



## GUIDANCE FOR OPENING UP HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Based on  
National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)  
Recommendations

The COVID-19 pandemic presents high school athletics with a myriad of challenges. The LHSAA (Louisiana High School Athletic Association) and NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) offers this document as guidance on the many components of “opening up” high school athletics and activities in Louisiana. After successful completion of Phase I determined by local and state government officials, LHSAA Summer Rules for all sports of all LHSAA Member Schools will go into effect on **Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> 2020**.

The NFHS SMAC believes it is essential to the physical and mental well-being of high school students across the nation to return to physical activity and athletic competition. The NFHS SMAC recognizes that it is likely that ALL students will not be able to return to – and sustain – athletic activity at the same time in all schools, regions and states. There will also likely be variation in what sports and activities are allowed to be played and held. While we would typically have reservations regarding such inequities, the NFHS SMAC endorses the idea of returning students to school-based athletics and activities in any and all situations where it can be done safely.

The following document is intended to highlight considerations for planning purposes of our institutions. Local and State regulations and determinations may be stricter in certain cases and thus should be followed. **As of June 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, the State of Louisiana will move to Phase II on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020; however, Orleans Parish will remain in Phase I.** Ultimately each institution should prepare an implementation plan that works for their specific situations. It is recommended that campuses have mental health programing and/or support available for student-athletes upon return to campus. This document will change based on emerging evidence, experience, and evolving public health standards.

## Points of Emphasis:

1. Decreasing potential exposure to respiratory droplets is the guiding principle behind social distancing and the use of face coverings. It is also the basis of the stratification of risk by sport presented later on in this document. Per advisement from Governor Edwards and the Louisiana Department of Health, the use of protective face coverings are encouraged in public.
  - a. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is additionally “advising the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.” (“Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission”)
  - b. Recognizing the benefits and potential drawbacks of the use of cloth face coverings during conditioning and physical activity, the NFHS SMAC recommends the following:
    - i. State, local or school district guidelines for cloth face coverings should be strictly followed.
    - ii. Cloth face coverings should be considered acceptable. There is no need to require or recommend “medical grade” masks for athletic activity.
    - iii. Any student who prefers to wear a cloth face covering during a contest should be allowed to do so.
    - iv. The NFHS recommends that cloth face coverings be worn by students during Phases 1 and 2 as outlined below. Exceptions are swimming, distance running, or other high intensity aerobic activity. Cloth face coverings may continue to be used during Phase 3 when not engaging in vigorous activity, such as sitting on the bench during contests, in the locker room, and in the athletic training room.
    - v. Plastic shields covering the entire face (or attached to a helmet) shall not be allowed during contests. Their use during practices increases the risk of unintended injury to the person wearing the shield or teammates.
    - vi. Coaches and staff should wear cloth face coverings at all times during Phases 1 through 3. (Artificial noisemakers such as an air horn or a timer system with an alarm can be used to signal in place of a traditional whistle.)
2. Testing regimens, specific guidelines regarding mass gatherings, and response to a student or team member testing positive for COVID-19 (including contact tracing) are all currently under review, and guidance will come from CDC and state and local health departments. Limited testing availability, lack of resources for contact tracing, and expanding knowledge of the characteristics of COVID-19 transmission could all result in significant changes to the recommendations below. The NFHS SMAC and LHSAA expect to disseminate this information as it becomes available.
3. Due to the near certainty of recurrent outbreaks this coming fall and winter in some locales, schools must be prepared for periodic school closures and the possibility of some teams having to isolate for two to three weeks while in-season. Policies regarding practice and/or competition during temporary school closures, the cancellation of contests during the regular season, and parameters

for the cancellation or premature ending to post-season events/competitions are all currently under review.

4. With the uncertainty of which phase will be attained at the beginning of a sports season or maintained during a season, scheduling contests that require less travel when possible should be considered. Such scheduling will reduce time spent in buses or vans. It will also potentially decrease the need for rescheduling contests as “opening up” may occur regionally. If opponents at the time of a contest are subject to different restrictions, re-scheduling that contest for a later date may be problematic.
5. The principles presented in this guidance document can be applied to practices, rehearsals, and events for the performing arts with the exception of singing and the playing of wind instruments. The extent of the spread of respiratory droplets during these activities is currently under investigation and further guidance will issued as it becomes available.
6. “Vulnerable individuals” are defined by CDC as people age 65 years and older and others with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.
7. Until a cure, vaccine or very effective treatment is readily available, or so-called “herd immunity” is confidently reached, social distancing and other preventive measures such as face covering will be a “new normal” if workouts, practices and contests are to continue.

## Areas to Address:

### 1. Administrative

#### A. *Preparticipation Physical Evaluation*

All students must have a current Preparticipation Physical Evaluation. The LHSAA will allow Preparticipation Physical Evaluations from the 2019 – 2020 academic year to expire on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Any student that is new to athletic activities must have a current Preparticipation Physical Evaluation prior to participating in summer activities.

#### B. *Mandatory Education*

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the cancellation of essentially all “in person” educational events for coaches and staff. It is recommended that online education courses take the place of “hands on” or in-person training, whenever possible. This includes accepting online training courses for AED/CPR and First Aid for the 2020-21 academic year.

#### C. *Equipment Reconditioning*

The National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association (NAERA) has advised the NFHS that significant equipment reconditioning capacity is currently operational. If schools have not sent out equipment for reconditioning, they should be directed to do so immediately. If schools currently have equipment being reconditioned, a school official should contact the reconditioning company to make specific delivery arrangements if their school is currently closed.

#### D. *Traffic Flow on Campus*

All efforts should be made to maintain social distancing between students and avoid overlapping / wandering while on campus. It is recommended to have one entrance onto campus for screening purposes and one exit to leave campus. All buildings should have one point of entry and one point of exit to avoid traffic at doorways. For buildings with stairwells, one stairwell should be designated for upward traffic, and a separate stairway should be designated for downward traffic. Whenever possible, limit surfaces touched by individuals throughout the day (i.e. keep doors propped open and turn off water fountains).

#### E. *Cleaning Procedures*

Each school is responsible for developing a cleaning and sanitization plan. It is recommended to clean bathrooms twice daily; clean common areas every two hours; and thoroughly clean all surfaces at the end of each day. Any cleaning products utilized must be CDC-approved for protection against COVID-19. A diluted bleach solution (1/3 cup household bleach with 1 gallon of water) can be used to disinfect hard, non-porous surfaces. This diluted solution must remain wet on the surface for no less than one minute.

#### F. *Conduct of Conditioning and Practice Sessions*

Phases are in accordance with guidelines published by the White House and CDC (available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>) and the Louisiana Department of Health (available at <https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/covid/Roadmap-to-Resilient-Louisiana-FINAL.pdf>). Not all states, cities, or parishes are using the same criteria, and what is allowable during specific phases will vary from state to state, city to city, or even parish to parish.

Phase I	Phase II
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Sizes: 10 or less (including adults) in <u>one enclosed location or outdoors with adequate distancing between other groups</u></li> <li>• “CONTACT SPORTS” <u>NOT</u> ALLOWED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Basketball</li> <li>○ Football</li> <li>○ Soccer</li> <li>○ Wrestling</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NON-CONTACT SPORTS ALLOWED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ *Sport-Specific Conditioning* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Basketball</li> <li>▪ Football</li> <li>▪ Soccer</li> <li>▪ Wrestling</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Bowling</li> <li>○ Cross Country</li> <li>○ Golf</li> <li>○ Powerlifting</li> <li>○ Swimming</li> <li>○ Tennis</li> <li>○ Weightlifting</li> <li>○ Non-Contact Outdoor Camps</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Sizes: 25 or less (including adults) in <u>one enclosed location or outdoors with adequate distancing between other groups</u></li> <li>• “LIMITED CONTACT SPORTS” ALLOWED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Baseball</li> <li>○ Cheerleading</li> <li>○ Gymnastics</li> <li>○ Softball</li> <li>○ Volleyball (Indoor and Outdoor)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NON-CONTACT SPORTS ALLOWED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ *Sport-Specific Conditioning* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Basketball</li> <li>▪ Football</li> <li>▪ Soccer</li> <li>▪ Wrestling</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Bowling</li> <li>○ Cross Country</li> <li>○ Golf</li> <li>○ Powerlifting</li> <li>○ Swimming</li> <li>○ Tennis</li> <li>○ Weightlifting</li> <li>○ Non-Contact Outdoor Camps</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## PHASE I

### Pre-Workout Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. Screening includes a temperature check. Groups are recommended to arrive in waves.
  - Screening location should be in close proximity of drop-off location / entrance to campus.
  - Parents/guardians must remain on-site until student has cleared screening process.
    - If multiple students carpool and arrive together, all students will be turned away if one or more students presents as symptomatic. Athletes belonging to different assigned groups should not carpool together.
  - Use of non-contact thermometer at screening location is recommended. If a person displays a temperature of 100.4\* or above, they will be considered symptomatic.
    - Prior to use of non-contact infrared thermometer, it may be necessary to calibrate the non-contact thermometer to a traditional oral thermometer reading.
    - If a non-contact thermometer yields a reading of 99\* or above, it is recommended to confirm the result with a traditional oral thermometer.
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a

record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19 (see Appendix II for sample Monitoring Form).

- Any person with positive symptoms reported will be turned away at screening location, should not be allowed to take part in workouts, and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.
  - A clearance note from a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner is required to return to campus.
- Vulnerable individuals should not oversee or participate in any workouts during Phase 1.

#### **Limitations on Gatherings:**

- No gathering of more than 10 people at a time (inside or outside), including coaches and staff.
- Locker rooms should not be utilized during Phase 1. Students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower at end of the workout.
- Workouts should be conducted in “pods” of students with the same 5-10 students always working out together. No changing of groups during entire Phase. Rosters for assigned groups should be used in case contact tracing needs to be implemented.
  - Smaller pods can be utilized for weight training. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- There must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times. If this is not possible indoors, then the maximum number of individuals in the room must be decreased until proper social distancing can occur.

#### **Facilities Cleaning:**

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.).
- Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.
- Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual’s use of equipment.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.
- Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam should be covered.
- Students must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home.

#### **Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:**

- There should be no shared athletic equipment (towels, clothing, shoes, or sports specific equipment) between students or between groups.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing) individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.

- All athletic equipment, including balls, should be cleaned after each use and prior to the next workout.
- It is recommended that coaches and staff are in charge of cleaning any equipment used.
- Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment are permissible, but the equipment should be cleaned prior to use by the next individual.
- Resistance training should be emphasized as body weight, sub-maximal lifts and use of resistance bands.
- Free weight exercises that require a spotter cannot be conducted while honoring social distancing norms. Safety measures in all forms must be strictly enforced in the weight room.
- Examples (including, but not limited to):
  - A basketball player can shoot with a ball(s), but a team should not practice/pass a single ball among the team where multiple players touch the same ball.
  - A football player should not participate in team drills with a single ball that will be handed off or passed to other teammates. Contact with other players is not allowed, and there should be no sharing of tackling dummies/donuts/sleds.
  - A volleyball player should not use a single ball that others touch or hit in any manner.
  - Softball and baseball players should not share gloves, bats, or throw a single ball that will be tossed among the team. A single player may hit in cages, throw batting practice (with netting as backstop, no catcher). Prior to another athlete using the same balls, they should be collected and cleaned individually.
  - Wrestlers may skill and drill without touching a teammate.
  - Cheerleaders may not practice/perform partner stunts or building. (Chants, jumps, dances without contact are permissible.)
  - Tennis players may do individual drills, wall volleys and serves.
  - Runners should maintain the recommended 6 feet of distancing between individuals
- See Appendix I for further sport-specific guidelines.
- Ice baths and whirlpools must be utilized individually and sanitized above the water line between each use. Water must be drained daily. Per CDC guidelines, water must be disinfected using chlorine or bromine.
  - CDC Guidelines: 1–10 parts per million (ppm) free chlorine or 3–8 ppm bromine, with a pH of 7.2 – 7.8.
  - If chlorine or bromine are unavailable, The Clorox Company advises using “1/8 cup per 100 gallons of new water. Mix required amount of Clorox® ‘Regular Bleach<sub>2</sub> with CLOROMAX’ with 2 gallons of water and scatter over surface of pool. Mix uniformly with pool water. Do not reenter pool until the chlorine residual is between 1 to 3 ppm.”

#### **Hydration:**

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized. Students should be encouraged to bring adequate water to last the duration of practice.

## PHASE II

### Pre-Workout/Contest Screening:

- All coaches and students should be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a workout. Screening includes a temperature check. Groups are recommended to arrive in waves.
  - Screening location should be in close proximity of drop-off location / entrance to campus.
  - Parents/guardians must remain on-site until student has cleared screening process.
    - If multiple students carpool and arrive together, all students will be turned away if one or more students presents as symptomatic. Athletes belonging to different groups should not carpool together.
  - Use of non-contact thermometer at screening location is recommended. If a person displays a temperature of 100.4\* or above, they will be considered symptomatic.
    - Prior to use of non-contact infrared thermometer, it may be necessary to calibrate the non-contact thermometer to a traditional oral thermometer reading.
    - If a non-contact thermometer yields a reading of 99\* or above, it is recommended to confirm the result with a traditional oral thermometer.
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19 (see Appendix II for sample Monitoring Form).
- Any person with positive symptoms reported will be turned away at screening location, should not be allowed to take part in workouts, and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.
  - A clearance note from a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner is required to return to campus.
- Vulnerable individuals should not oversee or participate in any workouts during Phase 2.

### Limitations on Gatherings:

- Groupings of 25 individuals (indoors and outdoors) are allowed, including coaches and staff.
  - Indoor groupings must follow social distancing. If an indoor space does not allow for adequate social distancing between groups, grouping numbers will need to be reduced for those indoor spaces.
  - Multiple groups of 25 individuals can practice outdoors, as long as there is no contact between groups or mixing of groups.
- Locker rooms should not be utilized during Phase 2. Students should report to workouts in proper gear and immediately return home to shower at end of the workout.
- If meeting rooms are used, there must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times.
- Workouts should be conducted in “pods” of students with the same 25 students always working out together. No changing of groups during entire Phase.
  - Smaller pods can be utilized for weight training. This ensures more limited exposure if someone develops an infection. 3-person groups recommended to allow for safe spotting. Weight equipment should be cleaned between individuals.
- There must be a minimum distance of 6 feet between each individual at all times. If this is not possible indoors, then the maximum number of individuals in the room must be decreased until proper social



distancing can occur. Appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines and benches during practices. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

### **Facilities Cleaning:**

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.).
- Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.
- Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.
- Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam should be covered.
- Students must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home.

### **Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:**

- Lower risk sports practices and competitions may resume (see Potential Infection Risk by Sport below).
- LHSAA Summer Rules go into effect on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, but excludes intra-squad scrimmaging, matches, and 7-on-7s.
- There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing or shoes between students.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- All athletic equipment, including balls, should be cleaned intermittently during practices and contests. It is recommended that synthetic sports balls (ex: rubber basketball or football) be used to allow for proper cleaning. Athletic equipment with porous surfaces should be avoided (ex: leather football, leather baseball, etc), but if options are limited, the equipment should be thoroughly cleansed between uses with an approved cleanser.
  - Athletic equipment used by one group should not be shared with another group during any workout and during entire Phase.
- It is recommended that coaches and staff are in charge of cleaning any equipment used.
- Individual drills requiring the use of athletic equipment are permissible, but the equipment should be cleaned prior to use by the next individual (ex: tackling dummies, hitting pads, hitting sleds, and padded shields). For hitting sleds, social distancing between students must be enforced.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.
- Athletic equipment such as bats, batting helmets and catchers gear should be cleaned between each use.
- Maximum lifts should be limited and power cages should be used for squats and bench presses. Spotters should stand at each end of the bar, wearing a cloth face covering.

- See Appendix I for further sport-specific guidelines.
- Ice baths and whirlpools must be utilized individually and sanitized above the water line between each use. Water must be drained daily. Per CDC guidelines, water must be disinfected using chlorine or bromine.
  - CDC Guidelines: 1–10 parts per million (ppm) free chlorine or 3–8 ppm bromine, with a pH of 7.2 – 7.8.
  - If chlorine or bromine are unavailable, The Clorox Company advises using “1/8 cup per 100 gallons of new water. Mix required amount of Clorox® ‘Regular Bleach<sub>2</sub> with CLOROMAX’ with 2 gallons of water and scatter over surface of pool. Mix uniformly with pool water. Do not reenter pool until the chlorine residual is between 1 to 3 ppm.”

**Hydration:**

- All students shall bring their own water bottle. Water bottles must not be shared.
- Hydration stations (water cows, water trough, water fountains, etc.) should not be utilized. Students should be encouraged to bring adequate water to last the duration of practice.

## **PHASE III**

*Disclaimer: Phase III Guidelines are subject to change and will be updated in accordance with State government mandates.*

### **Pre- Workout/Contest Screening:**

- Any person who has had a fever or cold symptoms in the previous 24 hours should not be allowed to take part in workouts and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.
- A record should be kept of all individuals present.
- Vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing, minimizing exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed.

### **Limitations on Gatherings:**

- Gathering sizes of up to 50 individuals, indoors or outdoors.
- When not directly participating in practices or contests, care should be taken to maintain a minimum distance of 3 to 6 feet between each individual. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

### **Facilities Cleaning:**

- Adequate cleaning schedules should be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Prior to an individual or groups of individuals entering a facility, hard surfaces within that facility should be wiped down and sanitized (chairs, furniture in meeting rooms, locker rooms, weight room equipment, bathrooms, athletic training room tables, etc.).
- Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful and available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.
- Weight equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should be worn at all times in the weight room to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.
- Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam should be covered.
- Students must be encouraged to shower and wash their workout clothing immediately upon returning to home.

### **Physical Activity and Athletic Equipment:**

- LHSAA Summer Rules go into effect on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, but Phase III can include scrimmaging, matches, and 7-on-7s only in an intra-squad setting.
- There should be no shared athletic towels, clothing or shoes between students.
- Students should wear their own appropriate workout clothing (do not share clothing), and individual clothing/towels should be washed and cleaned after every workout.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all contests and practices.

- Athletic equipment such as bats, batting helmets and catchers gear should be cleaned between each use. Other equipment, such as hockey helmets/pads, wrestling ear guards, football helmets/other pads, lacrosse helmets/pads/gloves/eyewear should be worn by only one individual and not shared.
- Maximum lifts should be limited and power cages should be used for squats and bench presses. Spotters should stand at each end of the bar.
- Modified\* practices may begin for Higher risk sports:
  - \*Continue pre-practice screening as in Phases 1 and 2. Shower immediately after practices/contests.
  - Re-assess epidemiology data and experiences in other states and other levels of competition to determine when Higher risk sports competition may resume.

**Hydration:**

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

## G. Contests

1. Potential Infection Risk by Sport (modified from United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee – Sports Medicine recommendations)
  - i. **Higher Risk:** Sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.
    - *Examples: Wrestling, football, boys lacrosse, competitive cheer, dance*
  - ii. **Moderate Risk:** 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.
    - *Examples: Basketball, volleyball\*, baseball\*, softball\*, soccer, water polo, gymnastics\* (if equipment can't be sufficiently cleaned between competitors), ice hockey, field hockey, tennis\*, swimming relays, pole vault\*, high jump\*, long jump\*, girls lacrosse, crew with two or more rowers in shell, 7 on 7 football*
      - \*Could potentially be considered "Lower Risk" with appropriate cleaning of equipment and use of masks by participants
  - iii. **Lower Risk:** Sports that can be done with social distancing or individually with no sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors.
    - *Examples: Individual running events, throwing events (javelin, shot put, discus), individual swimming, golf, weightlifting, alpine skiing, sideline cheer, single sculling, cross country running (with staggered starts)*
2. Transportation to Events
  - i. Schools must consider social distancing requirements when scheduling contests and events for the fall. Social distancing (as required by state or local health department) will need to be maintained on buses/vans. Thus, multiple buses/vans and/or parental/guardian transportation will likely be needed.
  - ii. Per Louisiana Department of Education guidelines as of May 21, 2020, the following applies for bus transportation:
    - Phase 1
      - Leave every other seat empty
        - Members of the same household can sit together
      - Maximum capacity should not exceed 25%
      - Maximize ventilation by keeping windows open
      - Check rider's symptoms and temperature prior to boarding
      - All passengers must sanitize hands prior to boarding
      - Buses must be cleaned after each use and disinfected once a day
    - Phase 2 – To Be Announced.
3. Social distancing during Contests/Events/Activities
  - i. Sidelines/benches
    - Appropriate social distancing will need to be maintained on sidelines/bench

during contests and events. Consider using tape or paint as a guide for students and coaches.

ii. Who should be allowed at events?

- Group people into tiers from essential to non-essential and decide which tiers will be allowed at an event:
  - Tier 1 (Essential): Athletes, coaches, officials, event staff, medical staff, security
  - Tier 2 (Preferred): Media
  - Tier 3 (Non-essential): Spectators, vendors
- *Only Tier 1 and 2 personnel will be allowed to attend events until state/local health departments lift restrictions on mass gatherings.*

#### *H. Athletic Training Services*

Given the coming financial crisis at the state and local levels, the NFHS SMAC fears that athletic trainer positions will be seen as a “luxury” and those positions will be at risk during the budgeting process. It is also assumed that athletic trainers supplied to high schools by hospitals and sports medicine clinics are also at risk as many medical clinics and hospitals have suffered severe revenue loss during the pandemic.

Athletic trainers in high schools are positioned to play a vital role as sports return following this pandemic. As health-care professionals, they can take lead roles in developing and implementing infection control policy throughout the school. Whenever needed, state associations and their SMACs should promote the importance of athletic trainers in high schools and their role in injury evaluation, treatment and risk minimization as well as being a vital component of any return-to-school and athletics plan.

#### *Athletic Training Guidelines*

- Athletic Trainers are strongly encouraged to wear masks and gloves during treatment. It is recommended to change gloves as well as wipe down surfaces between patients.
- Training rooms should be managed to meet distancing guidelines and room occupancy limits.
- Athletic Trainers should identify “vulnerable individuals” with underlying conditions (students, coaches, and staff) that may be considered “at-risk” for COVID-19 and suggest modifications to phased return-to-sport.
- Athletic Trainers should modify Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) to comply with group sizes for each Phase.
  - Lightning EAP should be modified to comply with proper social distancing.
  - Heat acclimatization must be followed by each group.

#### *I. Classroom Setting*

Although it is unclear what the fall semester will look like, the CDC has published guidelines (as of 5/19/2020) for any summertime activities that will occur in a classroom.

- Space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible.

- Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than face each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- Groups of students stay together and with the same teacher throughout/across school days and do not mix.
- Students do not share objects (ex: hybrid virtual and in-person class structures, or staggered/rotated scheduling to accommodate smaller class sizes).
- Additional details can be found at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html).

#### *J. Food Services*

When providing the option for food services to students during the summer, the following CDC guidelines should be followed:

- Have children bring their own meals as feasible, or serve individually plated meals in classrooms instead of in a communal dining hall or cafeteria, while ensuring the safety of children with food allergies.
- Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes). If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Individuals should wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food and utensils and ensure the safety of children with food allergies.

## **2. Return to Physical Activity**

Current pre-season conditioning and acclimatization models assume that athletes have deconditioned over the summer months. The current pandemic may result in students being deconditioned for four to five months. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure students are acclimatized to summer heat conditions and returning to sport.

## **3. Hygiene**

### **A. Illness reporting**

Create notification process for all event athletes, coaches, event staff, media, spectators and vendors if the organizers/medical personnel learn of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 at the event.

### **B. Considerations for Officials, Coaches, Other Personnel**

1. Vulnerable individuals should not participate in any practices, conditioning activities, contests or events during Phases 1 and 2.
2. Masks should be worn, social distancing enforced, and “Hygiene Basics” adhered to in all situations.

### **C. Hygiene Basics**

#### **CONTINUE TO PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE**

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
- Avoid touching your face.

- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Strongly consider using face coverings while in public, and particularly when using mass transit.

#### **PEOPLE WHO FEEL SICK SHOULD STAY HOME**

- Do not go to work or school.
- Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Wide availability of hand sanitizer at contests and practices. Participants, coaches and officials should clean hands frequently.
2. Wiping down ball and equipment frequently.
3. No pre-game and post-game handshakes/high-fives/fist bumps.
4. Players and coaches are asked to refrain from high fives or any other physical gestures of celebration.
5. Officials and sideline volunteers should be given option to wear face coverings (may use artificial noisemaker in place of whistle).

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LHSAA acknowledges that no plan can guarantee that an individual will not contract COVID-19. The recommendations in this plan are designed to mitigate the spread of the virus to create the healthiest environment for the LHSAA's student-athletes, coaches, and staff. Each day we learn more information about this virus, which may necessitate a modification to the recommendations we have outlined. This document is a snapshot in time and our best thinking based on what we know today. As new ideas, information and strategies become available we will modify our advice accordingly.



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## Approved May 2020

### **DISCLAIMER – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines**

The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time.

# **APPENDIX I**

## **Sport-Specific Adaptations**

Based on Louisiana Department of Education Reopening Guidance

### **General Adaptations**

- Outside workouts, where there is better ventilation and exposure to UV light, are strongly recommended.
- Maintain six feet of physical distance between participants, coaches, and other personnel.
- Balls used in play within the static group must be cleaned every hour.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.

### **Baseball and Softball**

- Participants utilize their own equipment or equipment is cleaned in between each individual use.
- No more than 3-5 individuals are permitted in the dugout at any given time (this would be dependent on the size of the dugout).
- Players should use disinfectant before, during, and after the games, whenever appropriate, such as if/when you come into contact with other players, coaches, or shared equipment (bases, bats, gloves).
- Refrain from sharing equipment such as bats, helmets, and catcher's equipment.
- Sanitize hand and shared equipment between innings or once an hour.

### **Cheerleading / Dance Team**

- No formations that require close physical contact.
- No pyramids or stunts that require participants to be in close physical contact.
- No sharing or exchanging of pom poms, megaphones, or signage used during cheers.
- Social distancing markers should be placed in strategic areas such as entry areas and group stretching and practice areas.
- Only allow group practice if it can be completed in accordance with social distancing recommendations.

### **Powerlifting/Weightlifting**

- Wipe down benches and equipment between individual participant uses with disinfectant wipes.
- Use only one piece of equipment at a time (i.e., no circuits or super setting).
- Adjust equipment layout and close or restrict access to equipment to maintain at least six feet of distance between equipment.
- Limit workout length to avoid unnecessary exposure.

### **Gymnastics**

- Social distancing markers should be placed in strategic areas such as entry areas and group stretching and practice areas.
- Wipe down equipment in between individual participant uses with disinfectant wipe.

### **Volleyball**

- Players should use disinfectant before, during and after workouts, whenever appropriate, including after coming into contact with other players, coaches, or shared equipment.
- Only allow group practice if it can be completed in accordance with social distancing recommendations.

# **APPENDIX II**

# COVID-19 Athlete/Coach Monitoring Form

Name	Time	Circle Yes/No below										Temp (equal to or higher than 100.4°F)
		Fever		Cough		Sore Throat		Shortness of Breath		Close contact, or cared for someone with COVID-19		
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	