limited to, a balanced diet, adequate sleep, and proper hydration.

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- Healthy eating and attention to hydration is especially important for student-athletes to enhance training capacity and reduce the risk of illness and injury.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** bring their own water or sports drink to all team activities (practice, workout, competition); Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that all student-athletes drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
  - SLSD athletic teams will have access to bottled water for those who run out of water or do not have access to water. Each student-athlete will be **REQUIRED** to bring at least 64 oz (half gallon) of water to all practices and games. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will provide **EMERGENCY** refill stations at each practice and game facility. The refill station can **ONLY** be accessed by a coach or athletic trainer.
  - Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource: [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff should refrain from congregations in groups.
  - Southern Lehigh School District HS and JR HI wrestling (contact sports) and swimming will be permitted to use locker room facilities with **no more than two student-athletes at a time to change** in/out of equipment and shower while adhering to restrictions on indoor capacities, socially distanced at 6 ft. apart, wearing appropriate masks or face coverings in accordance with the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#).
- No student-athletes are permitted in training areas without the presence of an Athletic Trainer.
- No whirlpool or hot/cold tubs should be used for the duration of the pandemic.
  - The St. Luke's Athletic Training Staff would make an exception for use in accordance with the SLSD Emergency Action Plan related to heat illness. Student-athletes are encouraged to shower as quickly as possible at the conclusion of a workout, practice, and competition.
- Student-athletes attending school in-person will have access to the after-school student-athlete study hall if they are in need of supervision prior to the start of their practice. Each team will be assigned a designated area in the HS cafeteria.
- All Southern Lehigh School District student-athletes and coaches will be asked to complete Return to Athletics Pledge outlining the District's mitigation strategies and expectations before participating. Student-athletes and coaches who cannot follow these guidelines will be prevented from participating. Student-athletes who cannot follow these guidelines will be prevented from participating.

## COACHES

- All SLSD coaches must complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to attending athletic practice, workouts, or competition on a daily basis. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- All SLSD coaching staff must follow the guidelines present in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan. Coaches **MUST** communicate these guidelines in a clear manner to student-athletes during practices, workouts, and competition.
- When feasible, all SLSD staff should consider conducting workouts and or practices in cohorts or **PODS** where the same group of student-athletes is always training and rotating together during the

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practice. The use of practice cohorts or **PODS** will ensure a more limited likelihood of potential exposure if a student-athlete or staff member develops symptoms COVID-19.

- SLSD coaching staff **MUST** develop a system to ensure accurate records of student-athletes and staff who attend each practice, workout, or competition in the event that contact tracing is needed following a COVID-19 exposure.
- When feasible, all SLSD coaching staff should limit the size of competition teams in order to ensure greater compliance with established social distancing guidelines while engaged in competition.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** bring their own water or sports drink to all team activities (practice, workout, competition); Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - High school athletes are at increased risk for dehydration. It is important that all student-athletes drink enough fluid before, during and after practice and competition.
  - SLSD athletic teams will have access to bottled water for those who run out of water or do not have access to water. Each student-athlete will be **REQUIRED** to bring at least 64 oz (half gallon) of water to all practices and games. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will provide **EMERGENCY** refill stations at each practice and game facility. The refill station can **ONLY** be accessed by a coach or athletic trainer.
  - Please see National Athletic Trainer Association (NATA) Resource: [Healthy Hydration For Young Athletes](#)
- All coaches will be required to complete the Return to Athletics Pledge before the start of the season.

## PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- SLSD parents/Guardians must complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to any SLSD student-athletes attending school on a daily basis. All SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening prior to the start of practice or a competition. This additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics.
- SLSD student-athletes who are sick or showing symptoms of COVID-19 **MUST** stay home.
- If a parents/guardians has a concern that their student-athlete is immunocompromised or has any concern regarding their risk in terms of participation in sports and activities, they should consult their health care provider to independently assess the levels of risk of student-athletes who may be at a higher risk for severe illness as a result of individual participation on an athletic team.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** ensure that all personal items including water bottles are labeled.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** disinfect your student's personal equipment after each practice, workout, or competition. Additional information, [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#).
- Parents/guardians **MUST** ensure that all their student-athlete(s) are prepared with appropriate masks or face coverings and reinforce that they must be properly worn at appropriate times.
- Parents/guardians **MUST** inform the head coach, the SLSD Athletic Department, the Athletic Trainer, or the school nurse if your student-athlete has been exposed to someone who is known to have COVID-19.

## WHEN TRAVELING TO A COMPETITION

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- The SLSD Athletic Department will communicate with the host school prior to any competitions in an effort to discuss health and safety plans, local practices, and to ensure compliance.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that all teams follow all health and safety policies and guidelines that a host school has communicated and set in place for their facilities.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that all SLSD athletic teams bring their own medical supplies and emergency action plans.
- Modifications for transportation related to athletic events may be necessary and may include:
  - Reducing the number of students/coaches on a bus/van to a maximum of two individuals per seat while leaving the front two rows empty per PA DOH Public Safety Guidelines.
  - Use of hand sanitizer upon boarding a bus/van.
  - Social distancing on a bus to the greatest extent feasible.
- Additional potential transportation modifications will be determined by the Southern Lehigh School District, the transportation company, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and state and local governments once transportation for events is permitted.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will follow the guidelines outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan if a student-athlete or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while traveling to a competition.

#### **WHEN HOSTING A COMPETITION**

- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that coaching staff members have an administrative contact (cell number) to complete necessary communications specific to all events. Communications should occur in a timely manner and not wait until the subsequent school day.
- PIAA Officials must complete the [Colonial League Event Worker Screener](#) and the [Southern Lehigh School District Daily Health Screening](#) prior to any SLSD athletic contest.
- Communicate ahead of time with the incoming interscholastic athletic team and officials about procedures, policies and guidelines. Examples to be covered include but not limited to:
  - Parking
  - Where to enter facility
  - What equipment should the visiting team bring
  - Water availability
  - Bench area seating (how many athletes can be accommodated while maintain 6 ft. social distancing)
  - Locker room availability and resources
  - Emergency action plans
  - How will game day paperwork be handled (electronic exchange is preferred)
- The SLSD Athletic Department will ensure that athletic facilities have been properly sanitized before the visiting team has arrived.
- The SLSD Athletic Department will have hand sanitizer and reserve disposable face coverings available for competitions should they be needed.
- When feasible, sharing of athletic equipment should be minimized. Athletic equipment that may be used by multiple individuals (balls, shields, tackling dummies, shot put, discus, pole vault, etc.) are to be cleaned after each individual's use during practice and competitions. See manufacturer guidelines

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for appropriate cleaning and sanitizing procedures.

- The SLSD Athletic Department will follow the guidelines outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan if a student-athlete or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while hosting a competition on the Southern Lehigh campuses.

## GATHERING LIMITATIONS

- All sports-related gatherings must conform with the [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the PA Department of Health](#) on October 6, 2020.
  - The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will work with the Southern Lehigh School District Support Services Department in order to determine occupancy limits as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code and then apply the attendee calculator provided by the PA Department of Health to determine how many attendees are permitted to attend Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Events.
  - The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will develop a system to provide access to spectators that falls within the guidelines set forth by the PA Department of Health, the Southern Lehigh School District, and the Colonial League.
  - The Southern Lehigh Athletic Department will adhere to the Spectator Guidelines set by the Colonial League and provide updated information to all Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Programs specific to gathering limitations and spectator expectations.

## SPECTATORS

- All sports-related gatherings must conform with the [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits released by the PA Department of Health](#) on October 6, 2020.
- Following the guidance from our local healthcare providers, **ONLY** student athletes, coaches, officials, and SLSD staff are permitted to attend athletic workouts, practices, and contests.
- All spectators who are permitted to attend athletic contests are subject to the specific limitations that were also included in the [Preliminary School Sports Guidance](#):
  - All spectators **MUST** complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) prior to attending the athletic contest. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
  - Seating areas, including bleachers, must adhere to social distancing requirements of at least 6 feet of spacing for anyone not in the same household.
  - ALL spectators **MUST** wear masks or face coverings at all times in accordance with the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#) (November 17, 2020).
  - Spectators should not enter the field of play or bench areas.
  - As per the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan, all nonessential visitors and volunteers will be limited, when possible, including activities with external groups or organizations.

## MEDIA

- All sports-related gatherings must conform with the [amended guidelines on safe gathering limits](#)

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[released by the PA Department of Health](#) on October 6, 2020.

- Should media members be permitted to attend a contest, they **MUST** complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) prior to covering the athletic contest.
  - If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- The media must make contact with the SLSD Athletic Department prior to attending any athletic event to ensure that they are able to make appropriate arrangements for attendance.
  - Media availability or attendance is likely to be limited especially in the event that there are limits on capacity.
  - Media should be restricted to areas outside of the team areas and should not have access to student-athletes.
  - Interview requests may be limited and should be accommodated either virtually or in person if social distancing protocols of 6 ft can be followed and all parties are wearing an appropriate mask or face covering in accordance with the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#) (November 17, 2020).
  - Media are required to wear a mask or face covering in accordance with the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings](#) (November 17, 2020).
  - Locker room access will be prohibited for the duration of the pandemic.
  - Access to student-athletes will be limited on a case by case basis and, if it occurs, media must wear mask or face covering while in a building and maintain social distancing at 6ft in all locations.
  - Press box availability may be limited for the duration of the pandemic.

## **GAME DAY WORKERS**

- The SLSD Athletic Department will coordinate with all individuals completing game day work responsibilities specific to the requirements outlined in the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan.
- All game day workers **MUST** complete the [Daily Health Screening](#) prior to attending athletic practice, workouts, or competition on a daily basis. If the individual has a temperature of 100.0 or higher, the individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 or is sick, they **MUST** stay home.
- All Game Day Workers are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the [Secretary of Health's order of July 1st, 2020](#).

## **Prior to Resuming Physical Activity**

- When feasible, the SLSD Athletic Department will make special considerations for student-athletes and staff at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- SLSD student-athletes and staff who should consider delaying their participation in sports and coaching activities are those with any of the following:
  - Diabetes
  - Chronic Lung Disease including Asthma
  - Severe obesity (Body Mass Index >40)

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- Chronic kidney disease
- Heart conditions
- Immunocompromised (e.g. any transplant recipient, needing immunosuppressant medications (e.g. steroids, biologics, etc.), patients receiving chemotherapy, etc.)
- Age 65 or older
- If there is a concern that someone is immunocompromised or has any concern regarding their risk in terms of participation in sports and activities, they should consult their health care provider to independently assess the levels of risk of student-athletes who may be at a higher risk for severe illness as a result of individual participation on an athletic team.
- **Pre-Participation Physical Examination Considerations**
  - The associated requirement for individual student-athletes to complete a pre-participation physical examination is dependent on the requirements set forth by the PIAA.
  - The SLSD Athletic Department will notify district families if there is a deviation from the standard annual frequency requirement established by the PIAA prior to COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Requirement of Sick Athletes and Staff to Stay Home**

- The Southern Lehigh School District will utilize communication tools including Blackboard Connect, the SLSD Website, social media, and other communication methods to inform student-athletes, staff, and parents about COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures, and appropriate hygiene practices.
- The SLSD will provide information about local COVID-19 resources including testing sites.
- The SLSD will establish procedures to ensure athletes and staff that become sick onsite or arrive onsite sick are sent home as soon as possible.
  - The SLSD Athletic Department will require an individual who becomes sick during athletics or demonstrates a history of exposure (defined as close contact to a confirmed case of COVID) to wear a face covering.
  - Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure) to report immediately to the designated isolation area.
    - The Boys and Girls locker rooms at SLHS and SLMS will be used as an isolation room for student-athletes and staff who do not pass the athletics daily screening process or become ill during a practice or competition. In the event of a student-athlete, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.
  - Students or staff with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 should seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions on returning to school or athletics.
  - When feasible, close off the area used by a person testing positive for COVID-19 for at least 24 hours and do not use it before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Notify staff and families confirmed cases while maintaining confidentiality.

### **Health Screening Procedure**

- All Southern Lehigh School District students and staff will be required to complete a [Daily Health Screener](#) as a critical component of the SLSD Health and Safety Plan. SLSD student-athletes will undergo an additional health screening process prior to the starting of practice or a competition. This

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additional health screening is being completed in accordance with recommendations from the St. Luke's University Health Network Sports Medicine Team due to the increased level of physical contact present in interscholastic athletics. Fundamental health screening criteria are as follows:

- If a SLSD student-athlete or staff member has a temperature of 100.0 or higher or an individual is showing symptoms of COVID-19 they will immediately be isolated and will be sent home. All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** stay home and not attend athletic practice if they have a temperature of 100.0 or higher or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- All SLSD student-athletes and staff **MUST** cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Additional health and safety guidelines are outlined within this plan if student-athletes or staff begin to demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19.
- Educate all stakeholders (students, staff, parents/guardians) on how to screen for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 at home before sending children to school and/or reporting to work.
- A mask must be worn by the person conducting the screening. Gloves shall be utilized by the health care provider if any direct contact with a person screened is required.
- Per the [Updated Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Covering \(November 17, 2020\)](#), all Southern Lehigh School District student-athletes and coaching staff are required to wear a mask or face covering **AT ALL TIMES**. Athletic staff, such as but not limited to an administrator, athletic trainer, coach, and/or nurse should conduct the screening.
  - Temperature check with a thermometer is required
  - Temperature threshold is greater than or equal to 100°F
  - If temperature is above 100°F threshold, two additional measures should be taken to verify initial measure
  - Forehead thermometer/non-contact thermometer is preferable.
  - Temperature check should take place in a temperature controlled environment whenever possible.
  - Person screened should be well rested, i.e. no recent physical activity
  - All health screenings will be performed by athletic staff and athletic trainers
- The Symptoms of COVID-19 may include (but are not limited to):
  - Fever or chills (100.0 or higher)
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Muscle aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Diarrhea
- If a student/staff is sick or thinks that he/she is sick with the COVID-19 virus, the student/staff **MUST** stay home and contact their physician or an appropriate healthcare professional for further directions.
- All members of the SLSD Athletic Staff will perform a [Daily Symptom Screener](#) on himself or herself prior to leaving for work, and will stay home if ill.
- Signage will be posted throughout the school district to ensure that students and staff are consistently

made aware of the signs and symptoms of Covid-19.

- Student athletes and athletic staff will go to the athletic trainers immediately if feeling ill.
- PA DOH will notify the school entity immediately upon learning that a person with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 was present at the school or a school event while infectious.
- PA DOH staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation, and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

### **Isolating or Quarantining a Student-Athlete or Staff if They Become Sick or Demonstrate a History of Exposure**

- The Athletic Trainers will evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms of COVID-19 during practice, workouts, or competitions.
- Require an individual who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure (defined as close contact to a confirmed case of COVID) to wear a mask or face covering.
- Require an individual (one who becomes sick in school or demonstrates a history of exposure) to report immediately to the designated isolation area.
  - The Boys and Girls locker rooms at SLHS and SLMS will be used as an isolation room for student-athletes and staff who do not pass the athletics daily screening process or become ill during a practice or competition. In the event of a student-athlete, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the student.
- Parents/guardians should have a plan in place for picking up a student-athlete when directed by the Athletic Trainer(s).
- If a parent or caregiver is not present, a predetermined staff member should escort them to a designated isolation room (HS and MS Boys and Girls Locker Rooms) or area away from others and have them wear a mask or face covering. They should then be directed to contact their health care provider for evaluation and potential COVID-19 testing. Those without a health care provider can be directed to a local COVID hotline such as St. Luke's University Health Network 1-866-785-8537 Option 7 or Lehigh Valley Health Network 1-888-402-5846. Positively screened individuals should not return until they have documentation demonstrating the SARS-CoV-2 test was negative or a note from their healthcare provider indicating they do not need to be tested and their symptoms are not due to COVID-19.
- Positively screened student-athletes or staff should seek medical attention for further evaluation by a primary care professional while following the guidelines outlined in the [Exclusion From and Returning to School](#).
- When feasible, close off the area used by a person testing positive for COVID-19 for at least 24 hours and do not use it before cleaning and disinfecting.
- SLSD Athletic Staff will notify staff and families of confirmed cases while maintaining confidentiality.

### **Returning isolated or quarantined staff, students, or school visitors to school**

- A student-athlete who was diagnosed with COVID-19 may return when **ALL FOUR** of the following criteria are met:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
  - At least 48 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever reducing medications

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- Symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath ...) have significantly improved.
- Written documentation of clearance from a health care provider (MD, DO, NP, PA)
  - Written documentation is required for **ALL** student-athletes who are returning to play from an injury or sickness that requires medical care.
- Further information about the conditions outlined in the [Southern Lehigh School District Exclusion From and Return to School Requirements](#) can be found using that link.
- A student-athlete or staff member who is quarantined following close contact with a case may not return to school until cleared to do so by the PA DOH or the appropriate County or Municipal Health Department. A negative test obtained prior to the end of quarantine does **not** clear an individual for return. The entire quarantine period must be completed.

### **Notifying staff, families, and the public of school closures and within-school-year changes in safety protocols**

- Post the approved Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan and the Southern Lehigh School District Return to Competition Athletics Health and Safety Plan on the SLSD website.
- Provide regular multi-modal updates on the SLSD website, social media accounts, and through the Blackboard Connect System.
- The District will be prepared to refer symptomatic individuals or those who have a known exposure to a confirmed case to an appropriate health care provider or testing site.
- The District will coordinate with local health officials on the strategies for COVID-19 cases as the district would do with similar conditions, such as measles, pertussis, and other infectious diseases.
- Local DOH staff or CMHD (County Municipal Health Department) will notify the school district and PDE immediately upon learning of a positive case of COVID who was present at the school or school event while infectious. Public health staff will assist the school with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

### **Other monitoring and screening practices**

- A “close contact” is defined as either being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for 15 or more minutes (close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or share a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case), or having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (i.e. being coughed on).
- The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications from the PA DOH or CMHD to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the PA DOH and CMHD staff.
- The District will contact local PA DOH staff before acting in response to a known or suspected communicable disease. A representative is on-call 24 hours a day.
- The local PA DOH staff will provide guidance to schools regarding disease information, appropriate letters and communications, identification of high risk individuals, appropriate action and treatment, and ongoing support and assistance.
- If the person is present on school property when PA DOH staff notify the school of the positive case information, the person should immediately, but discreetly, be taken to the COVID-19 related isolation space for pick up (if a student) or asked to return home (if staff).

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- SLSD will contact the PA DOH for further guidance if a parent/guardian notifies the school of potential exposure by a student, staff member, or essential visitor.
- As per the PA DOH, the entire school building does not have to be evacuated.
- The PA DOH staff will assist the K-12 school entity with contact tracing and may request information regarding potential close contacts from school district staff.
- Decisions to track additional health information will be made at the local school district level.

### **Promote Wellness and Hygiene**

- The potential for pre-symptomatic transmission is why the use of masks or face coverings and social distancing, including the avoidance of congregate settings, is imperative to reduce COVID-19 spread.  
Staying Home when Appropriate
  - Education and Promotion on [Self Screening for Signs and Symptoms](#) (CDC - If You Are Sick)
- Hand hygiene is essential. Schools need to promote frequent and effective, hand hygiene with ample hand sanitizer (>60% ethanol or >70% isopropanol) dispensers and areas with soap and water in many different locations. Hand washing or use of hand sanitizer should take place pre- and post-activity. Hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer should be made available during activity.
- Regular use of hand sanitizer will be encouraged prior to, during, and after sessions.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Activities that increase the risk of exposure to saliva must not be allowed; including chewing gum, spitting, licking fingers, and eating sunflower seeds.
- Avoid any unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, or hugs.
- No team huddles should take place. Encourage the minimization of offensive and defensive huddles and encourage the coaching staff to utilize other methods of communication with players (such as signals, cards, signs) to minimize grouping.

### **When Physical Activity Resumes**

- The decision to resume sports-related activities, including conditioning, practices, and games, is the discretion of a school's entity's governing body. Each school entity must develop and adopt an Athletics Health and Safety Plan aligning to the PDE Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools and Pennsylvania's Guidance for Sports prior to conducting sports-related activities with students. The plan must include the provisions of this guidance, be approved by the local governing body of the school entity, and be posted on the school entity's publicly available website. The plan does not need to be submitted to the DOH or PDE for approval.

### **Physical Activity and Usage of Athletic Equipment**

- No sharing of athletic towels, clothing or shoes
- Athletic equipment should not be shared between student-athletes in an effort to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets through contact. Items that may need to be shared in congregate settings ( such as bats, batting helmets, & catcher's gear ) should be disinfected in accordance with CDC, PA DOH, and manufacturing guidelines after each use.



- Other equipment such as football helmets, lacrosse pads, ear guards & eyewear should only be used by one individual and not shared
- Only in-season athletic teams participating in competition will be permitted to use the SLHS Fitness Center.
- Spotters for weight lifts are to be stationed at each end of the bar when use of the weight room is permitted.
- Regular use of hand sanitizer will be encouraged prior to, during, and after sessions.

### Individualized Hydration

- All SLSD student-athletes and staff must bring their own water or drinks to all athletic activities; Student-athletes and staff are **NOT** permitted to share water or sports drinks for the duration of the pandemic.
  - SLSD athletic teams will have access to bottled water for those who run out of water or do not have access to water. Each student-athlete will be **REQUIRED** to bring at least 64 oz (half gallon) of water to all practices and games. The Southern Lehigh School District Athletic Department will provide **EMERGENCY** refill stations at each practice and game facility. The refill station can **ONLY** be accessed by a coach or athletic trainer.
- Ice towels may be used for single use only and **MUST** be either discarded or washed properly following use.
- Team water coolers and disposable cups **WILL NOT** be permitted.
- Hydration stations and or fixed water fountains **WILL NOT** be permitted.
- All personal water bottles should be properly identified with an individual's name.

### Sanitizing Facilities

- The Southern Lehigh School District will complete cleaning, disinfecting, and ventilation practices outlined in the [Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan](#).
- SLSD Support Services will implement adequate cleaning and disinfecting schedules for all athletic facilities. Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting will be performed in accordance with current CDC and PA DOH guidelines to mitigate the spread of communicable diseases.
- Use EPA approved (List N) products for use against SARS-CoV-2 in accordance with labeling requirements, be for commercial use in schools without harmful components of fragrances, and applicable staff will be trained on how to appropriately use these products.
- Equipment and tables with holes that expose foam should be covered.
- Ensure that all hard surfaces, high-touch, and high traffic areas are included in frequent cleaning and disinfecting schedules.
- SLSD custodial staff will continue everyday responsibilities and tasks specific to athletic cleaning and disinfecting.
- Any visibly dirty surfaces will be washed with soap/water or an approved cleaner before disinfecting.
- Disinfecting fogger or misting spray applicator will be used in all areas at least once a week.
- Southern Lehigh School District weight room facilities will be marked with tape to position anyone using the facilities present in that room to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- Signage will be placed in the weight room and athletic hallways promoting wellness and hygiene

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- SLSD weight room equipment should be disinfected before and after each individual's use.
  - Signage will be placed in the weight room and athletic hallways promoting wellness and appropriate hygiene
  - Containers of "Gym Wipes" are located in the weight room for student-athletes, coaches, and staff to use.
  - Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times in the weight room when use is permitted to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment surfaces. Equipment should be wiped down after each individual's use.

### **Stakeholder Education**

- The Southern Lehigh School District will provide stakeholder education through the publication of posters, flyers, meetings, emails, and phone calls specific to COVID-19 to Staff, Coaches, Student Athletes, and Community Members.
- The Southern Lehigh School District will provide stakeholder education specific to the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 through a variety of different modalities.
- Proper ways to limit exposure to COVID-19 (hand washing, cough in your elbow, disinfecting touched surfaces, social distancing, avoiding touching eyes, nose, face and mouth, no spitting, gum chewing, etc.)
- Avoid any unnecessary physical contact, such as high fives, handshakes, fist bumps, or hugs.
- The content of this Return to Sport Guidelines Document
- Any pertinent COVID-19 information released by state/local governments, NFHS, and PIAA.
- Students are to come dressed for activity
- No indoor sessions permitted without prior and direct permission from the Athletic Director. Once permitted, limit indoor activities and the areas used. Locker room use is not permitted. Facility showers may not be used.
- Student-athletes must remain with their assigned groups during each workout and during daily workouts to limit the number of people they come in contact with.

## Important Reads and Source Documents:

- Pennsylvania's Guidance for All Sports Permitted to Operate During the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency to Ensure the Safety and Health of Employees, Athletes, and the Public Published June 10, 2020.
- Pennsylvania Department of Education, Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools. Published June 3, 2020, version 1. PDE Preliminary Guidance for Pre-K to 12 Schools
- CDC - Youth Sports Considerations Last reviewed June 8, 2020.
- CDC - Schools Considerations Last reviewed June 1, 2020.
- Guidance for Opening up High School Athletics and Activities, National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), accessed May 15, 2020
- PIAA Press Release Published June 10, 2020.
- Sports Event Planning Considerations Post-COVID-19, United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee April 28, 2020 – v0.11
- CDC Cleaning and Disinfection Tool. CDC.gov. CDC - Cleaning and Disinfection Decision Tool. Last reviewed May 7, 2020.
- CDC Handwashing Guidelines. CDC.gov. CDC - Handwashing Last reviewed April 2, 2020.
- Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 (Interim Guidance). CDC.gov. CDC - Return to Work Criteria. Last reviewed April 30, 2020.
- State of Missouri Novel Coronavirus Analytics. Health.mo.gov. State of Missouri - Coronavirus Analytics. Published May 5, 2020.
- The resurgence of sport in the wake of COVID-19: cardiac considerations in competitive athletes. BMJ.com. BMJ Blog - Cardiac Considerations in the Wake of COVID-19 Published April 24, 2020.
- A Game Plan for the Resumption of Sport and Exercise After Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Infection. JAMA Cardiol. JAMA Cardiology - Game Plan for Resumption of Sports Published online May 13, 2020. doi:10.1001/jamacardio.2020.2136
- Korey Stringer Institute's Return to Sports and Exercise during the Covid-19 Pandemic: Guidance for Collegiate and High School Athletics Programs. Published June 6, 2020. KSI Return to Sport and Exercise Guidance
- COVID-19: NSCA Guidance on Safe Return to Training For Athletes, National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) COVID-19 Return to Training Taskforce. Published May 2020.
- CSCCA and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods: Safe Return to Training Following Inactivity; Caterisano, A, Decker, D, Snyder, B, Feigenbaum, M, Glass, R, House, P, Sharp, C, Waller, M, and Witherspoon, Z. 2019. CSCCa and NSCA Joint Consensus Guidelines for Transition Periods. Strength and Conditioning Journal, 41(3), 1-23.
- National Athletic Trainers Association: Covid-19 Return-to-Sport Considerations for Secondary School Athletic Trainers. Published May 2020.

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## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Officials



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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### OFFICIALS

STAFF LIAISON: Pat Gebhart

*These considerations are meant to cover officials in all sports while keeping in mind that protocols may be different in each sport and adjustments may need to be made.*

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### OFFICIALS' GUIDELINES WHEN RETURNING TO OFFICIATE:

**Officials are not responsible for monitoring activities on the sidelines, such as social distancing, hand washing, symptoms of illnesses and other such issues. This monitoring obligation remains with the coaching staff and school personnel.**

### CONTACT THE HOST SCHOOL:

- Contact should be made with school athletic administration leading up to the contest about (1) school expectations, (2) to determine where you should enter the host school's property and (3) to obtain other information that you or the school may want to communicate to each other prior to your arrival.
  - Officiating crews should designate one crew member to contact the host school and provide information to other members of the crew.
- Request separate and secured parking areas away from other participants.
- Request hand sanitizer be available at scorer's table, if applicable, and use it between periods and during time outs. (Officials are encouraged to bring their own in the event none is available.)
- Conversations should occur with the host school administration regarding the size of changing areas or locker rooms to ensure social distancing can occur.
- When possible officials should come to contests fully dressed in uniform.

### GENERAL OFFICIAL GUIDELINES:

- Be prepared to have your temperature taken and a health screening conducted upon arrival at school campus.
- You may also be asked to sign a liability waiver by the school. While not a PIAA requirement, it may be a host site requirement. You should inquire the host school before arriving whether that requirement exists and, if so, request an opportunity to review the document in advance. If you are unwilling to sign it, you should decline the engagement. You should not wait until arriving on site to ask to see the waiver or to inform the school that you will not sign it.
- Upon conclusion of the contest, leave the contest area and do not interact with others.
- Officials must pay special attention to playing rules that require distances between players during play.

- Reminders should be issued for situations that involve hygiene (spitting, etc.).
- Maintain distance from players if an altercation occurs and minimize the times you are within 6 feet of others.
- Be aware of the location of medical personnel while you are on school property.
- Limit the exchanging of documents between yourself and others.
- Once the contest begins, avoid conversations within 6 feet with coaches.
- Wash your hands frequently. When in doubt about wearing a mask – put it on.
- Officials' Uniforms and Equipment.
  - Electronic whistles are permissible.
    - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry outside.
    - Be aware of the increased risk of inadvertent whistles.
  - Face coverings by participants are permitted.
  - Gloves may be worn by contestants.
  - Bring your own towels and hygiene materials. Do not share them with others.
- Individuals are required to wear face coverings in accordance with the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's order on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, unless they meet the exceptions under Section 3 of this order.
  - Officials are not required to wear face coverings while officiating a contest, but they are permitted. You should seriously consider wearing a face covering when officiating. Coverings must be worn when entering the host site and while inspecting the contest site prior to the contest.
  - There are no color restrictions on face coverings; however face coverings must adhere to the Restriction on Advertisements or Sponsors Names on Uniforms policy, as adopted by the PIAA Board of Directors.

#### **GAME DAY:**

- Complete a personal health assessment on the day of your contest. If you feel sick – STAY HOME. Notify the contracted schools, your partner(s) and the assignor to let them know.
- Notify site administrator immediately if your temperature is 100.4 or above.
- "Vulnerable individuals" are defined by CDC as people 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions. Officials fitting this description may wish to seek medical advice prior to returning to officiating.
- Communicate with school athletic administrator frequently during the days leading up to your contest about school expectations.
- Upon arrival at the host site and throughout the contest, wash and sanitize your hands frequently.
- When traveling to contests, considerations should be given to limiting carpooling or traveling with other individuals.
- Do not share uniforms, towels, apparel and equipment.
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times, including while in the locker room and/or on the court/field.
- Bring your own water bottle or rehydration beverages.
- Use a mask when communicating verbally within 6 feet of others.
- In an effort to maintain social distancing, officiating positions may need to be changed in a manner that are not necessarily in conformance with standard officiating mechanics.

- If an official is sent home or unable to officiate for any reason, follow the PIAA policy on “Absence or Withdrawal of Official at Contest”, in the Policies and Procedures section of the PIAA Handbook.

#### **PREGAME CONFERENCE:**

- Limit attendees to one official, the head coach from each team, and a single captain from each team, while maintaining social distance.
- Pre-contest official crew meetings should be held outside when possible and where social distancing is more easily accomplished.
- Coin Toss – should involve only the Head Referee (wearing a face covering) and 1 captain and head coach from each team.
- Move the location of the pregame conference to the center of the court/field. All individuals should maintain a social distance of 6 feet.
- No handshakes are permitted.
- Maintain social distancing while performing all pregame responsibilities.
- Encourage bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet.
- Encourage social distancing of 6 feet between substitutes and teammate(s).

#### **OFFICIALS’ TABLE:**

- Limit the table to essential personnel, including the home team scorer and timer, with a recommended distance of 6 feet between individuals. Visiting team personnel (scorer, statisticians, etc.) are not deemed essential and may need to find an alternative location. Space availability at the table is a variable in determining the number of individuals permitted at the officials’ table.

#### **PREGAME AND POSTGAME CEREMONY:**

- No shaking hands during introductions.
- Traditional pre-game introductions should be altered to ensure social distancing occurs.
- No postgame shaking hands.

#### **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Training
  - Review current and past year rule and case books.
  - Attend online and in-person meetings to review the rules for the coming year.
  - Start physical training using online video or complete skills alone. If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19, you should be cleared by your medical provider prior to initiating an exercise program.
- Positive COVID-19 Test
  - You should notify the school(s) administration where you officiated and partners of those contests.

#### **UNIFORM OF CONTESTANTS:**

- Long sleeves are permissible.
- Long pants are permissible.
- Undergarments are permissible but must be of a similar length for the individual and a solid like color.



## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Basketball



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Basketball **STAFF LIAISON:** Jen Grassel

The NFHS has determined that basketball is a moderate risk sport (sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants).

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### **BASKETBALL RULE CONSIDERATIONS:**

- ***Pregame Protocol (2019-2021 NFHS Officials Manual, page 16, 1.8)***
  - Limit attendees to the referee, head coach, and one captain from each team with each coach standing on the center circle on each side of the division line.
  - All individuals maintain a social distance of 6 feet or greater at the center circle.
  - Suspend handshakes prior to and following the Pregame Conference.
- ***Team Benches (1-13-1)***
  - ***Social distancing should be practiced when possible. Below are some suggestions.***
    - Limit the number of bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
    - Place team benches opposite the spectator seating.
    - Additional chairs or rows may be added to allow bench personnel to observe social distancing of 6 feet or greater.
    - Create separation between the team bench and spectator seating behind the bench.
    - Limit contact between players when substituting.
      - Substitutes shall report to the scorer's table but in the event there is more than one substitution, they may sit at the end of the scores table closest to their bench to maintain social distancing.
    - Coaches and Athletes should adhere to the current Pennsylvania Secretary of the Department of Health [Order](#) of July 1, 2020.
  - ***Officials Table (2-1-3)***
    - The host should sanitize the table before the game and at half time.
    - Place officials table sufficiently away from the sideline to allow for additional space for substitutes.
    - Limit seats at the table to essential personnel which includes home team scorer and timer with a recommend distance of 6 feet or greater between individuals. Other personnel (visiting scorer, statisticians, media, etc.) may not be deemed

- essential personnel and consider an alternate location for them.
  - Table personnel should adhere to the current Pennsylvania Secretary of the Department of Health [Order](#) of July 1, 2020.
- **Pre and Post Game Ceremony**
  - Suspend the pregame introduction handshakes.
    - This includes shaking opposing head coach and officials prior to the game.
  - Suspend post game protocol of shaking hands.
- **Basketball Rules Interpretations**
  - ***EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES***
    - Basketball
      - Ball shall be sanitized as recommended by the ball manufacturer and not used for warm-ups.
      - The host school should ensure that the ball is sanitized during time-outs and between quarters.
      - Sanitizer should be provided by the host team at the table.
    - Cloth face coverings are permissible for players.
    - Coaching staff and other bench personnel shall follow the current Pennsylvania Secretary of the Department of Health [Order](#) of July 1, 2020.
  - ***Officials Uniform and Equipment***
    - Long-sleeved shirts are permissible.
    - Electronic whistles are permissible (supplies are limited).
      - Choose a whistle whose tone will carry inside.
    - Cloth face coverings are permissible.
    - Officials should have face coverings readily available in the event they will be conversing with players/coaches/game personnel within six feet.
    - Gloves are permissible.
- **Other Considerations**
  - ***Throw-in***
    - Official may stand 6 feet or greater away from player making the throw-in and bounce the ball to that player on a front court throw-in.
  - ***Free Throw Administration***
    - The lead official shall stand on the end line and bounce the ball to the free thrower.
  - ***Jump Ball***
    - Official can designate another official to toss the ball in the center restraining circle for all jump-ball situations. (Rule 2-5-1)
  - ***Scorebook***
    - Officials do not need to sign the score book but will need to have verbal verification on roster and starter submissions prior to the 10 minute mark.

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Competitive Cheer



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Competitive Cheer **STAFF LIAISON:** Melissa Mertz

The NFHS has determined that competitive cheer is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

\*\*It's PIAA's position that Competitive Cheer competition may be considered no more than a moderate risk, with the following considerations: Routines are no more than 2 ½ minutes in length, contact among team members falls below stated CDC guidelines of less than 6 feet for 15 minutes or more and competition does not involve any contact with members of another team/school.

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### **COMPETITIVE CHEER RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Cheerleading General Risk Management (2-1-14, 2-1-16):** Sideline and playing surface placement during game.
  - *Participants should be appropriately spaced on the court, field or sideline to ensure proper social distancing.*
- **Cheerleading Apparel / Accessories (3-1-1):** Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: A religious medal without a chain is allowed and must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.
  - *Masks may be worn but are not required. No masks may be worn in routines that involve stunting. Any mask worn during a routine that does not involve stunting but involves tumbling must be taped and secure.*
- **Other Spirit Considerations Cheerleading General Risk Management:** Judge placement during adjudicated performance and competition.
  - *Judges, officials, adjudicators, etc. should be appropriately spaced to ensure proper social distancing.*

### **PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS:**

- The primary consideration is to begin any activity, practice, etc. with a clean space.
- Clean/sanitize surfaces with cleaner/accepted methods listed on the Environmental Protection Agency's list of disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2 as directed by the CDC, or as may be reasonably necessary.
- Mats should be cleaned at least each day of activity or as needed according to current guidelines. If different groups are meeting in the same space at different times, mats should be cleaned between groups.

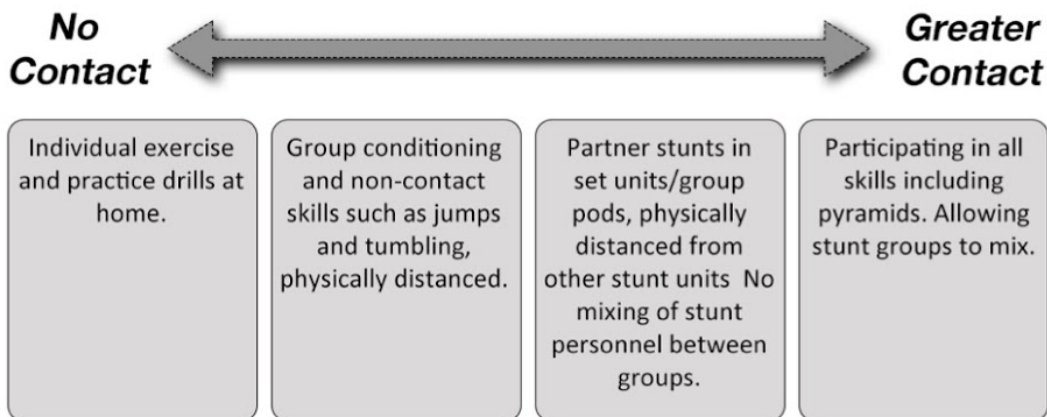


- Any athlete that feels ill during activity should be isolated and picked up by parents/guardians as soon as possible.
- Provide access to handwashing areas and wash hands during breaks or as reasonably necessary, with particular attention after participating in stunts.
- Athletes, coaches, and support staff who are a member of a high-risk group or live at home with a member of a high-risk group should consider attending training sessions virtually.
- Athletes and parents should be made aware of current best practices for minimizing the spread. Athletes should be sure to wash their hands thoroughly and/or use hand sanitizer before, during, and after practice and should avoid touching their face.
- Athletes should maintain their equipment themselves and there should be no other shared equipment, including, but not limited to the following:
  - Water bottles
  - Poms
  - Megaphones
  - Signs

**PHYSICAL DISTANCING:**

- Use proper physical distancing to minimize contact.
- Limit contact between groups at exits and entrances by staggering arrival/departure times between cohort groups (individual stunt groups, teams, etc.) and designating separate entrances and exits when possible.
- Avoid congregating before, during, and after practice.
- Contact and physical distancing should follow all local health directives.
- Keep stunt groups together in their cohort. Refrain from mixing and matching bases and tops from different groups.
- Keep stunt groups distanced from other stunt groups when possible (i.e. when not building pyramids), while allowing for all groups to remain on the proper surface for stunting.

The type of contact found in cheer can vary greatly and can be adjusted to meet local distancing guidelines.



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Physical contact with other teams: Participation in cheer and STUNT does not involve physical interaction with other teams. In this regard, contact during games and competition is similar to that found in volleyball or tennis.

**FACE COVERINGS:**

USA Cheer recommends allowing face coverings with the following guidelines:

- Face coverings should not impede vision or movement.
- Face coverings should be soft and pliable with no exposed metal, and should provide adequate ventilation and protection from the spread of particulate matter.
- Modifications to skills should be considered while wearing face coverings, such as limiting inversions, twisting, and tosses.
- Face coverings should be snug-fitting.

Use these examples when considering face coverings.

- Coverings that are held in place with over-the-head straps using Velcro or other breakaway type connections.
- Full head coverings.
- Coverings that minimize the chance of having fingers caught in them or shifting to impede any visual sight.

**PHYSICAL READINESS:**

- Due to shutdowns and general isolation, many athletes have not participated in an activity in several months. Even with individual conditioning and practicing jumps and tumbling, athletes will need a period of acclimatization to prepare for physical activity

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Swimming & Diving



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Swimming & Diving **STAFF LIAISON:** Melissa Mertz

The NFHS has determined that swimming and diving is a lower risk sport (sports that can be done with physical distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between uses by competitors).

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### **SWIMMING & DIVING RULES CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Conduct (1-3-2)** - Require athletes to arrive at venue already in competitive attire or provide alternative accommodations for swimmers and divers to change that allows for 6 feet of social distancing.
- **Lap Counting (2-7-6, 3-4)** - Only one person per lane should be permitted at turning end. Provide hand sanitizer and require lap counters to clean hands and wipe down devices.
- **Pre-Meet Conference (3-3-6, 4-2-1d)** - Decrease number of participants or hold one conference with coaches and one meeting with captains. The referee can use P.A. system or starting system microphone to allow participants to hear but keep them properly separated.
- **Referee and Starter (4-2, 4-3)** - Various rules require interactions between officials, coaches and athletes. Alternative methods for of communications include utilization of the P.A. system, hand signals or written communication.
- **Notification of Disqualification (4-2-2d, e)** - Notification shall occur from a distance via use of hand signals or the P.A. system.
- **Meet Officials (4-8, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12, 4-13)** - Officials responsible for information processing are often located together at a desk/table adjacent to the competition course or in an office/remote location. Develop alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information. Require a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table.
- **Timers (4-9)** - Timers must assemble at the finish of each race, at the edge of the pool within the 6-8 feet confines of the lane which they are timing. Timers should wear cloth facial coverings.
- **Submission of Entries to Referee (5-2)** - Alternative forms of entry submission can be designed to reduce face-to-face interaction when submitting a proper entry, where/how/to whom entries are



submitted, and a reduction or elimination of certain penalties currently attached to improper entries.

- **Relay Takeoff Judges and Relays (8-3)** - Require all takeoff judging from the sides of the pool. Space relay swimmers apart from one another. Timers and relay takeoff judges should wear cloth facial coverings.
- **Diving Officials (9-6)** - Alternative methods for submitting entries (3-2) and movement of non-electronic information will be required. Recommendations include a distance of 3-6 feet between individuals seated at the desk/table. Create a 3-6 feet space between judges by spacing groups of judges on opposite sides of boards or on one side of the board on a multi-level platform.

#### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- **Swimming Warm-up Areas** - Establish multiple sessions for warm-up periods to limit number of swimmers per lane. Restrict the number of swimmers in competition area. Limit number of swimmers per lane during warm-up and warm-down periods.
- **Diving Warm-up Areas** - Limit number of divers during warm-up by creating multiple sessions. During competition, divers may not approach the board until their turn to compete. Hot tubs should not be permitted. Dive order sheets should be posted in multiple areas to reduce number of divers viewing at the same time.
- **Team Seating and Lane Placement** - Keep the teams on opposite sides of the pool and require the home team to compete in lanes 1-3 and visitors to swim in lanes 4-6.
- **Preparing Athletes for Competition** - Athlete clerking areas should be eliminated.

## Return to Competition: General Considerations for Wrestling



Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

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**SPORT:** Wrestling

**STAFF LIAISON:** Mark Byers

The NFHS has determined that wrestling is a higher risk sport that involves close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.

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### General Considerations:

- Have hand sanitizer and wipes available at the table.
- Wash stations or sanitizer at mat side.
- No one touches the score sheet except the scorer.
- If writing implements are used, they should be sanitized and not shared with anyone.
- Disinfect the mats prior to and following competition.
- Events should be structured to ensure compliance with current indoor occupancy limits and mitigation requirements by the PA Department of Health and Governor's Office.
- Athletes and Coaches wear masks off the mat.
- Schools should communicate in advance regarding any screening policies and occupancy levels to be expected from the host site.
- Schools may increase the bench area to assist in social distancing.
- For tournament settings, prohibit all wrestlers from warming up simultaneously for competition. Provide for separate warm-up areas off of the competition mats for use and sanitize regularly.
- Provide for separate warm-up mats off of the competition mat for teams involved in dual competition.
- Schools are recommended to only wrestle those schools within their close geographic area.

### Considerations for Coaches:

- Wear masks on and off mat.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing teams post-match.
- Each team should be expected to provide their own leg bands for competition.
- **Limit the size of their traveling party to include essential personnel, staff, and only those with the ability to wrestle.**
- Consider practicing with wrestlers in pods to limit close contacts across the entire team.

### **Considerations for Wrestlers:**

- Daily screening prior to practice and competition should be conducted pursuant to each school's adopted health and safety plan.
- Shower after each round and put on a fresh uniform, when able and facilities permit.
- Wear masks off the mat when not competing.
- Eliminate handshakes with opposing coaches post-match.
- The use of a fist bump in lieu of a pre and post-match handshake is recommended.

### **Considerations for Referees:**

- Bring personal hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently
- Don't share equipment.
- Long-sleeved undershirts are permissible. If worn, they are required to be black in color.
- Change whistle several times during the day.
- Follow social distancing guidelines. Consider six feet minimum distance when talking to others (players, coaches, other officials).
- Consider use of a commercially manufactured whistle cover.
- Do not shake hands and follow pre- and post-game ceremony guidelines established by state associations.
- Officials may recognize the winner of the match by pointing to the wrestler and raising the appropriate color wrist band. Contact with wrestlers is discouraged.
- Officials may wear masks or face shields.
- Mask or face shields are required when not actively officiating the match.
- Officials may wear disposable gloves. If worn, they must change after each match.

### **Pre-Match Meeting:**

- Limit attendees to the referee and one captain from each team.

### **Considerations for Parents:**

(A family's role in maintaining safety guidelines for themselves and others):

- Make sure your athlete and immediate household members are free from illness before participating in practice and competition (if there is doubt stay home),
- Provide personal items for your child and clearly label them.
- Disinfect your student's personal equipment after each match or practice which would include wiping down headgear, washing clothing and bags used to transport gear.

**\*\* Please note, all of the content held within these pages is subject to change. The content in the Southern Lehigh School District Health and Safety Plan represents the requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the physical return to school. This document does not encompass all of the incremental planning necessary to physically reopen the schools and that planning is ongoing and additional details will be shared throughout the summer. \*\***